



## Carey Research Conference

**Thursday 18 September 2025 | 9.30am–4.00pm**

Join the Zoom Meeting: <https://zoom.us/j/96035148206>

Meeting ID: 915 0791 1253

**9.30–10.30AM | Mihi Whakatau and Research Student Mini-Presentations** – Jarrahmal Tanielu and Lizzie Carter

**10.30AM | Morning Tea Break**

**10.45AM–12.15PM | Assoc. Professor in History, Dr. Miranda Johnson, University of Otago (Zoom) & Respondents Eugene Fuimaono and John Tucker**

***Redemptive visions and the (re)sacralizing of the Treaty of Waitangi/te Tiriti o Waitangi***

The Treaty of Waitangi/te Tiriti o Waitangi, now regarded as New Zealand's founding document, has been sacralized, de-sacralized, and re-sacralized over its long and eventful symbolic life. Yet historians, who have spilled a volume of ink unmatched in their attention to other events in the nation's life explaining what the treaty really means, have not yet paid much attention to the changing, contested, and manifold symbolic meanings attributed to the treaty. Theologians have paid more attention to the treaty's larger symbolic meaning, particularly its role as a 'covenant'. In this talk, I want to attempt two things: an attempt at historicizing the treaty as symbol, in the context of a book I am writing on 'redemptive visions' in recent Aotearoa New Zealand; and a meta interpretive argument about how and why historians should be paying more attention to the symbolic.

**12.15PM | Lunch**

### **1.15 –1.45PM | Andrew Meek (Zoom)**

#### ***Care for the Vulnerable Outsider in Deuteronomy and in the Oxford Terrace Baptist Church Housing Project***

This presentation will draw from one chapter of Andrew's Master's research project, investigating how the Deuteronomic commands to care for the vulnerable outsider (the "gēr") can inform church responses to the current housing crisis in Aotearoa New Zealand. The overall thesis aims to provide church leaders with a practical, theologically grounded resource that highlights the role churches can play as significant landholders in addressing housing needs. By integrating Deuteronomic scholarship with a case study of Oxford Terrace Baptist Church's housing project, the research seeks to articulate a framework for church-based housing provision that is responsive to marginalised communities, including refugees. Through a literature-based approach, with a case study component, this project will contribute to the theological discourse on housing justice, emphasising the necessity for churches to embody the kinship principles found in Deuteronomy, thereby fostering inclusive communities in the face of social inequities.

### **1.45–2.15PM | Caleb Haurua**

#### ***'Tōku Reo Tōku Ohooho': My Language is My Awakening – Decolonising Christian Spirituality through Māori Language Reclamation***

This paper shares the early stages of my PhD research into how Māori Christians are decolonising their faith through Māori language reclamation. I will reflect on what has led me to this point and what will sustain my research journey moving forward. In an increasingly post-church Aotearoa, what do the lived experiences of Māori disciples need to flourish as they re-indigenise through language reclamation? What impact has whiteness, colonialism and western-framed theologies had on our people and what critiques are offered to support Māori? This paper makes a case for re-indigenising Christian spirituality by first confronting the enduring structures of white supremacy within Aotearoa's religious institutions, and by centring Māori voices, histories, and epistemologies in theological formation.

### **2.15PM | Afternoon Tea**

### **2.30–3.00PM | Andrew Baldwin**

#### ***Worship in Community***

We often think of worship in the church requiring an exclusive focus on the divine, but if this is so what is the significance of doing worship together? What is gained by doing worship in the context of community rather than as isolated individuals? This paper will describe the dynamic interaction between the worship of the church and the community of the church. That is, how the church's worship influences the relationships between those within the church, and in turn, how the nature of those relationships influences the church's worship. It will first give a theological account of the nature of the interpersonal relationships in the church based on British Methodist theologian Tom Greggs' *Dogmatic Ecclesiology: The Priestly Catholicity of the Church*. It will then extend these theological insights gained from Greggs into Baptist ecclesiology demonstrating how the worship practices of the church can be an important part of developing relationships of depth and intimacy in the church.

### **3.00–3.30PM | Steven Goulstone**

#### ***Supported or Thwarted? Exploring the Agency of 25–35 year old Baptists***

This presentation explores the initial stages of a qualitative study examining how 25 to 35 year old Baptist churchgoers experience agency supportive and agency thwarting practices within their church contexts. Framed by Basic Psychological Needs Theory, which highlights the core needs of autonomy, competence, and relatedness, and by focusing on primarily on autonomy as agency, the research seeks to understand how agency is supported or restricted in congregational life. Drawing on the first wave of in-depth interviews, emerging themes suggest a complex interplay between institutional structures, leadership approaches, and personal faith development. Participants describe both empowering and limiting experiences in areas such as participation in decision-making, leadership development, and expressions of dissent or doubt. Further, participants discuss the tension involved in the process of faith formation, which involves offering direction and at times, correction. How this process contributes to the experience of agency support or thwarting must be explored.

### **3.30–4.00PM | Poroaki and Close**