



Samuel Marsden Collegiate School  
**140<sup>th</sup> Celebration Cathedral Service**

24 September 2018  
Principal's Message

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## Honouring Our Past, Imagining Our Future

Nau mai haeremai nga whanau o Hamuera Matene ki tenei wahi tapu. Kua tiwhiri tatau i tenei wahi kia whakanui i to tatau kura, kia tu hei tohu ka maimoa tatau. i te karere karaitiana. Te karere kua tautoko i a matau mai i te timatanga, te karere ka tautoko i o tatau kura me nga tauira i nga tau e heke mai ana. Ka whakamoemiti tatau ki te Atua na tona pai, tona piripono i nanahi, i tenei ra, i nga wa katoa.

*(Welcome, Marsden family to this sacred place. We have chosen to celebrate our proud school history here as a sign that we still cherish the Christian message that has motivated our vision and work since the very beginning. It is the same message that will guide our school and our students through today to a future that honours God. We praise and thank the Lord because He is always good. His faithfulness endures to all generations. It is the same yesterday, today and forever!*

Translated by Tuia Tapuke - Year 11 student)

I add my welcome to you, the Marsden community, and thank you for gathering in this sacred place to celebrate our School's 140-year history of outstanding education delivery. We do so as a fitting reminder that the Christian message in the Anglican tradition has been a cherished and key part of Marsden's philosophy since its founding in 1878. It is the same message that guides our vision for Marsden and its students through today to a God honouring future. We praise and thank the Lord because He is always good. His faithfulness endures to all generations. It is the same yesterday, today and forever!

Thank you girls for bringing such beauty and meaning through your moving rendition of that ancient piece of religious music. What a gift. You have led us deeper into worship and helped bring us to this part of the service with joyful, open hearts.

I'd like to begin on behalf of us all, by gratefully acknowledging the commitment, drive and passion of all those who, over 140 years, have helped form the dynamic learning community that is Marsden today. There's absolutely no doubt that each generation

before us strived faithfully as custodians of the school to build and maintain its reputation as a leading education provider, not just in Wellington, but in New Zealand. And there's no doubt that we have inherited a tradition of excellence underpinned by Christian values. One that has always equipped students for their time. Today we honour that, and face our responsibility to project that tradition forward.

The quest for excellence had humble beginnings. Fancy that first graduating class being comprised of just six students! They and each student since has perpetuated the view that Marsden students can and will make significant positive contributions – the type that help change the cultural fabric of society. There has always been that clear sense that students left Marsden with a sense of social justice and responsibility; a code of ethics that was Christian in inspiration and humanitarian in practice.

These fundamentals remain as relevant as ever today. It's why they're expressed in our vision, mission, motto and values. As recently as June this year, the Marsden Board reaffirmed our commitment to equipping students to take on the world with courage and conviction. We still aim every day to help our students live meaningfully, accomplish their academic and personal potential in the spirit of *ad summa*, and to be genuinely happy. And we are determined to keep developing confident, independent students who willingly practise the values of excellence, resilience, creativity and service. Consensus came easily because these are the principles, values and skills Marsden alumni have been building successful lives on for decades.

As an Anglican school we have also continuously and gladly aligned ourselves with the Church's Marks of Mission. Our service ethic and practice of loving kindness to one other and the community is a reflection of the Church's commitment to responding to human need. Through role modelling, teaching, advocating and taking action, we also demonstrate our commitment to helping transform unjust structures in society, to challenging violence of every kind and working to bring peace and reconciliation. Looking after our planet, valuing all created things and working to sustain and renew the life of the earth is something we readily embrace accepting that God has made us caretakers of His creation.

While some things, as Bella reminded us, aren't meant to last a century and four decades – some, like these commitments, are. They are core to our mission - universal, timeless, eternal.

That said, some purposeful change is necessary if we're to remain relevant, effective and faithful to the tradition of preparing students for *their* time. It can be incredibly easy to shelter in the past with its narrow comforting certainties. But all that produces is learners beautifully equipped for a world that no longer exists.

So how do we best honour our past and project our tradition of excellence forward? Imagining our future is the first step. Only then can we start to bring it to life together.

It begins with truly understanding the future our students will inherit.

It's one in which the convergence of rapidly developing technologies will result in a time of upheaval unprecedented in human history. Popular science writer Damien Broderick predicts a spike on the chart of change around 2030. No wonder futurists have been warning us about future shock for the past 50 years.

To that end, we have developed a new, coherent, inspiring yet realistic vision – one that's fit for today in light of tomorrow. We have put in the serious intellectual effort required to understand what our students will need so that the preparation they get today will enable them to thrive whatever they choose to do and wherever they choose to do it.

This vision is articulated in a three-year Strategic Plan that will be launched very soon. We'll be referring to it as the Life-ready Strategic Plan because that's its purpose – to develop life-ready learners. It incorporates five interdependent goals: future-focused learning and teaching, student wellbeing, quality teachers, community engagement and sustainable operations.

Integral to these goals are the notions embedded in the beautiful waiata you are about to hear and experience. It has been written especially for the school, and this is the first time our very own Samuel Marsden tribute has been expressed and delivered in this culturally appropriate way. It reinforces the fundamental principles we'll continue to embed in Marsden's culture because they are good, because they are right, because they are relevant and because they complement the innovations that will ensure our students can thrive through every stage of life.

We thank the writer of the waiata, Araraina, for honouring Samuel Marsden, our patron of Anglican faith, for urging our students to strive for and gain knowledge as those before them have done, for encouraging each one to take hold of the treasures

they have been taught and to store them up so wellbeing and health enables them to stand strong and be independent in this ever evolving world. And we thank her for encouraging the type of collaboration that means our hearts beat as one to keep the school's spirit alive.

Marsden family, deep learning – learning you can use – occurs when we live what we learn. That's why, while holding fast to our fundamentals, we're taking up the challenge to modernise our subject offerings and teaching approaches, to more fully nurture the human spirit, cultivate emotional intelligence, and develop the whole person. It's why we're determined to do all it takes to develop life-ready learners.

We have reached to catch something of the future, to put its promise into our students' hands. Now, as we make it happen together, the next exciting chapters of Marsden's proud history will be written. I think we'll be brilliant co-authors of it.

May God upon whose grace we fully depend keep us eager to pursue truth beyond the outermost limits of human thought. May he make us scornful of the cowardice that dares not face new truth, the laziness content with half-truth, and the arrogance that thinks it knows all truth. May he strengthen our resolve to see fulfilled around the world and in our time, all hopes for justice so long deferred, and show us how to think, work and struggle to bring about His kingdom on earth. Fill our hearts, Lord with courage to face inevitable challenge and change. Help us to count struggle and set back as but straws on the tide of life. So may we run and not grow weary, walk and not faint, until that day when, by Your grace, faith and hope will be outdistanced by sight and possession, and love will be all in all in this wonderful, beautiful present and future world. Amen.

Narelle Umbers

Principal

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