

Sea of Faith

Exploring Values, Spirituality and Meaning

www.sof.org.nz

Newsletter 132, October 2017

500th Anniversary of Luther's Reformation, 50th Anniversary of the Geering "Heresy Trial",
and 25th Anniversary of this Newsletter

IT'S ALL HAPPENING ... DON'T MISS IT!

The 2017 SoF Conference will be held on Monday 6 to
Wednesday 8 November, at the Silverstream Retreat Centre
where it was held last year.

This year's Conference is well up to our usual excellent standards. There will be the opportunity to understand the time of Luther and how his extraordinary testament 500 years ago has profoundly affected the world we live in today; how current religious thinkers are addressing the challenges of today's world; and a call to arms - SoFers will welcome the opportunity to 'get real' after all the politicking we have been subjected to recently.

The timing of the Conference is new, and we hope will suit a good number of people more than the usual early October school holiday weekend. It is in early November, to come directly after the seminar commemorating 50 years since Lloyd Geering's heresy trial on the previous Friday evening (6pm) 3 November to 5pm on the Saturday 4 November

<http://www.standrews.org.nz/event/courage-to-act-seminar/>

The National SoF Steering Committee draws members from around the country, each for maximum term of four years. This gives us a useful turnover, and giving others the opportunity to meet like-minded colleagues and to steer the SoF activities - and, in particular, the annual Conference.

This year we have vacancies for three new SoF members, and I urge you to consider putting yourself forward.

The new Steering Committee meets at the close of the Conference, then in Wellington in late January/early February. Further meetings are by Skype or teleconference one evening each month. Please do consider supporting this highly valued organization in this way.



Gretchen Kivell,
Chairperson,
Sea of Faith New Zealand, Inc

THERE IS STILL ROOM FOR YOU

We will accept Registrations *even after the advertised close-off date of October 1st*. This timely and stimulating Conference deals with Reformation in several forms. Issues include how we are to construe it starting with **reflections** on the events triggered by Luther, and **suggestions** for what still needs to be done and **who** is to do it. Also, at this time we remember the "heresy trial" of 1967 and we look forward the 100th birthday (on February 26, 2018) of Sir Lloyd Geering.

The **Registration Form** is on the website at www.sof.org.nz



THE INTERNET CORNER

UPDATING THE COLUMN PREVIOUSLY NAMED “FAITH IN CYBERSPACE”

Laurie Chisholm has suggested that we become more systematic at recommending helpful websites. Below is his second submission. You, dear reader, are urged to follow Laurie's lead by sending similar copy to noel@cheer.org.nz

Today's world is dominated by disruptive technologies that make use of the Internet. Take Encyclopedias for example. The Encyclopedia Britannica (EB) was the standard for reference works. An army of paid writers produced scholarly articles and salesmen went door-to-door selling the multivolume work. The Internet brought that to an end; the final print edition was 2010. A first revolution resulted in CD versions of encyclopedias, especially Microsoft's Encarta, but now, the brash upstart Wikipedia has essentially supplanted the classically authoritative EB. Wikipedia now has some 3.9 million English articles with 800 being added daily. EB has only 120,000. A similar story can be told about other major Internet sites. Youtube has some 819 million hours of videos, with 300 hours being uploaded every minute. Google (Alphabet Inc) dominates the search engine world, Facebook social media and TradeMe New Zealand secondhand sales. Ebooks are growing in popularity, with Amazon set to dominate that market. All these revolutions and new, often highly profitable businesses, have been made possible by the Internet.

ON BEING <http://onbeing.org>

The On Being website aims to explore the questions, what does it mean to be human? and how do we want to live? It airs as a radio show on more than 400 public radio stations across the US and its programmes are available as podcasts through the above website. You can also sign up for an email newsletter. Interestingly for those SoFers who experienced the attempt to change our name some years ago, On Being has undergone a

fundamental rebranding. Originally, it was called “Speaking of Faith” (a name astonishingly similar to our own) with the tagline “public radio's conversation about religion, meaning, ethics and ideas.” This change suggests that even a word like “faith” which has been fundamental to Western religious culture, is losing its meaning.

It looks like more recent programmes have become more general and less theological, but I have found the podcasts on Einstein exceptionally valuable. Just search for “Einstein” at the website's home page. There is a two-part programme on Einstein, which features two physicists: Freeman Dyson and Paul Davies. It really helps to clarify Einstein's spirituality and what he meant by God, including his famous quip “God does not play dice with the Universe.”

A whole team is involved in maintaining this website, but it was started by Krista Tippett. Krista was headed for the world of politics and journalism, living and working in Germany. She was struck by the emptiness of the personal lives of those who wielded political power, and, by contrast, the meaningful and joyful lives of those on the other side of the Berlin wall. So she decided to study theology and ended up with a Master of Divinity. Her cherishing of deep and meaningful conversations is a response to growing up in the Bible Belt with an absence of them. Rachel Kohn, who will be a Keynote Speaker at this year's Conference, recently interviewed Krista. You can hear it at:

(<http://www.abc.net.au/radionational/programs/spiritofthings/on-being-krista-tippett/8812192>) and also wrote an article on her (<http://www.abc.net.au/news/2017-08-24/krista-tippett-on-why-we-need-to-talk-more-about-faith/8835348>).

Laurie Chisholm

At this pre-Conference season our own website offers a lot of relevant information.

Try this

<http://sof.org.nz/2017studyguides.htm>

Happy surfing!

ALL ABOUT US

SEA OF FAITH NETWORK (NZ) INC: EXPLORING VALUES, SPIRITUALITY AND MEANING

We are an association of people who have a common interest in exploring religious thought and expression from a non-dogmatic and human-oriented standpoint.

We follow similar organisations in the UK and Australia in taking our name from the 1984 BBC TV series and book by the British religious academic, Don Cupitt.

“Sea of Faith” both traces the decline of traditional Christian influence in the West in the past 250 years and invites the viewer to consider what might replace it. In New Zealand, Sea of Faith provides a forum via annual Conference and Newsletter, for the continued exploration.

The Sea of Faith Network itself has no creed. We draw our members from people of all faiths and also from those with no attachment to religious institutions.

Our national **Steering Committee** publishes a Newsletter six times each year, maintains a website at www.sof.org.nz, assists in setting up Local Groups, and organises an annual Conference.

We have four **Life Members**: Sir Lloyd Geering ONZ, Don Cupitt (UK), Noel Cheer, and Ian Harris. (The late Alan Goss, and the late Fred Marshall were, for a time, Life Members).

Chairperson: Gretchen Kivell

email gretchen.kivell@xtra.co.nz

phone (03) 473-0031 mobile 0274-473-0031

Secretary: Bruce and Lynne Tasker

email landbtasker@gmail.com

phone (09)827-0720 mobile 027-290-3056

Treasurer: Norm Ely

email n.ely@xtra.co.nz mobile 027-440-9267

Membership Secretary: Peter Cowley

email pcowley@paradise.net.nz

1/30A Dunns St, Silverstream, Upper Hutt 5019

Newsletter Editor and Webmaster: Noel Cheer,

email noel@cheer.org.nz

The **Copy Editor** is Shirley Dixon, **Newsletter Distribution** is by Yvonne Curtis (paper copies) and Peter Cowley (emailed copies).

Steering Committee Members in General: Adrian Skelton, Doug Sellman, Jan Calvert, Daniel Phillips, Ian Crumpton

To offer a comment on material appearing in the Newsletter or to submit copy for publication, contact **The Editor, 26 Clipper St., Titahi Bay, Porirua 5022**, (04) 236-7533 or 0274-483-805 or email to noel@cheer.org.nz

Publication deadlines for submitted Newsletter copy for the remainder of 2017: 1/12/17.

Members may borrow books, CDs, and DVDs from the Resource Centre. We are in the process of thinning-out the contents of the Resource Centre and will come up with a simplified management process over the next several months.

CONTENTS

1. Conference 2017

Don't miss it! Register Now! Deadline extended!

2. The Internet Corner

Previously “Faith in Cyberspace”

3. All About Us

4. Agenda for Annual General Meeting 2017

5. Getting On Side With God

Luther voted for “faith”

6. Not In God's Name

Rabbi Jonathan Sacks rules out violence

7. Hal Taussig

He's a Conference Keynote Speaker this year and he's also doing a “Common Dreams” roadshow

8. The Catholic Reformation

How the Catholic wing of the Church responded to the Protestant Reformation

9. Heresy at Home

Sir Lloyd Geering walks us through the “Tempestuous Years” of 1966 to 1970 – the ‘prequel’ to his (somewhat misnamed) heresy trial

11. Nomination Form for the members of the next Steering Committee

12. The Reformation Theatre

the Big Bang (and Brexit) of the 16th Century still has echoes

Membership of the national organisation costs \$25 per year (\$30 if outside NZ).

We will soon have an Annual General Meeting at which the membership charge will be reviewed. If this subject interests you then you should plan to visit the website www.sof.org.nz sometime after mid-November, and go to the panel called “Membership”. Follow your nose (or mouse ... if you prefer!)

Both charges drop to \$20 if the Newsletter is emailed and not on paper. Transfer the appropriate amount by Internet Banking to our account number: 38 9000 0807809 00 and email your details (name, address, version) to pcowley@paradise.net.nz

Bonus: If you already receive the paper version, then you can receive the email version in addition, *at no extra charge*. Our Financial Year starts on 1 July.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Annual General Meeting of the Sea of Faith Network NZ (Inc) will be held at Silverstream Retreat and Conference Centre, 3 Reynolds Bach Drive, Silverstream, Upper Hutt, on Monday 6 November, 2017 at 7:30 pm.

Notices of motion must be submitted to the secretary (landbtasker@gmail.com) at least ten days before the AGM.

AGENDA

- Welcome
- Apologies
- Minutes of the 2016 AGM. (They are on the Website at www.sof.org.nz)
- Matters Arising
- Reports (all will be on the Website in time for the AGM)
 - Chairperson: Gretchen Kivell
 - Treasurer: Norm Ely
 - Local Groups Coordinator: Doug Sellman
 - Archivist: Alison Eng
 - Resource Centre Manager: Suzi Thirlwall
 - Webmaster/Newsletter Editor: Noel Cheer
- Notices of Motion
 - I, Norman Ely, Treasurer of the Sea of Faith (NZ) Inc. move as follows: -
 1. That the subscription to the Sea of Faith (NZ) Incorporated be \$20.00 per member. This is to usually include 6 copies of the Newsletter by email only.
 2. That the posted Newsletter (6 copies per year) now be a

separate and at an additional cost of \$30.00 per year. This will apply ONLY to members ordering the Newsletter by post.

Therefore, members who receive the Newsletter by email will pay an annual subscription of \$20.00.

Members who receive the Newsletter by post will pay an annual subscription of \$20.00 plus \$30.00 a total of \$50.00.

[The case for the Notice of Motion will be on the website by 20 October.]

- Election of Steering Committee Members.

We need several people (to a minimum of 8 and maximum of 12) to be elected to the Steering Committee. Please give this serious consideration and submit nominations on the handout form in the Newsletter.

- Life Members.
- Other Business / Close.

The new Steering Committee will convene soon after the AGM.

Reformation Themes

GETTING ON SIDE WITH GOD

Justification

In Christian theology, **justification** is God's act of removing the guilt and penalty of sin while at the same time declaring a sinner righteous through Christ's atoning sacrifice.

The means of justification is an area of significant difference between Catholicism, Orthodoxy and Protestantism, and even within the latter.

In Lutheranism and Calvinism, righteousness from God is viewed as being credited to the sinner's account through faith alone, without works.

Broadly speaking, Catholic, Methodist and Orthodox Christians distinguish between initial justification, which in their view ordinarily occurs at baptism, and final salvation, accomplished after a lifetime of striving to do God's will (sanctification).

Many Protestants, such as Lutherans and Calvinists, believe that justification is a singular act in which God declares an unrighteous individual to be righteous, an act made possible because Christ was legally "made sin" while on the cross (2 Cor 5:21). Justification is granted to all who exercise faith, and that is viewed as a gift from God (unmerited favour) by Lutherans and Calvinists, who use Eph 2:8, as well as Acts 16:14 and Phil 1:29 to support that belief.

In Methodism, justification refers to "pardon" and "the forgiveness of sins" and sanctification is the consequent process that together, will ultimately lead to one's salvation.

Catholics, Orthodox and Methodists use James 2:14-26, Galatians 5:19-21 and Matthew 19:17 to support their belief that justification is kept through avoiding grave sins. **Justification is often seen as being the theological fault line that divided Catholic from the Lutheran and Reformed traditions of Protestantism during the Reformation.**

From Wikipedia

Sola fide

Sola fide (Latin: "by faith alone"), also known as **justification by faith alone**, is a Christian theological doctrine that distinguishes most Protestant denominations from the Catholic Church, the Eastern Orthodox Church, and some parts of the Restoration Movement.

According to Martin Luther, justification by faith alone is the article on which the church stands or falls.



From 1510 to 1520, Luther lectured on the Psalms, and on the books of Hebrews, Romans, and Galatians. As he studied these portions of the Bible, he came to view the use of terms such as penance and righteousness by the Catholic Church in new ways.

He became convinced that the church was corrupt in its ways and had lost sight of what he saw as several of the central truths of Christianity. The most important for Luther was the doctrine of justification – God's act of declaring a sinner righteous – **by faith alone through God's grace**. He began to teach that salvation or redemption is a gift of God's grace, attainable only through faith in Jesus as the Messiah.

"This one and firm rock, which we call the doctrine of justification is the chief article of the whole Christian doctrine, which comprehends the understanding of all godliness."

From Wikipedia

Conscience

Luther: "I cannot and will not recant anything for to go against conscience is neither right nor safe. Here I stand, I can do no other, so help me God. Amen"

Einstein: "Never do anything against conscience, even if the state demands it."

CONFRONTING RELIGIOUS VIOLENCE

Rabbi Jonathan Sacks says “NOT IN GOD’S NAME”



Admired by non-Jews as much as by Jews, by secular as well as religious thinkers, and equally at home in the university and the

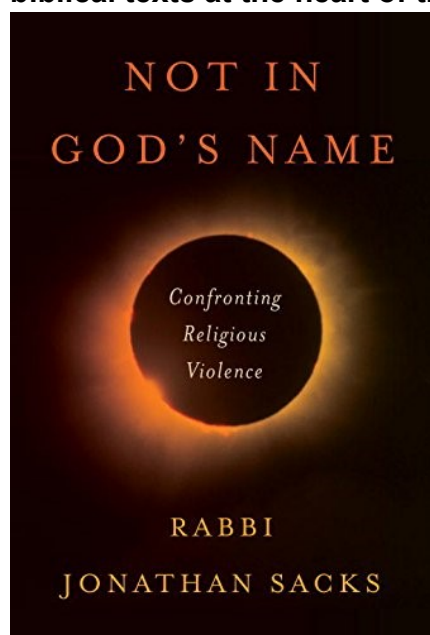
yeshiva, Rabbi Sacks served as Chief Rabbi of the United Hebrew Congregations of the Commonwealth from 1991 until 2013. He read Philosophy at Cambridge before pursuing postgraduate studies at New College, Oxford and King's College, London.

Rabbi Lord Jonathan Sacks is a global religious leader, philosopher, the author of more than twenty-five books, and a moral voice for our time. Described by H.R.H The Prince of Wales as 'a light unto this nation', he is a frequent and respected contributor to radio, television and the press both in Britain and around the world.

From the website <http://rabbisacks.org>

Drawing on arguments from evolutionary psychology, game theory, history, philosophy, ethics and theology, Sacks shows how a tendency to violence can subvert even the most compassionate of religions. Through a close reading of key biblical texts at the heart of the Abrahamic

faiths, Sacks then challenges those who claim that religion is intrinsically a cause of violence, and argues that theology must become part of the solution if it is not to remain at the heart of the problem.



This book is a rebuke to all those who kill in the name of the God of life, wage war in the name of the God of peace, hate in the name of the God of love, and practise cruelty in the name of the God of compassion.

For the sake of humanity and the free world, the time has come for people of all faiths, and none, to stand together and declare: Not in God's Name.

“To invoke God to justify violence against the innocent is not an act of sanctity but of sacrilege. It is a kind of blasphemy. It is to take God's name in vain.” (ibid p5)

“Muslims form the majority of victims of Islamist violence.” (ibid p7)

“We need a term to describe this deadly phenomenon that can turn ordinary non-psychopathic people into cold-blooded murderers of schoolchildren, aid workers, journalists and people at prayer. It is, to give it a name, *altruistic evil*: evil committed in a sacred cause, in the name of high ideals.” (ibid p9)

See also
*Fields of Blood, Religion
and the History of Violence*
by Karen Armstrong



HAL TAUSSIG AND COMMON DREAMS ON THE ROAD

Professor Hal Taussig, one of the leading theologians of the late 20th & early 21st centuries, is to tour

Australia & New Zealand in October & November this year under the **Common Dreams on the Road banner. Hal will also be a Keynote Speaker at the NZ Sea of Faith Conference from November 6 to 8. For details about Common Dreams, visit www.commondreams.org. For Conference details go to our website at www.sof.org.nz**

While Sea of Faith in New Zealand shares quite a lot of the views of Common Dreams, there is no formal affiliation.

Hal has recently retired as Visiting Professor of New Testament at Union Theological Seminary, New York where he taught masters & doctoral level studies. He is Professor of Early Christianity at the Reconstructionist Rabbinical College in Philadelphia. He has also retired from 30+ years as a United Methodist pastor & now is specially assigned by his bishop as a consultant to local congregations. Hal is co-chair of the Society of Biblical Literature's Consultation on Greco-Roman meals, & on the steering committees of SBL's Seminar on Modern Theories & Ancient Myths of Christian Origins and the Greco-Roman Meals Consultation.

Professor Taussig is a foundation fellow of the Westar Institute & participated in that Institute's celebrated Jesus Seminar. He is currently co-chair of Westar's Christianity Seminar. Among his 14 published books are *A New New Testament: A Bible for the 21st Century & Newly Discovered Texts* (2013); *A New Spiritual Home: Progressive Christianity at the Grass Roots* (2006); & *Re-imagining Life Together in America: A New Gospel of Community* (2002).

Hal will visit SE Queensland, Sydney, Perth, Albany/Denmark, & Melbourne. The New Zealand segment includes events in Auckland & Wellington and at the Sea of Faith Conference. Details of the dates he will be in each centre & the local contacts for enquiries are:

SE Queensland: 5 – 11 October.

Contact Paul Inglis, psinglis@westnet.com.au

Sydney: 11 – 18 October.

Contact, Margaret Mayman,
m.mayman@gmail.com

Perth & Albany: 18 – 25 October.

Perth contact Richard Smith,
richbert@it.net.au.

Albany/Denmark Contact, Elizabeth Burns,
elizabeth.burns@bigpond.com

Melbourne: 25 – 29 October.

Contact info@pcnvictoria.org.au
or (03) 9571 4575

Auckland: 29 October – 2 November.

Contact Glynn Cardy. glynn@stlukes.org.nz

Wellington: 3 – 5 November.

Contact Susan Jones
minister@standrews.org.nz

**Sea of Faith Conference, Silverstream:
6 – 8 November. See www.sof.org.nz or
contact Adrian Skelton,
adrian.skelton@gmail.com**

Don't miss the opportunity to hear this remarkable progressive thinker & speaker.

WHAT IS COMMON DREAMS?

COMMON DREAMS is an alliance of Australian and New Zealand kindred organisations which promote the study, discussion and implementation of Progressive Christian and other progressive religious streams of thought and action. Its principal method of pursuing these objectives is through its major "Common Dreams" conferences which are held each three years plus the promotion of visits by leading international scholars and the sale and distribution of the materials that result from these activities.

Professor Hal Taussig, the highly respected theologian, scholar, writer and Westar Fellow, will undertake a speaking tour of Australia and New Zealand during October and November 2017 under the "Common Dreams on the Road"

The fifth Common Dreams Conference will be held in Sydney in July 2019. Matthew Fox will feature as the distinguished international keynote speaker. More details at
<http://www.commondreams.org.au/index.php/events>.

From <http://www.historyguide.org/earlymod/lecture5c.html>

THE CATHOLIC REFORMATION

Jesuits and the Counter-Reformation

In 2013, Jorge Mario Bergoglio became the first Jesuit Pope, taking the name Pope Francis.

MEMBERS OF THE SOCIETY OF JESUS ARE CALLED JESUITS.



Ignatius of Loyola, a Basque nobleman from the Pyrenees area of northern Spain, founded the society after discerning his spiritual vocation while recovering from a wound sustained in the Battle of Pamplona. He composed the *Spiritual Exercises* to help others follow the teachings of Jesus Christ.

In 1534, Ignatius and six other young men, including Francis Xavier gathered and professed vows of poverty, chastity, and later obedience, including a special vow of obedience to the Pope in matters of mission direction and assignment. Ignatius's plan of the order's organization was approved by Pope Paul III in 1540 by a bull (charter) containing the "Formula of the Institute".

Ignatius was a nobleman who had a military background, and the members of the society were supposed to accept orders anywhere in the world, where they might be required to live in extreme conditions. Accordingly, the opening lines of the founding document declared that the society was founded for "whoever desires to serve as a soldier of God to strive especially for the defence and propagation of the faith and for the progress of souls in Christian life and doctrine." Jesuits are thus sometimes referred to colloquially as "God's soldiers", "God's marines", or "the Company", which evolved from references to Ignatius' history as a soldier and the society's commitment to accepting orders anywhere and to endure any conditions. The society participated in the Counter-Reformation and, later, in the implementation of the Second Vatican Council.

The society is engaged in evangelization and apostolic ministry in 112 nations on six continents. Jesuits work in education (founding schools, colleges, universities, and seminaries), intellectual research, and cultural pursuits. Jesuits also give retreats, minister in hospitals and parishes, sponsor direct social ministries, and promote ecumenical dialogue.

COUNTER-REFORMATION: AND THE COUNCIL OF TRENT

Pope Paul III (1534–1549) is considered the first pope of the Counter-Reformation, and he also initiated the Council of Trent (1545–1563), a commission of cardinals tasked with institutional reform, addressing contentious issues such as corrupt bishops and priests, indulgences, and other financial abuses.

The Council upheld the basic structure of the Medieval Church, its sacramental system, religious orders, and doctrine. It rejected all compromise with the Protestants, restating basic tenets of the Roman Catholic faith. The Council upheld salvation appropriated by grace through faith *and* works of that faith (not just by faith, as the Protestants insisted) because "faith without works is dead", as the Epistle of St. James states (2:22–26).

From Wikipedia:

The Baroque is a period of artistic style that used exaggerated motion and clear, easily interpreted detail to produce drama, tension, exuberance, and grandeur in sculpture, painting, architecture, literature, dance, theatre, and music.

The style began around 1600 in Rome and Italy, and spread to most of Europe. The popularity and success of the Baroque style was encouraged by the Catholic Church, which had decided at the time of the Council of Trent, in response to the Protestant Reformation, that the arts should communicate religious themes with direct and emotional involvement.

The aristocracy viewed the dramatic style of Baroque art and architecture as a means of impressing visitors by projecting triumph, power, and control. Baroque palaces were built around an entrance of courts, grand staircases, and reception rooms of sequentially increasing opulence. However, "baroque" has a resonance and application that extend beyond a simple reduction to either a style or period.

CHRONOLOGY OF THE TEMPESTUOUS YEARS 1966–1970

Professor Sir Lloyd Geering

In 2007, The St Andrew's Trust for the Study of Religion and Society presented a one-day seminar dealing with the events of the "heresy" trial of 1967. This article draws on one of the documents which resulted from that seminar.

The Outlook, the weekly magazine of the Presbyterian Church of New Zealand, invited Lloyd Geering to write an article for Reformation Day, October 31, 1965. This was published on September 25, as 'Is a New Reformation Possible?'

To this Bob Blaikie responded with two articles:

- March 5, 1966: 'A Disastrous Misunderstanding'
- March 19, 1966: 'The Religious Road to Atheism'

In the meantime *The Outlook* had invited Lloyd to write an Easter article. This appeared on April 2, 1966 as: 'What does the Resurrection Mean?' This led to such a spate of letters in *The Outlook* and a private meeting of the Presbytery Auckland, that several metropolitan dailies then published the Easter article in full.

Lloyd tried to explain the background to the debate with four articles in *The Outlook*.

- June 25: 'Knowledge or Faith – that is the Question!'
- July 9: 'The Empty Tomb – Fact or Fiction?'
- July 23: 'The Westminster Confession – Our Master or our Servant?'
- August 6: 'The Word of God and the Bible'

In September the NZ Association of Presbyterian Laymen was formed to "counter the liberal theology emanating from the Theological Hall". It subsequently held meetings throughout the country (the one in Invercargill breaking up in disorder).



The Association, said to have already gained 4,000 members, advertised in October in the metropolitan newspapers seeking further support and announcing its intention to petition the coming General Assembly to reaffirm certain basic beliefs.

In November the General Assembly, after a long debate, approved a statement prepared by the Doctrine Committee. This appeared to resolve the issue to the satisfaction of most by asserting, "God raised Jesus Christ in triumph over sin and death to reign with the Father as sovereign over all." (The question of what 'raising from the dead' means was conveniently ignored, even though it was what sparked off the controversy). On the following Sunday 111,000 copies of an 8-page Assembly News, giving a full report of the Assembly, along with its message to the church, were made available for every Presbyterian.

In March 1967 Lloyd was invited to preach at Wesley Methodist Church, Wellington, to mark the opening of the academic year for Victoria University of Wellington. A journalist selected from this sermon on Ecclesiastes the statement, 'Man has no immortal soul', and headlined it in the next morning's *Dominion*. Public controversy immediately broke out again and with even greater intensity.

Bob Wardlaw, chairman of the New Zealand Laymen's Association, called immediately for Lloyd's resignation.

Because of the widespread public discussion that followed for months on end, several newspapers published the sermon in full.

The Laymen's Association then prepared a statement of charges of doctrinal error that it wished to bring against Lloyd and met with officials of the General Assembly, seeking a special meeting of the Assembly. The latter, after consideration, decided not to call a special meeting.

[In September 2017, Lloyd offered this addition: "About April 1967, the Moderator asked me not to speak in public about the controversy. That is why my address to Canterbury students was delivered to what was declared to be a private gathering."]

About August Lloyd was warned by the Moderator that charges were to be laid against him at the next General Assembly, by Bob Wardlaw and Bob Blaikie, but this news did not become public until October. (Lloyd's permission was sought for this to be done, since by church procedure it should have been before a Presbytery, leaving the Assembly to be used, if necessary, as a Court of Appeal.)

On November 3, 1967, at Assembly, Bob Wardlaw and Bob Blaikie were allowed forty-five minutes each to present their respective cases. Bob Wardlaw accused Lloyd of serious doctrinal error, while Bob Blaikie, often not agreeing with Bob Wardlaw, accused Lloyd of disturbing the peace of the church. Lloyd was allowed ninety minutes to reply to the charges on the following Monday morning. On the Monday afternoon the Assembly entered into debate, rarely referring to the charges and the response, but chiefly concerning itself with how best to handle the situation from a pastoral point of view. Finally, by a large majority, the Assembly 'judged no doctrinal error had been established, dismissed the charges, and declared the case closed.' Once again the Assembly prepared a pastoral letter to be read to all congregations.

The aftermath

Early in 1967 Hodder and Stoughton had invited Lloyd to write a book about the controversy. He wrote this during 1967, while the controversy was continuing. It was published in April 1968 as *God in the New World*.

Before this was even published, Hodder and Stoughton invited Professor E.M. Blaiklock to write a response and this was published in October

1968 as *Layman's Answer, An Examination of The New Theology*.

R.J.Nicholson, vicar of Ngaruawahia, wrote *Empty Tomb or Empty Faith?*

In 1969 a Marist Father, P.J.Gifford, wrote *Professor Geering in Perspective*.

In request for a monograph to be used in school by seventh formers, Lloyd wrote and published *God in the Twentieth Century*.

In 1970 Bob Blaikie published *Secular Christianity and God who Acts*.

In 1971 Lloyd published *Resurrection — A Symbol of Hope*.

During 1970 Lloyd was invited to spend a week in Brisbane (where he had taught Old Testament Studies, 1956-60), speaking to congregations, ministers, students and public meetings. In a thirty-minute programme on prime time television, he answered fifty-five questions thrown to him by four journalists. A transcript of this was sent to his New Zealand critics, who brought their concerns to the General Assembly and persuaded the Assembly to dissociate itself from his views. In effect, though not in words, it reversed the decision of the 1967 Assembly.

Four weeks later Victoria University of Wellington announced that it would appoint Lloyd to be the Foundation Professor of Religious Studies.

COMMEMORATING THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY

As part of a series of events on "Courage and Speaking Out", under the auspices of The St Andrew's Trust for the Study of Religion and Society, a recollection of Lloyd Geering's "Heresy Trial" will be held on the 50th anniversary of that trial at St Andrews on the Terrace, Wellington starting at 5:30pm on Friday 3 November, 2017.

It will start with brief addresses by Prof Lloyd Geering and Prof Hal Taussig, followed by a Question and Answer session.

There will be further events on Saturday 4 November at St Andrews, starting at 9:30 am.

See www.satrs.org.nz/events/ for finalised details.

The above-mentioned events occur a few days before the annual Sea of Faith Conference which reviews the effects of the earlier "heretic" Martin Luther, details of which can be seen at www.sof.org.nz/



Sea of Faith Network (New Zealand)

Nomination Form for the Steering Committee

A four year term

We wish to nominate (Please print name) -----

Proposed by (Please print) _____

(Signature) _____

Seconded by (Please print) _____

(Signature) _____

I hereby agree to stand for the position

Signed _____

Dated _____

Send the form to the Secretary (preferably with a brief CV) to

**Lynne Tasker
56 Tahi Terrace
Glen Eden
AUCKLAND**

Or hand it to her at Conference, before the start of the AGM.

The Reformation Theatre

This map is part of a summary of the events of the Reformation precipitated by Martin Luther on 31 October 1517. You can read a more detailed account at <http://www.sof.org.nz/lutherprotoref.pdf>

