



# EFM Matters

October 2022

## Thank You Valda

In the mid 2010's, not long after EfM(NZ) moved to a new four year programme that the University of the South, Sewanee, Tennessee had developed, the role of Executive Officer became vacant and a woman of many talents based in Taranaki decided to apply. Enter Valda McBeth. I'm not sure she realised she would be in the role as long as she was!

Valda came on board with a background in administration, a member of a committed faith community in Taranaki, and seeking a challenge – she got it! Not only did she become EO, she then undertook the four year course, then became a mentor, then a trainer. She put time and energy into developing the relationships with Sewanee, other mentors and trainers, and trying always to find ways of spreading the word about EfM – which hasn't been easy. She attended international gatherings at Sewanee, streamlined our processes and when a pandemic hit in 2020, helped us as a board to keep going. She was always professional in what she did, and as a board we valued her persistence. Her own ministry in this role and outside of EfM grew and developed, and we are thankful Valda has stayed on as long as she did. She did this while also working part time in another role with Cancer NZ in Taranaki. Constantly Valda sought to find ways for EfM to connect, engage and evolve around the country.

The last nearly three years has been particularly tough as the world has navigated a pandemic and our meetings happened more on ZOOM than in person. Valda has with grace and good humour adapted to a change in meetings and a new chair. However earlier this year she decided it was time to let go of the EO role, wanting to spend more time with Gary on their rural property.

Sadly, as Valda finished as EO, Gary died suddenly in May.

Valda thank you for continuing to assist us as we moved into a new phase with a new Administrator – I suspect not having to make your latest move with the EfM boxes was a blessing! We have grieved with you in your loss and prayed for you as you move into this next part of your life. (continued next page)

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**New EfM Mail Address** — please amend your records

**Education for Ministry**

**579 Queen St East**

**Levin 5510**

There will be another change of address in February 2023

*Please distribute this newsletter widely amongst your networks in the community*

## Thank You Valda (continued)

Valda, on behalf of the board, mentors, trainers, and participants in the programme - thank you for all you have done for EfM in Aotearoa New Zealand these past years. It has been said to me that it is hard to put into words what you have meant to us all. So true. It has been a delight to work alongside you, be mentored by you – and be kept on track as chair! For the better part of the last decade you have helped steer the good ship EfM in Aotearoa New Zealand and we have been richer for your involvement.

**Leanne Munro, Board Chair**

*Deep peace of the running wave to you, deep peace of the flowing air to you, deep peace of the quiet earth to you, deep peace of the shining stars to you, deep peace of the Son of Peace to you.*

## Thank You Andrew

At May's AGM Andrew McKean also stepped down after several terms on the Board. Andrew thank you for your attention to detail, your good humour and latterly assisting Valda when we had to do hybrid meetings in present and over zoom. It won't be the same without you!



## Introducing Michael Butler the new EFM Administrator

Michael is 70 years old. He lives in Levin but will soon be moving to Titahi Bay (more about that later). Michael has 3 adult children who live in Auckland, Wellington and South Canterbury.

Michael was brought up in Howick in the days when it was a small town – not a suburb of Auckland – and attended the Presbyterian Church. He drifted away from the church but on arriving in Wellington in the 1970s started attending Mt Victoria Presbyterian Church. While a member of the Mt Victoria parish Michael was one of the founding trustees of Mt Victoria Housing Trust, now Dwell Housing Trust, which continues to provide affordable housing.

Michael's sport is Dog Agility and he has competed for nearly 30 years with a number of dogs throughout New Zealand including seven years as an Agility Judge. He established one of the first websites for Dog Agility in New Zealand and is still results recorder for a national monthly competition.

Michael has 3 dogs, who have all 'participated' in weekly EfM Seminars!

Idol is a 10year old Heading Dog, Toby, a rehomed dog, is a 10 year old Huntaway/Terrier cross and Static is a tiny 2 year old Papillion.

Michael had a 43 year career as a computer programmer – the last 23 years working for New Zealand banks on credit card systems in a senior role. He became a programmer by chance as a result of a looming dismissal in a job he was doing badly. At the time, the Post Office had paid for a person to go on a 10 week pressure cooker course to become a programmer but then couldn't find a person to send. God sometimes works in strange ways.

Michael did the EfM course in the early 1980s and did one year as a mentor following on from that. In 2019 Michael enrolled in EFM again at Wellington Cathedral. Retirement was approaching and Michael had a number of options and used EfM as a way of discerning which of these to choose. Michael is now engaged to Sarah Crawford, who was also doing EfM at the cathedral, and they will marry early in 2023. He is part of the Lower Hutt EfM group and in his final year of the course.

Michael currently worships at St Andrew's Anglican Church in Plimmerton or Levin Uniting Church. He describes himself as a monotheist by belief and a Christian by culture.

We welcome Michael into his new role.

## EDUCATION FOR MINISTRY

*Fertile ground to grow your faith*

Like the mustard seed, we need fertile soil to grow. Education for Ministry (EfM) is like that fertile soil and we are the mustard seeds.

Learning about the Old and New Testaments, church history, and discovering theology is the light shining on the soil, warming it so the seed will sprout.



### **Thinking about EFM?**

Do you want to know more about EFM?

Are you keen to join or start a new EFM Group?

Please contact Mike, we would love to hear from you.

Phone 021 246 0672

Email: [educationforministrynz@outlook.com](mailto:educationforministrynz@outlook.com)



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