



Te Pīhopatanga o Aotearoa
Mō te Oranga Ake o te iwi, o te ao

*Ngā inoi me ngā whaiwhakaaro kua whakaritea
hei inoitanga, hei whakaarotanga
mō Te Hui Amorangi ki Te Waipounamu katoa
atu i tēnei wā tae rawa ki te wā e tū ai te Rūnanga Tohu
ki te whiriwhiri i te Pīhopa hou.*

HE KARANGA KI NGĀ MEMA ME NGĀ WHAKAMINENGA A TE HUI AMORANGI KI TE WAIPOUNAMU

For the next three weeks, from the 2nd to the 22nd of February 2026, members and congregations in Te Hui Amorangi ki Te Waipounamu are humbly called to enter into a time of prayerful consideration and reflection in the lead up to formal nominations being submitted for confirmation before the upcoming Electoral College to be held in April.

Karakia and reflections based on the appointed Gospel readings for each Sunday during this time are provided here as a resource to support congregations in their collective prayerful consideration.

We invite congregations to share these karakia and reflections as part of their Sunday Service.

Kia tau ngā manaakitanga a te Atua aroha ki a koutou, ki a tātou katoa hoki.



The Most Reverend Dr Donald Steven Tamihere
Te Pihopa o Aotearoa
Commissary for the Electoral College

HE INOI MO TE MAHI TAPU A TE RŪNANGA TOHU O TE HUI AMORANGI KI TE WAPOUNAMU

E te Ariki, nau nei te kī ko koe hei hoa mō tāu iwi whakapono i ngā rā katoa, a, ki te mutunga rā anō o te ao:

Titiro atawhai mai inaianei ki tēnei wāhi o tāhau Hāhi. Tohutohungia hoki te Rūnanga Tohu o tēnei Hui Amorangi i te mea e anga ana ki te whiriwhiri i tetahi pononga pai hei hēpara mō tōnei wahi o tāhau māra waina, kia whiriwhiria ai ko tāhau e pai ai, he hēpara pono e kakama tonu ana ki te kauwhau i te Rongopai, ki te tautoko i te mea ngoikore, ki te whakamārie i te ngākau iro, ki te rapu i te mea ngaro, ki te whāngai i āu tangata ki te kai i te wā e tika ai.

Whakarongo ki a mātou, e te Ariki, e Ihu, e ora nā, e kingi tahi nā me te Matua, me te Wairua Tapu, ā, ake ake,

Āmine.

TE WĀTAKA ME TE TUKANGA A TE RŪNANGA TOHU

*TIMELINE FOR THE ELECTORAL COLLEGE PROCESS IN TE
HUI AMORANGI KI TE WAIPOUNAMU*

2026

16 Jan Formal Notice of Vacancy

2-22 Feb Call to Time of Prayer and Reflection

Te Hui Amorangi ki Te Waipounamu is called to three weeks of prayer and reflection to collective discernment.

The karakia, readings, and reflections in this document are provided here as a supporting resource.

9 Feb Nomination & Screening Forms Available

Nominations must come from recognised local and regional groupings within Te Hui Amorangi ki Te Waipounamu, as confirmed by the Commissary

9am 23 Feb Formal Call for Nominations

Submission are open

5pm 4 Mar Nominations Close

Nominations close with a hard deadline of 5pm and must include all the information requested

4-26 Mar Vetting and Screening Process

Formal vetting and screening will be overseen by a sub-committee, and includes Police, VCA, Health and Psychological testing. Vetting and screening costs are to be paid by the nominee and/or nominating group.

27 Mar Candidates Publicly Announced
Electoral College Membership Confirmed

17-18 Apr Electoral College Convenes

The Electoral College will discern confirmed nominees

6-7 June Ordination / Installation (dates TBC)

TE HUI AMORANGI KI TE WAIPOUNAMU

Te Hui Amorangi ki Te Waipounamu is one of five episcopal units that comprise Te Pihopatanga o Aotearoa, the Māori Anglican Church in Aotearoa-New Zealand. It serves the region of Te Waipounamu (the South Island) including Rakiura (Stewart Island) and Rēkohu/Wharekauri (the Chatham Islands).

Historically, Te Hui Amorangi ki Te Waipounamu has arranged itself across seven regions including Te Tau Ihu o Te Waka, Whakatū, Motueka, Te Tai Poutini, Ōtautahi, Ōtepoti, and Murihiku, though new ministry units and mission areas continue to be developed.

The first Pihopa in Te Hui Amorangi ki Te Waipounamu was The Rt Rev John Gray, who served from 1996 until his passing in November 2015. He was followed by The Rt Rev Richard Wallace, who was the first Pihopa of Ngāi Tahu descent to serve in Te Waipounamu. Bishop Richard was ordained in January 2017, and passed away in office in January 2024.

Following a time of mourning and thanksgiving for the life and ministry of its previous Pihopa, Te Hui Amorangi ki Te Waipounamu now turns itself to the task of prayerful consideration and discernment to seek and choose its next Pihopa.

GUIDELINES FOR NOMINATIONS

Under newly adopted guidelines, nominations must be made collectively. They must come from recognised local or regional groupings within the Hui Amorangi, such as pāriha, rohe, pastorates, vestries, or kōmīti tiaki, and not just from two nominators as has been the practice in the past. This will help ensure that candidates are proposed by and have the support of their wider church community, informed by careful prayer and reflection, whakapapa and strong relationship ties.

Nominees will need to:

Provide written acknowledgement that they have read and understood *He Aratohunga Pihopa* (the Handbook for Pihopa);

- Complete formal nomination forms as provided;
- Provide a CV including an overview of their ministry with a particular focus on the last 5 years;
- Provide a “Safe to Receive” and/or endorsement from the current licensing Pihopa;
- Undergo formal vetting and screening, including Police, VCA, medical, psychological and/or psychometric, and forensic reporting of online activity. The cost of professional fees for these services must be met by the nominee and/or their nominating group.

Formal nomination forms and supporting documents will be made available on 9 February 2026 via the Te Hui Amorangi o Te Waipounamu Facebook Group and the Te Pihopatanga o Aotearoa website.

Formal nomination submissions will be accepted from 9am 23 February to 5pm 4 March 2026. No further nominations will be accepted after this time. Pending satisfactory completion of vetting and screening, candidates will be publicly announced on 27 March 2026

ĒTAHI INOI TUKU MŌ TE WĀ NEI

Mō tētahi tangata ngākau pai hei Pīhopa hōu

E te Atua aroha, Ora tonu,
Whakarongo atawhai mai rā ki ngā inoi o ēnei pononga āu;

Tukua mai ki a mātou he tangata ngākau pai hei Pīhopa hōu mō mātou:
he pononga ia e rite ana ki tāu e pai ai, he kaimahi tūturu e
taea ai ki ngā āhua katoa a tōu aroha nui:

he manawanui, he atawhai,
e kore e hae, e kore e
whakahīhī kino, e kore e
whakapehapeha, kaore ona
tikanga whanokē, e kore e
whai ki āna ake, e kore e
riri wawe, e kore e
whakairi kino, e kore e
hari ki te hē,
engari ka hari tahi ia me te pono;

Meatia ia hei hēpara pai e whakapau ai tona ngakau, tona wairua, me tona hinengaro ki
te aroha ki a koe, ki te aroha hoki ki tāu iwi whakapono,

Ko Ihu Karaiti hoki to matou Ariki, **Āmine.**

Mō ngā whakaminenga me te Rūnanga Tohu o Te Hui Amorangi ki Te Waipounamu

E te Atua Kaha rawa,
e kāwana nei i ngā mea katoa o te rangi me te whenua,

Titiro atawhai mai rā ki a mātou e tuku inoi atu nei ki a koe;

Tukua mai ki a mātou ngā whakaminenga o Te Hui Amorangi ki Te Waipounamu he
ngākau hōu e taea ai mātou ki ngā mahi kua ritea nei e koe mō mātou i tenei wā;

Tukua hoki ki ngā mema katoa o te Rūnanga Tohu o Te Hui Amorangi ki Te Waipounamu he
ngākau mahara ki a koe,
kia tūpato ai tō rātou whiriwhiri i te Pīhopa hōu mō
tēnei wāhi o tāu Hāhi puta noa;
kia āraia atu i a ratou te hae, te riri, me te whakaaro hē e
wareware ai rātou ki tāu e pai ai,
engari kia piri ai rātou ki te tapu o tōu Wairua me te tika o tōu whakaoranga;

Ko Ihu Karaiti hoki to matou Ariki,

Āmine.

ĒTAHI WHAI WHAKAAROTANGA MŌ TE WĀ NEI

Reflections based on the appointed Gospel readings for Sundays 8, 15, and 22 February, to be shared by congregations as part of the Sunday Service.

SUNDAY 8 FEBRUARY 2026

The Gospel Reading – Matthew 5:13-20

<p>¹³ Ko koutou te tote o te whenua: otirā ki te hemo te hā o te tote, mā te aha e whai tikanga tote ai? Heoi anō tōna painga, na ka akiritia ki waho, ka takahia e nga tangata.</p> <p>¹⁴ Ko koutou te whakamarama o te ao. E kore e ngaro te pā e tū ana i runga maunga.</p> <p>¹⁵ E kore hoki e tahuna te rama, e whakatūria ki raro o te mēhua, engari ki runga ki te tūranga; a ka tiaho ki ngā tāngata katoa i roto i te whare.</p> <p>¹⁶ Waihoki, kia tiaho tō koutou marama ki te aroaro o ngā tāngata, kia kite ai rātou i a koutou hanga pai, kia whakakorōria ai i tō koutou Matua i te rangi.</p> <p>¹⁷ Kei mea koutou i haere mai ahau ki te whakakāhore i te ture, i ngā poropiti rānei; kīhai ahau i haere mai ki te whakakāhore, engari ki te whakatutuki.</p> <p>¹⁸ He tino pono hoki tāku e mea nei ki a koutou, pāhemo noa te rangi me te whenua, e kore tētahi tongi, tētahi tohu ranei o te ture e pāhemo, kia rite katoa rā anō.</p> <p>¹⁹ Nā, ki te whakakāhore tētahi i tētahi mea iti rawa o ēnei kupu ako, ā, ka ako i ngā tāngata kia pērā, ka kīia ia ko te iti rawa i te rangatiratanga o te rangi: engari ki te whakaritea e tētahi, ki te whakaakona, ka kīia ia he nui i te rangatiratanga o te rangi.</p> <p>²⁰ Ko tāku kupu hoki tēnei ki a koutou, ki te kore e nui ake tā koutou mahi tika i tā ngā karaipi rātou ko ngā Parihi, e kore rawa koutou e tapoko ki te rangatiratanga o te rangi.</p>	<p>¹³ ‘You are the salt of the earth; but if salt has lost its taste, how can its saltiness be restored? It is no longer good for anything but is thrown out and trampled underfoot.</p> <p>¹⁴ ‘You are the light of the world. A city built on a hill cannot be hidden.</p> <p>¹⁵ No one after lighting a lamp puts it under the bushel basket, but on the lampstand, and it gives light to all in the house.</p> <p>¹⁶ In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven.</p> <p>¹⁷ ‘Do not think that I have come to abolish the law or the prophets; I have come not to abolish but to fulfil.</p> <p>¹⁸ For truly I tell you, until heaven and earth pass away, not one letter, not one stroke of a letter, will pass from the law until all is accomplished.</p> <p>¹⁹ Therefore, whoever breaks one of the least of these commandments, and teaches others to do the same, will be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but whoever does them and teaches them will be called great in the kingdom of heaven.</p> <p>²⁰ For I tell you, unless your righteousness exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven.</p>
---	---

Gospel Reflection

“He pono te kōrero: “Ki te hiahia tētahi ki te mahi pīhopa, e hiahia ana ia ki te mahi pai.””

These are the words of the Apostle Paul in his letter to a young, aspiring leader called Timothy: “This saying is true – If you aspire to the work of a bishop” he said, “you aspire to a good thing.”

Some translations of this verse might give us the idea that merely wanting to *be* a bishop, or to *hold* the office of a bishop, is a good thing. But that’s not what Paul meant.

As Paul said in another letter: “Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others as more significant than yourselves.”

It’s not the *title* or the *office* of a bishop that is worthy of aspiration. Instead, Paul said it’s the *mahi*. It’s the *mahi*, and nothing else.

But what is the *mahi* of a bishop?

The ordinal says that they are to lead by example, to be Christ’s shepherd, seeking out and caring for those in need. They are to heal and reconcile, uphold justice, and strive for peace.

They are to exercise godly leadership, to maintain wise discipline, and promote peace and unity among all God’s people.

They are to encourage obedience to God’s word, to keep the Church true to its faith, and to teach this faith and proclaim it. They are to ordain, send forth and care for the Church’s pastors, and to preside over its worshipping life.

The *mahi* of a Bishop is a high calling.

Further, we know that the *mahi* of a modern Bishop includes being faithful and fruitful in the stewardship of ministries and church resources, operating with competence in high-level governance and management, fulfilling canonical, legal, and fiduciary obligations,

The *mahi* of a Bishop is to be a safe person, who in turn can keep the Church safe as well.

Add to that the *mahi* that comes with being a modern Māori Bishop – using Te Paipera Tapu and the Tikanga Karakia of Te Hāhi Mihinare to bring hope and healing to whānau, hapū, and iwi, upholding the best of our reo and tikanga, our mātauranga, and our Mihinaretanga with care and compassion. All while maintaining their call as a Gospel servant to seek and serve the last, the lost, and the least, and empowering and supporting our minita and whakaminenga to be and do the same.

The *mahi* of a Bishop is a life-time commitment to teaching through servanthood.

Our Gospel reading today speaks of us being salt of the earth and light of the world. What use, the reading asks, is salt that has lost its saltiness, and light that is hidden?

The answer is no use. No use at all.

Then Jesus speaks of the law and the prophets, and that he has not come to abolish them but rather to fulfil them. Then he teaches that those who break the commandments and lead others to do the same will be called the *least* in the kingdom of heaven. But whomever does the commandments and teaches them will be called great.

Jesus makes a connection here between saying and doing, and between teaching and practice. Elsewhere in the Gospels Jesus points out the hypocrisy of scribes and Pharisees who were notorious for saying one thing and doing another. They would instruct others to obey God's word, while they themselves were corrupt and entitled.

When Jesus says that our righteousness must exceed that of the scribes and Pharisees, he's saying that we must do what they did not. We must be a people who are more than merely teachers of the commandments, we must be ones who live them every day. We must be a people whose words line up with their actions. We must be a people who can do the mahi. We must be salt of the earth, and light to the world.

And our new Bishop must be the same and even more so.

The mahi of a Bishop is a high calling. The person who is called to do this mahi has an immense work in front of them. They will face challenges and pressures that are many magnitudes greater than most of us will ever have to deal with on our own. But their task will be to carry all these burdens and more with humility and compassion, and to help lead and teach us by their example to be and do the same.

Over the next three weeks Te Hui Amorangi ki Te Waipounamu will enter into a time of prayerful consideration. Our task will be to pray earnestly, honestly, and without ceasing, so that we might see God's will be done and not simply our own.

Let us pray for the leading and guidance of the Te Wairua Tapu. Let us pray for those whom God may call to become candidates, for their whānau, and for those who may nominate them. May they approach this time in sacred humility and give deep, prayerful consideration to the call of God.

Let us pray for Te Hui Amorangi ki Te Waipounamu, and for those among us who will become members of the Electoral College, tasked with discerning whomever it is that God is calling to take up the mahi of being a Bishop.

Kia tau ngā manaakitanga a te Atua aroha ki a tātou. Āmine.

SUNDAY 15 FEBRUARY 2026

The Gospel Reading – Matthew 5:21-37

<p>²¹ Kua rongo koutou, i kōrerotia ki ngā tūpuna, Kaua e patu tangata; a ki te patu tangata tētahi, ka tau te hē ki a ia.</p>	<p>²¹ ‘You have heard that it was said to those of ancient times, “You shall not murder”; and “whoever murders shall be liable to judgement.”</p>
<p>²² Nā, ko tāku kupu tēnei ki a koutou, Ki te riri noa tētahi ki tōna teina, ka tau te hē ki a ia; a ki te mea tētahi ki tōna teina, Wairangi! ka tika kia kōmititia: nā, ki te mea tētahi, Pōauau! ka tika mōna te kōpura o Kēhena.</p>	<p>²² But I say to you that if you are angry with a brother or sister, you will be liable to judgement; and if you insult a brother or sister, you will be liable to the council; and if you say, “You fool”, you will be liable to the hell of fire.</p>
<p>²³ Nā reira, ki te mauria e koe tāu whakahere ki te āta, ā, ka mahara i reira i hara koe ki tōu hoa;</p>	<p>²³ So when you are offering your gift at the altar, if you remember that your brother or sister has something against you,</p>
<p>²⁴ Waiho tāu whakahere i reira, i mua o te āta, a haere, matua houhia te rongo ki tōu teina, ka haere ai, ka mau ai i tāu whakahere.</p>	<p>²⁴ leave your gift there before the altar and go; first be reconciled to your brother or sister and then come and offer your gift.</p>
<p>²⁵ Kia hohoro te whakarite i tā kōrua kōrero ko tōu hoa tauwhāinga, i a kōrua anō i te ara, kei tukua koe e te hoa tauwhāinga ki te kaiwhakawā, a ka tukua e te kaiwhakawā ki te kātipa, a ka maka koe ki te whareherehere.</p>	<p>²⁵ Come to terms quickly with your accuser while you are on the way to court with him, or your accuser may hand you over to the judge, and the judge to the guard, and you will be thrown into prison.</p>
<p>²⁶ He pono tāku e mea atu nei ki a koe, E kore rawa koe e puta i reira, kia utua ra ano te pātene whakamutunga.</p>	<p>²⁶ Truly I tell you, you will never get out until you have paid the last penny.</p>
<p>²⁷ Kua rongo koutou, i kōrerotia, Kaua e pūremu:</p>	<p>²⁷ ‘You have heard that it was said, “You shall not commit adultery.”</p>
<p>²⁸ Nā, ko tāku kupu tēnei ki a koutou, Ki te titiro tētahi ki te wahine, he hiahia ki a ia, kua pūremu kē ia ki a ia i roto i tōna ngākau.</p>	<p>²⁸ But I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman with lust has already committed adultery with her in his heart.</p>
<p>²⁹ Ki te hē koe i tōu kanohi matau, tikarohia, maka atu: he pai kē hoki ki a koe ki te ngaro tētahi wāhi ū, ā, ka kore e maka tōu tinana katoa ki Kēhena.</p>	<p>²⁹ If your right eye causes you to sin, tear it out and throw it away; it is better for you to lose one of your members than for your whole body to be thrown into hell.</p>
<p>³⁰ Ki te hē anō hoki koe i tōu ringa matau, poutoa, maka atu: he pai kē ki te mate tētahi wāhi ū, ā, ka kore e maka tōu tinana katoa ki Kēhena.</p>	<p>³⁰ And if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away; it is better for you to lose one of your members than for your whole body to go into hell.</p>
<p>³¹ I kōrerotia anō, Ki te whakarere tētahi i tāna wahine, me hoatu ki a ia tētahi pukapuka whakarere:</p>	<p>³¹ ‘It was also said, “Whoever divorces his wife, let him give her a certificate of divorce.”</p>

<p>³² Nā, ko tāku kupu tēnei ki a koutou, Ki te whakarere tētahi i tāna wahine, hāunga mō te take moepuku, e mea ana ia i te wahine kia pūremu: ā, ki te mārena tētahi i te wahine i whakarerea, e pūremu ana ia.</p> <p>³³ Kua rongo anō koutou, i kōrerotia ki ngā tūpuna, Kaua e oatī teka, engari me whakamana au oatī ki te Ariki:</p> <p>³⁴ Nā, ko tāku kupu tēnei ki a koutou, Kaua rawa tētahi mea e oatitia; kaua te rangi, ko tō te Atua torona hoki ia:</p> <p>³⁵ Kaua hoki te whenua; ko te tūranga hoki tera o ūna waewae: kaua hoki a Hiruhārama; ko te pā hoki tērā o te Kīngi nui.</p> <p>³⁶ Kaua anō e oatitia tōu mātenga, e kore hoki e āhei i a koe te mea kia mā tētahi makawe, kia mangū rānei.</p> <p>³⁷ Erangi ko tēnei hei kupu mā koutou, Āe, āe; Kāhore, kāhore: nō te mea ki te maha atu i ēna, nō te kino.</p>	<p>³² But I say to you that anyone who divorces his wife, except on the ground of unchastity, causes her to commit adultery; and whoever marries a divorced woman commits adultery.</p> <p>³³ ‘Again, you have heard that it was said to those of ancient times, “You shall not swear falsely, but carry out the vows you have made to the Lord.”</p> <p>³⁴ But I say to you, Do not swear at all, either by heaven, for it is the throne of God,</p> <p>³⁵ or by the earth, for it is his footstool, or by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the great King.</p> <p>³⁶ And do not swear by your head, for you cannot make one hair white or black.</p> <p>³⁷ Let your word be “Yes, Yes” or “No, No”; anything more than this comes from the evil one.</p>
---	--

Gospel Reflection

Jesus was a brilliant teacher who knew how to lead a wānanga.

In our reading today Jesus expands on ancient commandments and teachings that were part of the whakapapa of his people. And in doing so he took something old, reinterpreted it, and used it to teach something new:

“You have heard that it was said to those of ancient times ...” he said, “But I say to you ...”

The ancient commandments and teachings in this reading relate to kaupapa that are incredibly challenging and confronting: Murder, adultery, divorce, and swearing sacred oaths falsely.

Our collective response to these things from within our own tikanga and whakapono might seem clear-cut to some: Acts that are hurtful and heinous must have serious consequences.

But to each of these things, Jesus added another dimension to challenge and teach us further.

It's as if he was saying:

You understand the ancient commandment “Thou shalt not murder” and that murder is clearly wrong. But what of those who fester with jealous anger and resentment in their hearts, and speak slander and vile insults? Are they life-takers of another kind?

You understand the ancient commandment “Thou shalt not commit adultery”. But do you understand that this sin is not merely of the eye or the hand, but rather it is a sin of the heart?

You understand the ancient teachings around divorce. But have you ever really considered the real people involved, and the moral and spiritual consequences of it all?

You understand the ancient teachings around swearing oaths falsely. So why swear an oath on things that you do not control? Instead, let your own “Yes” be “Yes”, and your own “No” be “No”. Stand on the integrity of your own words and actions before God, or swear no oath at all.

Jesus knew how to lead a wānanga. And Jesus, as always, was trying to draw his listeners beyond the performative and get to the heart of the matter.

As we continue as a Hui Amorangi with our time of prayerful consideration, we may reflect on the task that lies ahead for whomever God calls to be our new Pīhopa.

Our Pīhopa will have to face challenging and confronting kaupapa, sometimes with us and sometimes alone.

We hope that our new Pīhopa will be able to lead us in wānanga, weaving our whakapapa and whakapono together in new and innovative ways.

We hope that our new Pīhopa will help us to pay more attention to the sacred, and to our own underlying attitudes, and to be more compassionate and common-sense about it all.

We know that when the members of our Electoral College gather in April, they will have the sacred task of discerning through Te Wairua Tapu whom this new Pīhopa will be. We must pray for them, and for whomever the candidates might be.

This is our wānanga. May we take the time to weave our whakapapa and whakapono together like Jesus did, so that we can look beyond the performative and get to the heart of the matter.

May we also find with God's blessing a Pīhopa who can be a rangatira among us as Bishop Manu Bennett, the third Pīhopa o Aotearoa, once described:

*Ko te kai a te rangatira, he kōrero
Ko te tohu o te rangatira he manaaki
Te mahi a te rangatira he whakatira i te iwi*

Kia tau ngā manaakitanga a te Atua aroha ki a tātou katoa. Āmine.

SUNDAY 22 FEBRUARY 2026

The Gospel Reading – Matthew 4:1-11

1 Me i reira ka arahina a Ihu e te Wairua ki te koraha, kia whakamatautauria e te rewera.	1 Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil.
2 A, nō ka whā tekau ngā rā ka whā tekau ngā pō i nohopuku ai, muri iho ka hiakai.	2 He fasted for forty days and forty nights, and afterwards he was famished.
3 Nā, ka tae te kaiwhakamātautau ki a ia, ka mea, Ki te mea ko te Tama koe a te Atua, kīia iho kia meinga ēnei kōhatu hei taro.	3 The tempter came and said to him, ‘If you are the Son of God, command these stones to become loaves of bread.’
4 Nā, ka whakahoki ia, ka mea, Kua oti te tuhituhi, E kore e ora te tangata i te taro kau, engari i ngā kupu katoa e puta mai ana i te māngai o te Atua.	4 But he answered, ‘It is written, “One does not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.”’
5 Me i reira ka kawe te rēwera i a ia ki te pā tapu, ā, whakatūria ana ia ki runga ki te keokeonga o te temepara,	5 Then the devil took him to the holy city and placed him on the pinnacle of the temple,
6 Ā, ka mea ki a ia, Ki te mea ko te Tama koe a te Atua, rere atu ki raro: kua oti hoki te tuhituhi, Ka kōrerotia iho koe e ia ki āna ānahera; mā rātou koe e hiki ake ki ō rātou ringa, kei tutuki tōu waewae ki te kōhatu.	6 saying to him, ‘If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down; for it is written,
7 Mea atu ana a Ihu ki a ia, Ka oti anō hoki te tuhituhi, Kaua e whakamātautau ki te Ariki ki tōu Atua.	“He will command his angels concerning you”, and “On their hands they will bear you up, so that you will not dash your foot against a stone.”’
8 Ka kawe anō te rēwera i a ia ki runga ki tētahi maunga tiketike rawa, ā, whakakitea ana ki a ia ngā rangatiratanga katoa o te ao, me te korōria o aua mea;	7 Jesus said to him, ‘Again it is written, “Do not put the Lord your God to the test.”’
9 Ā, mea ana ki a ia, Ko ēnei mea katoa e hoatu e ahau ki a koe, ki te tāpapa koe, ki te koropiko ki ahau.	8 Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendour;
10 Nā, ka mea a Ihu ki a ia, Haere atu, e Hātana; kua oti hoki te tuhituhi, Me koropiko koe ki te Ariki ki tōu Atua, me mahi anō ki a ia anake.	9 and he said to him, ‘All these I will give you, if you will fall down and worship me.’
11 Nā, ka mahue ia i te rēwera, ā, ka haere mai ngā anahera ka mahi mea mana.	10 Jesus said to him, ‘Away with you, Satan! for it is written,
	“Worship the Lord your God, and serve only him.”’
	11 Then the devil left him, and suddenly angels came and waited on him.

Gospel Reflection

The story we see in our reading today follows immediately after the story of the baptism of Jesus in Mt 3:13-17. Though only a few verses, the story of the baptism of Jesus contains glorious and phenomenal events.

Just as Jesus was lifted back up from the waters of baptism by his whanaunga John, the heavens opened, and the Spirit of God descended like a dove and settled upon Jesus. And then a voice from heaven spoke saying:

This is my Child, my Beloved, with whom I am well pleased!

Can you imagine what that must have been like, and how awe-inspiring it must have been to witness?

As awesome as it surely was, Jesus wasn't given much time to take it all in. In short order he was led away by the Spirit into the wilderness, and there he was sorely tested by what the Gospel of Matthew calls *the devil*.

And *the devil* it seems is in the details.

The testing of Jesus in Mt 4:1-11, or *the temptation of Jesus* as others have called it, presents three very crucial questions:

The first we may call *a question of commitment*.

Jesus was asked "If you are the Son of God, command these stones to become loaves of bread." He was asked this after fasting for forty days and nights and, as the reading says, "... he was famished."

Put another way, Jesus was being asked if he could endure, or would he give up instead at the first real hunger pain.

Jesus responded "*It is written ...*"

The second question we may call *a question of judgement*.

Jesus was placed on the pinnacle of the Temple and asked "If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down ..."

Put another way, Jesus was being asked if he had enough sound judgement to guard and protect his life's sacred calling, or would he risk it all through lack of wisdom.

Jesus replied "*It is written ...*"

The third and last question we may call *a question of character*.

Jesus was taken to a very high mountain and shown all the kingdoms of the world and their splendour. There the devil said to him “All these I will give you, if you will fall down and worship me.”

Put another way, Jesus was being asked “Can you say “No!” to false glory and riches, or can you be bought?”

Jesus answered in return “*It is written ...*”

The devil had no choice but to leave. Jesus’ commitment, his judgement, and his character could not be overcome. When he was sorely tested and tempted, he turned to the word of God and found the strength he needed to overcome.

As we conclude our time of prayerful consideration as a Hui Amorangi, we might imagine some of what lies ahead for our new Pīhopa.

Like the story of the baptism of Jesus, the election and consecration of our new Pīhopa will be a glorious and phenomenal kaupapa for us.

And like the story of the testing of Jesus in the wilderness, there can be no doubt that our new Pīhopa will soon find themselves tested and under pressure. This is the nature of ministry. Jesus went through it, and so will they. And so too will we.

Whomever we discern to be our next Pīhopa must be discerned wisely and with a deep compassion for the mahi that lies ahead of them. Their commitment, their judgement, and their character will be questioned and sorely tested at some point.

If we have discerned wisely, our Pīhopa will respond to every test by saying “*It is written ...*” And like the angels in today’s reading, we must be there to minister with aroha and deep compassion, no matter the test.

Let us not waver, but instead remain steadfast in prayer for our Hui Amorangi, for the upcoming Electoral College, and for all those who will become candidates to be discerned.

Kia tau ngā manaakitanga a te Atua aroha ki a tātou. **Āmine.**