

AOTEAROA NEW ZEALAND ASSOCIATION FOR BIBLICAL STUDIES

28th ANNUAL MEETING

Dates: 1-2 December 2025

Host: Laidlaw College, Christchurch Campus

70 Condell Avenue, Christchurch 8053, NZ

Dual mode (in-person and via Zoom)

CALL FOR PAPERS 2025

Papers are invited for either of the following **two streams**:

General Paper stream

20 min presentations + 10 min of discussion. There is no conference theme, so we welcome any topic and method related to biblical literature and its reception.

NB: A 20-minute paper is roughly 2,000 words.

Hui–Talanoa stream: A First Step in Indigenizing the Bible

In order to develop any “alter-native” approach to biblical interpretation, Nāsili Vaka'uta (“Moana Hermeneutics”, 2024) has prompted us to begin with an emphasis on contextualization: knowing where we stand, who we are, the pertinent distinctives in our Indigenous categories of thought, our Indigenous cultures and local contexts, in short, “the key issues on the ground” (whenua, fonua, fenua, vanua, fanua...). Our positions of reading are even more critical in this day and age of neo-colonialism, with the global climate crisis, geopolitics in the Pasifika region, religious fundamentalism, the influence of AI and technological advancements, the capitalist machine, rising authoritarianism, and the global ramifications of genocide and ethnic cleansing happening in Gaza. Knowing our position on the whenua/fonua/fenua/vanua/fanua entails an understanding that we occupy a position of humility and respect, appreciating the value of human life but also that of non-human animal life, and the created order, where a failure to acknowledge our fellow beings in creation perpetuates the colonial shitstems that continue to oppress and marginalise. To this end, we invite 20- to 25-minute papers centred on analysis of some aspect of our local contexts throughout Te Moana-nui-a-Kiwa: Indigenous stories, worldviews, concepts, and lived experiences that should be included in te tumu (the foundations) of a distinctively Māori or Pasifika form of biblical interpretation.

Submission of proposals – both streams

Please include

1. your preferred stream: paper or hui–talanoa
2. a title
3. an abstract (100–150 words)
4. name(s) of presenter(s) and (if applicable) institutional affiliation(s)
5. whether you will attend in-person or via Zoom
6. Please indicate if you would like to be considered for a scholarship (see overleaf).

Send to Katie Marcar at: katie.marcar@otago.ac.nz

Proposals should be received by 27 September 2025 – though early proposals are most welcome!

2025 CONFERENCE FEATURES

ANZABS Postgraduate Scholarships

2 x \$200 scholarships for postgraduate students to attend the conference in person and present their research. These will be paid to the recipients upon confirmation of attendance at the conference.

Scholarship Eligibility

Applicants for the scholarships must be enrolled in or a recent (within 1 year) graduate of a New Zealand postgraduate degree, i.e., Masters, PhD, or equivalent. An applicant may apply for both a scholarship and the essay prize. Only postgraduates who are presenting at the conference in person may apply for a scholarship. Indicate that you are applying for a scholarship when you submit your paper proposal and provide eligibility information in the same email (see previous page).

Judith E. McKinlay Memorial Essay Prize

The inaugural Judith E. McKinlay Memorial Essay Prize of \$400 will be awarded to a postgraduate student essay as determined by the ANZABS Executive Committee. It will be awarded at the conference.

Prize Eligibility

Applicants for the essay prize must be enrolled in, or a recent (within 1 year) graduate of, a New Zealand postgraduate degree, i.e., Masters, PhD, or equivalent. An applicant may apply for both a scholarship and the essay prize.

Essay Criteria

The essay should be 5,000-8,500 words, inclusive of footnotes. The essays will be judged on significance of research and clarity of communication. All essays will receive constructive written feedback from the judges. The essay topic or an aspect of it should be presented at the conference as either a general paper or a hui/talanoa.

Essay Submission

Send to Jonathan Robinson at: jonathan.robinson@carey.ac.nz by 27th September 2025. Please give eligibility information in the covering email.

CONFERENCE REGISTRATION

- Further details on registration and conference arrangements will be sent out in early October.
- Registration fees (including morning and afternoon teas):
 - \$50 waged
 - \$25 online only and/or unwaged
 - Payable online via bank deposit in the ANZABS account 12-3125-0475839-00, using your surname as reference.
 - If you require a receipt, contact the ANZABS treasurer, Philip Church, at PChurch@laidlaw.ac.nz.
 - Or, payable at the conference by EFTPOS.
- An optional conference dinner will be held on the Monday evening, venue to be announced, pay individually for what you order.

Please share this call for papers widely, and do especially encourage graduate students to consider offering a paper. We look forward to seeing you at Laidlaw College in Christchurch.

Katie Marcar
(on behalf of the ANZABS Executive)