

Kia ora tātou,

My name is Brett Reid and I lead a youth group called Merge Youth. Merge Youth is a faith-based youth group run out of Khandallah Presbyterian Church, in partnership with Ngaio Union and Wadestown Presbyterian Churches and we provide youth ministry for the young people of the Western suburbs of Wellington. We're the new kids on the block, having pitched our tent in the mighty hills of Wellington only a year ago!



Let me start off first by expressing our immense gratitude to the Mission Resourcing Office of Te Haahi Weteriana o Aotearoa for enabling us to take a group of young people to the Presbytery Central Easter Camp held at El Rancho in Waikanae, on the Kapiti Coast. It is my pleasure to submit this story and the adjoined images from Easter Camp.



And what a trip it was!! But I'll let our young people tell you what they thought:

"EC has been an amazing opportunity for me to take time out and start to develop and make sense of my relationship with God as well as meet lots of great people!" (Alice, 17 years.)

"Easter camp was a great way for us to draw closer and recognise the gifts we have." (Alex, 17 years.)

This was Merge Youth's inaugural trip to Easter Camp and a team of ten young people, one of my leaders, and myself joined in with 150 other Presbyterian and Uniting young people from the lower North Island in celebrating Easter together. We met at El Rancho on Friday afternoon, where we were introduced to our keynote speaker, Al Ronberg, a teacher from St Kentigern's in Auckland who guided us over five sessions through the story of Easter; from Jesus' walk to the cross through to His resurrection. Al's focus was mainly on the "what we do once we're





back from Easter Camp”, in and amongst ‘normal’ life again, which was quite a refreshing contrast to the usual hype that is built up at some of these bigger camps! The “so what do we do now?” that is usually unaddressed by some speakers leaves us, as youth pastors and leaders, with quite a tricky job on our hands, haha. Al’s chats, on the other hand, felt really genuine, and if you want to know what I mean by that, then you’ll have to come and have a chat! 😊

Alongside the marvelous teaching our young people were kept well and truly busy with plenty of team games – wide games and Top Town – delicious food, some top-notch elective and free-time activities, and plenty of laughs from the amazing MCs. In contrast, there was a lovely opportunity on the Saturday evening to interact with various prayer stations situated around camp that had us reflect on different ways one might engage in prayer! This would be a definite addition to any Sunday morning service of worship and I’d be happy to share ideas with whoever might be interested!!

All in all, it was a successful camp. Our young people gained a lot out of the weekend away, reflecting on the Easter narrative, and wrestling with what the crucifixion and resurrection means to them and to their relationship with God.

We can’t thank you enough for your support with this project.

Yours in Christ,  
Brett Reid and Merge Youth

