

Methodist minister happy at progress following changes

By MARK BIRCH

BIG CHANGES for the Methodist church in New Plymouth are progressing well — but much remains to be done.

A year ago the church announced moves to:

- Combine the congregations of St Luke's (Westown), Fitzroy and Whiteley and the Samoan fellowship.

- Revamp extensively (over time) the Liardet St property, to form a New Plymouth Methodist Centre.

- Sell, eventually, the Westown and Fitzroy churches.

The Rev Doris Elphick, Methodist superintendent in Taranaki, said that some of those objectives had now been met.

The changes were proving to be

well worth the effort in terms of effectiveness, greater variety of worship and outreach, she said. "Things are looking good."

The congregations had been merged, but the sale of the church buildings and land at Westown and Fitzroy had not yet been completed although the buildings were no longer in use.

The Whiteley Church site in Liardet St was now named the NP Methodist Centre, but the reorganisation of buildings and improvement of car parking on the site was still to be done.

Taranaki's first official Samoan Methodist church — launched in March and headed by the Rev Fatu Tufuga, was going really well. "He is getting a really good congregation coming together; a lot of the Samoans in the district," said Mrs Elphick.