

**"elephantTV Challenges the Church to have Intelligent Conversation"
for immediate release : www.elephant.tv**

elephantTV is challenging the church to have open dialogue about issues that are important to both those inside and outside her walls. Broadcaster Pat Brittenden hosts a series of panel discussion between Christian communicators, theologians and thinkers that's unlike anything ever seen before.

Pat explains that the "*uniqueness*" of elephantTV is what makes this series so exciting. "*We've been working on this project for five years and we've found nothing quite like it in the world, our desire is that the Church will take what we have made and begin, or continue, honest, open, healthy and informed conversations around these issues.*"

Not afraid to 'ask the big questions' elephantTV's first series will consist of conversations around Same-Sex Marriage, War, Evolution and Women in Authority

elephantTV has some of the most interesting contributors ever to be brought together, "*We've got a soldier who fought in Iraq, an author explaining that there is no need to choose between a Christian faith and being gay, a peace activist who brought down the Waihopai spy base and many more intelligent interesting Christians to help flesh these issues out*", explains Brittenden, "*one of the biggest differences you'll see in elephantTV is that we are trying to educate, not convert people to any one position. Like in society, in church there are many different perspectives on all issues and we want to expose that.*"

The aim of elephantTV is to present a range of perspectives on issues that are contentious within the church. Pat Brittenden says "*We are creating easily accessible, intelligent, respectful and balanced conversations, where we have PhD's and laypeople, priests and scientists talking openly about the big issues in the church and in the world today.*" Pat also believes these conversations will be watched by those inside and outside the church "*if I've learned anything from my years in talk radio it's that everyone loves talking religion.*"

elephantTV is available for download from www.elephant.tv from Friday 18th January. Full schedule below

Ends.

Download schedule at www.elephant.TV

18th January: Same-Sex Marriage

25th January: Evolution

1st February: War

8th February: Women in Authority

For more information and for interview requests contact

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elephantTV: Selection of Series One contributors**Host Biography****pat brittenden**

Pat Brittenden is a broadcaster, blogger and commentator. Pat has a passion for news and current affairs and loves interviewing people. In his career he has been a talk radio announcer at New Zealand's most successful, largest and oldest commercial radio station Newstalk ZB, a political commentator for the 2011 election on TVNZ, and a contributor to various radio stations, blogs and media outlets. Pat is passionate about getting to the bottom of an issue and engages his audience in such a way that both parties learn from the experience.

Selected Contributor Biographies**dr. stuart edser (Same-Sex Marriage)**

Dr Stuart Edser is a Psychologist and author from Newcastle, Australia. He has degrees in psychology and education. Dr. Edser is the author of "Being Gay, Being Christian". The primary aim of his book is to explain to gay or same-sex attracted people that they can be both gay and Christian.

**adrian leason (War)**

Adrian is most well known as one of the three men tried by the NZ Government for their attack on the Waihopai Spy Base. 'Adi' took his understanding of the scripture and formed a '*conspiracy of love*' which ended in the actions of disabling the base. Calling themselves the Anzac Ploughshares, the group said at the time that they wanted to draw attention to the war in Iraq. They attacked the spy base in reaction to George Bush's statement that intercepting communications was one of the key weapons in the so-called "war on terror".

**the reverend dr sarah harris (Women in Authority)**

Sarah is a New Testament lecturer, the first woman on faculty at Carey Baptist College in its' nearly 90 year history. Sarah joined Carey in January 2012 after having completed studies for her doctorate in 2011. Her passion for the church led her into full time theological study from which she has developed a love for the New Testament. Her research interests centre in Gospel scholarship with primary interest in the narrative of Luke-Acts. Her doctorate explored the motif of the Davidic Shepherd King and how Luke portrays faithful leadership.

**rev captain paul stanaway (War)**

Although British, Rev Paul Stanaway is an Army Chaplain for the New Zealand Defence Force currently based at Burnham Military Camp. He studied a degree in Environmental Science at Lancaster University and then joined the army as a private soldier in an Infantry Regiment. After a year he transferred to the Royal Army Medical Corps and trained as a combat medic. He served in this role as a Lance Corporal in Iraq 2005-2006 and shortly after returning left the British forces and continued with training and ordination as an Anglican Priest. He studied Theology at Ridley Hall in Cambridge, U.K. and was ordained priest by Bishop David Coles in Christchurch Cathedral in December 2007.

**dr. graeme finlay (Evolution)**

Dr Graeme Finlay BSc, MSc (Honours) and PhD degrees from the University of Auckland, and a BTheol degree from the University of South Africa. Graeme is a cell biologist with thirty years in cancer research and have contributed to some 70 publications, Graeme believes that '*God is the cause of everything, but scientifically he is the explanation of nothing.*' Dr Finlay is currently a Senior Lecturer in Scientific Pathology, University of Auckland.