

St Paul's Presbyterian Church

'Partners in God's Mission of Love'
'We celebrate life in Christ. Join us on the journey'



10:00 am Service led by Rev Keith Rowe
Music led by Pam Clare

Fifth Sunday of Easter, 7th May, 2023

Call to Worship:

Gathering Prayer:

God of infinite and deepening love:

May the door of this church be wide enough to receive all who hunger for love,
all who are lonely for friendship.

**May it welcome all who have cares to unburden, thanks to express, hopes
to nurture.**

May the door of this church be narrow enough to shut out pettiness and pride,
envy and enmity.

May its threshold be no stumbling block to young, or straying feet.

May this church be for all who enter, the doorway to richer and more meaningful
life.

May the door of this church open to a community shaped by hospitality, strengthened in forgiveness and united in care for one another.

In the spirit of Jesus may our prayers be enacted among us and within us. Amen.

(Our gathering prayer is adapted from Sabbath Prayers in 'MISHKAN T'FILLAH', a Progressive Jewish Prayer Book. The words become a gift to us from first cousins in faith.)

***Hymn: Praise with joy the world's Creator**

– Words: Iona Community, Scotland; (tune 160 CH4)

Praise with joy the world's Creator,
God of justice, love and peace,
Source and end of human knowledge,
Force of greatness without cease.
Celebrate the Maker's glory
Power to rescue and release.

Praise the Son who feeds the hungry,
Frees the captive, finds the lost,
Heals the sick, upsets religion,
Fearless both of state and cost.
Celebrate Christ's constant presence
Friend and Stranger, Guest and Host.

Praise the Spirit sent among us,
Liberating truth from pride,
Forging bonds where race or gender,
Age or nation dare divide.
Celebrate the Spirit's treasure
Foolishness none dare deride.

Praise the Maker, Son and Spirit,
One God in community,
Calling Christians to embody
Oneness and diversity.

Thus, the world shall yet believe,
When shown Christ's vibrant unity.

Welcome and notices:

Bible Readings:

First reading: Psalm 31:1-5, 15-16.

The psalmist feels as though he/she is locked into tough times and cries out to God who is thought of as a rock on which he/she may stand in such a time. The image of God as like a rock on which we can stand in difficult times has strengthened many who have wondered if they will make it through life's difficulties.

Second reading: John 14: 1-14.

Is there a Way through life that brings pleasure and meaning? Thomas, a disciple who had the courage to name his doubts and questions, is unsure what that way might be for himself and for the infant church. The words of Jesus are imprinted on the Christian consciousness- Jesus is for us the true and living way. We do not have all the answers to life's questions but we have a starting point: in following the Way pioneered by Jesus we penetrate into deep and life-giving truth.

Sermon: "Friendship in the presence of difference -
Christian in a world of many faiths."

***Hymn:** In God there is no east or west (WOV 39)

In God there is no east or west,
in God no south or north,
but one great fellowship of love
throughout the whole wide earth.

In love shall true hearts everywhere
their high communion find,
God's service is the golden cord
close binding all who live.

Join hands, then, people of all faiths,
whate'er your race may be;
all children of the living God
are surely kin to me..

In love now meet both east and west,
in peace meet south and north;
all love shaped souls are one in God
throughout the whole wide earth.

(Words – John Oxenham, adapted)

Prayers for the world:

Imagine our prayers to be like a grace-soaked stone dropped into the pool of life and rippling out from that centre, touching the whole pool of humanity in ripples of grace, healing and energy for living.

The Prayer of Jesus *(sung): (WOV 676)*

**Our Father in heaven –
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.**

Give us today our daily bread.

Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us.

Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil.

**For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours,
now and for ever. Amen.**

Offering:

Prayers of Thanksgiving:

God within mystery,
God present in every moment of our living.
We give thanks for the simple things of life:

the first rays of a new day's sunshine,
the touch of a hand, a smile exchanged.

We give thanks for memories that bring pleasure,
the laughter of small children and
the wisdom of those who have lived longest,
for words that affirm and encourage,
and for words that challenge and question.

We give thanks for the comfort of a well-worn chair,
for tasty food and for rest at the end of a busy day.

**May we so know you in the simple gifts of the everyday,
that we may know you in the darkness of tough times.**

We give thanks for those who sit with us in this church today
And we pray that each of us may find fulfilment
in what we do, and in what we hope for.

We hold within our love the people of other churches in our community praying
that together and separately we may become parables of the love of Christ in this
city and beyond.

**May we see signs of your love all around us.
May our lives be a blessing to those around us.
May our doing, our praying and our speaking
reflect your love into a needy world.
In the spirit of Christ we pray, Amen.**

***Hymn: All of life is filled with wonder (Tune: Hymn to Joy, WOV 92.)**

All of life is filled with wonder, so we thank you, God of love —
For the crash of evening thunder, clearing clouds, then stars above;
For the night that turns to glowing as we feel the morning mist,
God, we praise and thank you, knowing every day we're truly blessed.

For the joy of daily waking, for the gift of each new day,
For the smell of fresh bread baking, for the sound of children's play,
For the ways we seek to serve you as we work and volunteer,
God we humbly praise and thank you for your presence with us here.

For the ways we're blessed with plenty — love and laughter, neighbours, friends,
Nature's wonders, seasons' bounty, life in you that never ends,
For the ones who've gone before us, giving witness to your way —
We rejoice in all you give us every moment, every day.
For your love in times of trouble, for your peace when things are tough,
For your help when hardships double, for your grace that is enough,
For a stranger's gentle kindness, for a doctor's healing skill —
God, we thank you that you bless us, and you bless your world as well.

For your presence in our neighbours, for your love that claims and frees.
For our talents and our labours, for our faith communities.
For your daily great surprises — poor ones lifted, lost ones found —
God, we thank you! Hope still rises, as your gifts of grace abound.

The Blessing:

The blessing of God's love be with you.
And also with you.

(The blessing is shared with those around us)

As we go,
Let us recall the way of Jesus:

Blessed are those who know their need
the grace of heaven surrounds us.

Blessed are those who weep
our tears are being wiped away.

Blessed are the humble
we are close to the sacred earth.

Blessed are those who hunger for earth's oneness
we see signs of what we seek.

Blessed are the forgiving
we are being freed from slavery to past hurts.

Blessed are the clear in heart
we live within the Living Presence.

Blessed are the peacemakers
we are born of God and serve God.

THIS WEEK'S NOTICES

Helping Today

Greeters: Penny Marshall & Jill McConnochie

Offering: Janice Tucker

Bible Reader: Anne Loan

Music: Pam Clare

Flowers: Pam Clare

Grounds: Paul Hentschel

Helping next week Sunday 14th May 2023

Greeters: Lynne & Murray Arnold

Offering: Helen McClymont

Bible Reader: Marion Fell

Music: Dorothy Finlayson

Flowers: Marian Eagle

Grounds: Bruce Tucker

Prayer Focus: Let us pray for: -

- * Ministry among us: **Care and Share**
- * Partners in God's Mission of Love: **Napier Family Centre**
- * Partners in the Napier Inner City: **Trinity Methodist Church**
- * Parishes in our Presbytery: **St Columba's Taradale**

Thanks from the Catering Team

The catering team would like to thank everyone who assisted with the catering for Ian Finlayson's funeral on Wednesday 3rd May at St Paul's. It was a privilege for us to do this for Ian. He was held in high esteem and was a vital part of the Church Community, playing an important role in Church life. We are grateful to everyone who helped to make the occasion such a success. Regards, Margaret.

May Parish Lunch

Parish Lunch Group will meet at **Thai Chef, Taradale Road**, at **noon** on **Friday, 12th May**. If you would like to join the group please contact Jill, 027 342 1282 or mcconnochie@nowmail.co.nz. Everybody welcome.

Combined Pentecost Service.

A Combined Presbyterian Church Service will be held at **St Columba's, Havelock North, on May 28th @ 4.00pm** to celebrate Pentecost. All are invited. It was great to worship together at St Andrew's a few weeks ago so this is another opportunity to reconnect.

June Newsletter contributions

We are starting to put together the next newsletter. Please forward any items or contributions to Bridget in the office stpaulsnapier@gmail.com or Pam pamclare@xtra.co.nz by Monday 22nd May at the latest. Many thanks.

Hawkes Bay Seafarers Welfare Society

HB Seafarers Welfare Society are seeking additional volunteers to staff their Centre lounge located near the port in Napier, open weekdays from 1pm to 4pm. They are also seeking person(s) who may be interested in job sharing a paid Welfare Officer position (being up to 20 hours per week each). Good presentation and communication skills are required. As this interesting position includes visiting cargo ships, a reasonable standard of fitness is necessary. Please contact the Chairman, Buster Harvey Tel 845 2925, busterh@xtra.co.nz for more information.

Cyclone Relief Fundraiser Concert

Our friends at Arohanui Church in Havelock North have asked us to promote a Cyclone Relief Fundraiser concert. **Chris Skinner** will be holding an evening of uplifting music at **7pm on Saturday 13th May**. The venue is **Arohanui Church, 81 Middle Road, Havelock North**. You can register online and prepay the \$30 entrance fee. All proceeds go towards the HB Mayors Disaster Relief Fund. Please see the poster on the community noticeboard for more information.

Bible Readings for Monday 8th May to Saturday 13th May 2023

Monday, May 8, 2023:

Psalm 102:1-17; Exodus 13:17-22; Acts 7:17-40

Tuesday, May 9, 2023:

Psalm 102:1-17; Proverbs 3:5-12; Acts 7:44-56

Wednesday, May 10, 2023:

Psalm 102:1-17; Proverbs 3:13-18; John 8:31-38

Thursday, May 11, 2023:

Psalm 66:8-20; Genesis 6:5-22; Acts 27:1-12

Friday, May 12, 2023:

Psalm 66:8-20; Genesis 7:1-24; Acts 27:13-38

Saturday, May 13, 2023:

Psalm 66:8-20; Genesis 8:13-19; John 14:27-29