



St Paul's Presbyterian Church
“Partners in God’s Mission of Love”

NEWSLETTER – June 2022



“This do in remembrance of Me.”

Services of Holy Communion

Sunday, 12th June 10:00am

Please accept this as a personal invitation to be present.



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From the Minister's Desk

Rev Sally Carter



As I came to write this, I thought of many different things. And as I pondered so many things, I thought of the eight habits of love (by Ed Bacon) which Craig preached about last Sunday. I thought of Quaker teacher and leader Parker Palmer's [Habits of the Heart](#) and I thought of Jesus' farewell discourse (goodbye speech) to his disciples. Out of the 21 chapters of John's gospel, five of them (chapters 13-17) are devoted to Jesus' saying goodbye. So, saying goodbye was an important part of Jesus' teaching for John's community. And saying goodbye is important for me as well.

One of the habits of love Craig mentioned is gratitude. The century mystic Meister Eckhardt said 'If the only prayer you ever say is 'Thank you' that is enough.' So, it is good to pause now and thank you for your love and generosity, your patience and forgiveness, your understanding and the ready sharing of your many gifts.

Our time together has not been uneventful - what with earthquake strengthening, illness, landscaping, donuts, changing to a Parish Council from Session and Board. And COVID. There have been challenges to face together, alongside the regular rhythms, joys and sadness of congregational life. One of Parker Palmer's [Habits of the Heart](#) is holding the inevitable tensions of congregational life in a creative way, so that, in his words, 'they can open us to new understandings of ourselves and our world, enhancing our lives and allowing us to enhance the lives of others'. I hope we have tried to do that.

Like the community of John's gospel, (likely written in the third generation after Jesus' ministry on earth), the St Paul's community of faith is facing many changes. (As all church communities are these days.) We are acutely aware of the generations missing from our pews. There are temptations in all directions - on one side the temptation to put our energy into resisting the inevitable changes and on the other the temptation to put our energy into adopting whatever latest answer to declining membership is on offer. Neither of those is what Jesus prays for the small, ragtag community he is about to leave. In the final heartfelt prayer in chapter 17, he prays that they may be one. That they may put their energy into being a true community¹ - a community of faith, transforming the world by their trust in him, the love of God and their love for one another. I truly believe that if that is where we put our energy, that transforming love will overflow into our own lives, the lives of our community and the life of the world.

Last Sunday I heard Pam playing one of my favourite hymns 'Peace I give to you; I give to you my peace'. These words are taken from John 14 which is part of Jesus' goodbye speech. The hymn writer added other verses - hope, joy and love.

So, as we say goodbye, may we do so leaving each other with peace, hope, joy and love. Let it flow through one another, let it flow. May we remember one another with affection and grace, and may we travel into our unfolding futures enriched by our time together and trusting in God's good purposes for us all.

With richest blessings,

Sally

Editorial

Pam Clare

Every autumn a lone kereru visits our garden in the morning to breakfast on guavas and spend time in contemplation at the top of the jacaranda tree. In June it moves on, not to be sighted again until the following March, and we know the seasons have changed and we are moving into winter.



There's A Time. This is the title of a favourite hymn by Shirley Murray, beginning "Our life has its seasons, and God has the reasons", so it was a poignant moment when we joined to sing it at Sally's final service. It ends fittingly with the words "a time for beginning, a time to end", and for Sally, these are times of endings and beginnings as she moves into retirement.

In this edition, as St Paul's looks to the future, we are also looking back. In a Q & A with Sally (over coffee of course) she reflected on her time with us, some of her favourite things, and future plans.

Kerry, who has been on the board of the Napier Family Centre for three years, reports on the challenging times faced in each of those not so normal years, and Adair reflects on her increased awareness of the privilege she has enjoyed throughout her life as she encounters and responds to rough sleepers on a regular basis through being part of an inner-city church.

Attention is paid to the Queen's Platinum Jubilee with memories of her visit to Napier in 1963 when she worshipped at St Paul's, (including how that impacted on Rosemary Semple's wedding).

Anne Silson looks to the future while connecting it with the past. And two past parishioners are remembered by their

families with gifts to St Paul's, and Ian Finlayson's time as Elder and Session Clerk is honoured.

Q & A With Sally

What are some highlights of your ministry at St Paul's?

Seasonal services at Easter and Christmas are always memorable and the service of Lessons and Carols is very meaningful. One Christmas Day I had planned to have the Carol "Little Drummer Boy" with the children marching and accompanying on drums. That Christmas we unexpectedly had thirty-two children so it was bedlam!

The candlelit Taize services have been very special, especially on the occasions when the homeless joined us. It could be challenging, but it was noticeable to me those who were moved by the presence of the homeless among us at worship.

Also working towards and with the Parish Council, the development of the landscaping, working with Adair and being her mentoring minister, services which involved the congregation moving to the front of the church for prayer. The connections made with the homeless among us. And the community use of the church for events such as music.

The impact of Covid has been very challenging but a highlight was the support and response from the church leaders.

Parishioners may often be only aware of what they see you doing at church. Could you describe some of the wider work of the church community that you have been involved in?

Roles outside the parish have included convening the Mission Work Group for Presbytery. This involves encouraging parishes

in discerning what churches are being called to do. Knowledge of parishes is required to help them thrive.

Another role has been convening Ministry Settlement Boards. And being part of the formation of Presbytery Central has taken ten years. The Inner-City Covenant Churches has been a very important part of my ministry here, working together for our community and support for one another.

What are some of your favourite things? You have a collection of seasonal stoles you wear for services. Which is the most special?

My advent stole. It was made by one of the parishioners in my first ministry in Palmerston North. She was a great embroiderer. We chose fabric in shades from darkness to light, with pohutukawa flowers representing the New Zealand Christmas. She told me “All you have to do Sally is love us”. She died shortly after I left, so it is a memory of her.

This will be difficult, but a couple of your favourite hymns?

“Every Day” of course. (We sang it at my first service here. And I still love it and about a thousand more). “Praise to the Lord the Almighty”, “Come and find the Quiet Centre”, “Taizé singing. And hymns of the seasons, Christmas and Easter

And Bible Verses?

Mark 4:26-29 The parable of the growing seed; Ephesians 3:14-21, praying from the depths of your inner being, God’s love, fulfilling and abundant; Matthew 11:29-30. ‘Take my yoke upon you and learn from me’; Micah 6:8. ‘What does the Lord require of us?’.

We know that in your spare time you enjoy photographing birds.

The royal spoonbill is a favourite, also the pied stilt. The photo I am proudest of is of a tui on a flax bush.



What are some of the things you will be looking forward to in your retirement? As well as having weekends?

More time to practise music, piano first, and violin.

Although they have been highlights, not worrying about Christmas and Easter services and having the freedom to be somewhere else.

To be able to celebrate my birthday! (It often falls around Easter).

To be able to travel away at weekends, and do things such as watching grandson Toby play football.

To have more time to spend on bird photography.

And to have more time to spend with Frank!

What was in the Envelope?

Lynne Arnold

We were happy to gift Sally and Frank a beautiful signed book called “Godwits” by Keith Woodley which we are sure Sally will enjoy.



As well there was a gift voucher for an overnight trip for two to Kapiti Island. This trip offers an amazing opportunity to see some very special New Zealand bird life, especially an evening walk to see/hear the Little Spotted Kiwi. We expect to see some of Sally’s photos sharing the birds they see.

There is also a “voucher” for a special meal out at a restaurant of Sally and Frank’s choice, and some spending money. We trust they will enjoy all these activities that are a sign of the love and esteem we have for them both.

Napier Family Centre Update

Kerry Marshall

I’ve been on the NFC Board for several years and I don’t think any one year of those three years has been ‘normal’. You’re well aware of the changes in our society and communities and these have flowed through to the delivery of social services in many ways – increasing demand, more challenges raising funds, changing priorities for Government agencies. Despite that, the Napier Family Centre continues to deliver help to many people in our city and suburbs.

The Board has welcomed two new members - Sue Webb and Victor Saywell. We are grateful for the additional expertise they bring to the Board. The CEO, Kerry Henderson, and staff have been focusing on business continuity to enable the organisation to function satisfactorily and there was a lot of pleasure when the doors were reopened under the orange setting recently. The Taradale Charity shop was severely affected by the economic downturn so it has been closed and while it was necessary from a business point of view, there was a lot of sadness with having to make that decision.

Another sad point for the Board was the resignation of Mike Healey from the Board. Mike has served the Board and Napier Family Centre faithfully for many years; his skill, experience and expertise have been a source of ongoing strength through many of the changes and challenges the Napier Family Centre has had

to face over the years. His commitment has been total, a taonga that has come from his deep faith and the support and generosity of his faith community.

There is important work on budgets and plans for the next financial year coming up and also the finalisation and audit of the current year's activities in June and July. The Board understands the pressures this brings but is appreciative of the work being done by everyone. Despite the difficulties facing everyone at this time, the Napier Family Centre continues to support so many people in our community and this wouldn't be possible without the support of our parishes – thank you!

Welcome to the margins!

Adair Oosterbroek

I grew up in the Eastern suburbs of Auckland and while my upbringing was very “normal” for me, the older I get, the more impressed I am by how much privilege I enjoyed in my middle-class existence. It's challenging to review my “normal,” even with its particular challenges and expressions of brokenness, and realise how far removed it is from the normal that is the experience of many; and by that, I mean, how very much more comfortable, more safe and secure, more regular and predictable, and how much more conducive to a “successful” life as defined by our culture.

I also realise how sheltered so much of my life has been in that it has allowed me to view and assess the lives of others according to terms set by others just like me. It's all been self-reinforcing and served to shore up my own sense of achievement and self-worth – nice!

At this point in my life, I'm increasingly aware of how very much more complex the reality is, and I appreciate that I am not successful entirely on my own merits but on the back of the hard work, and privilege of those who've gone before me. Sadly, I recognise that I've also benefitted by acts of injustice that served to bolster the well-being of my ancestors and which in turn have supported me.

So, here I am at inner city St. Paul's and I find myself encountering rough sleepers on a regular basis. Over time I've had the opportunity to begin to get to know them and to hear some of their stories. It gets harder to draw simplistic conclusions, and impossible to relegate everyone to the "consequences of their own choices."

As I head along to the Clive Square drop-in each week, I feel my "middle-class white girl" identity keenly and wouldn't be surprised if I was called to account for the injustices perpetrated by my forebears. What a surprise and delight, that instead I experience such acceptance and warm hospitality. Instead of judgement for what I represent as an example of the privileged, I am instead embraced and appreciated. My meagre offering of three hours' presence is gratefully received. In response, I am truly grateful...and deeply challenged.

As the people of God, we are called to extravagant hospitality consistent with what God has extended to us. Sadly, for the most part, the Church is not known for such generosity and grace. What a different kind of privilege it is to be an inner-city church easily visible and accessible to the rough-sleepers of central Napier. And as a recipient of their hospitality, I hope and pray that I/we might do as well to "share our bread with the hungry and bring the homeless poor into our house; and when we see the naked to cover them..." from Isaiah 58:7.

Recollections from Marie Geddis

(As told by Marie's niece, Chris Nimon)

I visit my 95-year-old aunt twice weekly and she often recalls earlier days and I thought you might like her recollection of church-going for your newsletter.

From Madeira Steps, Marie and her brother Brian and sister Diana used to troop down to church. Sometimes Tiffen Park was slippery and wet to get down, so they went right around the block. The girls had to wear white gloves for communion, so as not to touch the chalice. The Church she remembers as a small child was facing a different direction. She wonders how the building was turned around.

Marie is very interested in embroidery and hand embroidered white covers for the pulpit and a picture too. Maybe they are there still.

Reverend Asher christened everybody in her family but Marie often recollects how one Reverend said although the men she might have married had died in the war, Marie's time would come. She has always had a very positive outlook on life and has taken her joy from her many dogs, a deep love of gardening and her embroidery guild. As Marie still walks her dog every day, she meets all sorts of new friends and delights in the contact she has.

At Woodford House, Marie remembers being delivered a daily newspaper. It helped her learn to read, as she was a bit of a later starter. After Marie finished school, she was man-powered post war to work, and went to work at the Daily Telegraph (her



Marie (aged 10) on left, with her younger sister Diane and Granny Geddis

father's newspaper) in the Proof Room. She felt she was very fortunate to be able to have a post like this, when others had not so lovely jobs to attend.

Marie says learning doesn't stop at the end of school; she has learned much through the journey of life. Her unrelenting positivity has helped her through all obstacles.

Mrs Loan is Marie's elder and has been delivering Marie's newsletters for many years now, and since she can't get to Church, she is very appreciative of this contact.



Marie (aged 20)

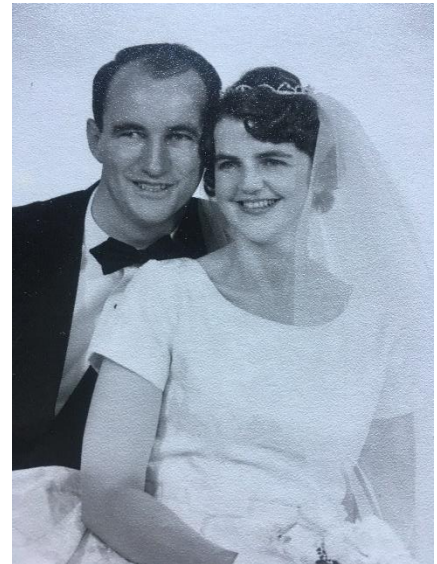
Memories of the Queen's Visit to St Paul's

Pam Clare

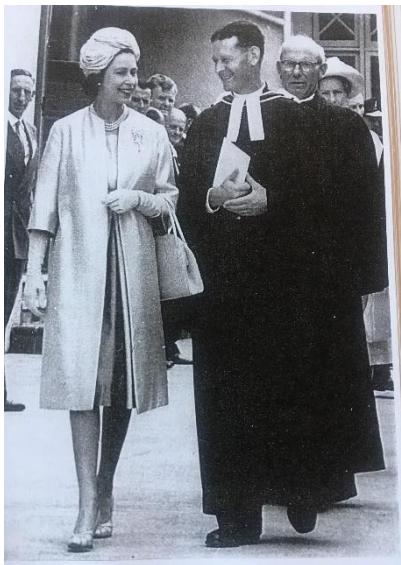
This year is Queen Elizabeth's Platinum Anniversary and parishioners with long memories have been reminded of the day she attended worship at St Paul's. Rosemary Semple has cause to remember it more than most.

On Saturday the 10th of February, 1963 at 6pm, Rosemary Sorrell was to be married to Jack Semple at St Paul's Church by Rev W R Hay. It also happened to be the evening before Queen Elizabeth and the Duke of Edinburgh were to attend morning worship at St Paul's, with Rev Hay and the Moderator of the General Assembly, Right Reverend Malcolm Wilson, officiating. So, a very busy weekend for all involved, but did it affect the arrangements for the wedding? Only in one way, remembers Rosemary. They weren't allowed to use the front row of pews, so the parents of the bride and groom, in all their wedding finery, had to sit in the second row. ("Surely they didn't think we were going to stash a bomb under the seat"? Rosemary ponders).

However, all went to plan, and Rosemary, a beautiful bride as you can see from the photo, walked up the aisle (the entire length of the church, the aisle going from back to front in those days). There were 215 guests, and dinner was at the War Memorial. It was very expensive, Rosemary says, a guinea a head.



Next morning, pandemonium. There was a traffic jam across the hill, with roads blocked by cars coming from the port after viewing the royal yacht 'Britannia'. Meanwhile the newly-weds were attempting to drive up to Priestly Avenue for Rosemary to say goodbye to her parents



before setting out on honeymoon, but roads were closed, and they were stopped and checked on the way. (Rosemary remembers that Rev Hay was also caught in the traffic when he had a fraught rush home from the church to Lincoln Road to retrieve the moderator's degree hood, arriving back at St Paul's with just minutes to compose himself before the Queen's arrival).

Eventually the traffic cleared, and they were able to head away to Rotorua, where further adventure lay ahead in the form of a brush with the notorious George Wilder. But, says Rosemary, that's another story.

Now Thank We All Our God

Anne Silson

Thank you to Lynne and the message at the Sunday service following Sally's retirement of looking to the future with hope. I found it particularly telling to sing a hymn very special to some of us during this first service of our current vacancy.

After deciding in 1969 to join St Stephen's (then called St Peter's) after over seventy years of being a Congregational church in Napier, our final evening service was conducted by the chaplain of Lindisfarne College. The service finished with the hymn "Now Thank We All Our God". This had real meaning and hope for our future. Tom Somerville, the minister at St Stephen's welcomed us the following Sunday, and again we sang this hymn.

Years later, after deciding to replace the older Anglican building we worshipped in, the last service in this place ended with the same hymn, the Sunday before it was demolished. And when the new building was completed, with Michael Coppins as our minister, we once again looked to the future with the words "Now Thank We All Our God".

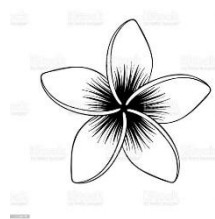
So, it seemed very fitting to once again sing these words as we move to new beginnings with hope and confidence.

*Now thank we all our God,
With hearts and hands and voices,
Who wondrous things have done,
In whom his world rejoices.*

Remembering the Cowan Family

Anne Silson

The catering team recently received an acknowledgment from the Crowley family and enclosed a substantial donation for the ladies. Mrs Cowley (Takamoa) passed away just over twelve months ago and her husband Bill some months earlier. The ladies felt that they could not use this money for themselves and decided to ask Rae Wildbore to use it to purchase some special silk flowers for an arrangement in the church.



The family was an important part of the Congregational church and then at St Stephen's, being part of both the Girls' and Boys' Brigade. Mr and Mrs Cowley worked so hard for their family and shared anything they had with so many. We will always remember the beautiful garden and their ability to share so much of it with others. It is hoped that the flower arrangement made by Rae will give pleasure to all in the years ahead.



Memorial Tree Planting

Pam Clare

On a recent autumn afternoon, friends of Isabel Morgan gathered with Helen in St Paul's garden to plant a small kowhai tree in her memory. Isabel was a member of St Paul's for over 60 years and a committed conservationist. It is fitting then that the tree is a seedling grown from a tiny kowhai tree given to her by one of her Kiwi Club Conservation members when she retired from her leadership role. Watch out for the flowers when spring comes, and think of Isabel.



Elder Emeritus - Ian Finlayson

Rae Wildbore

Twenty years ago, I arranged a suitable time to visit Ian, together with another elder, to invite him to become an elder at St. Paul's Parish. His initial response was a refusal because he deemed himself to be not 'good enough!' Well, are any of us 'good enough' to work for God? Ian became a very good elder. He was renowned for his visiting and also served as Session Clerk for a period of five years from 2009 until 2013 inclusive.

On the 5th of May, a warm and beautiful Autumn afternoon, a group of seven, Sally Carter our Minister, Liz Willis, Jill McConnochie, Bruce Tucker, myself and including Dorothy and Gina Finlayson, gathered with Ian at Mary Doyle Rest Home to bestow on him our prayerful blessings and sincere good wishes for his future as he became Elder Emeritus. He was presented



with a certificate. We then enjoyed a time of fellowship together with a delicious afternoon tea supplied by Dorothy.

Remembering Barbara Jean Anne Cocking

Dorothy Finlayson

Barbara, who died at Atawhai village on 16th May, was a valued member of Care and Share. Being a very creative lady, we always enjoyed her involvement. She was also an able member of the catering team and enjoyed being involved with the flower group both at St. Stephens and St. Pauls. We will miss her very much. A service for Barbara was held at Dunstalls on Friday 20th May, 2022.

PARISH REGISTER
<i>Rae Wildbore</i>
Harvey Cole O'Halloran. Baptised 1st May 2022
Our loving welcome and congratulations to family and friends of Harvey.
Lillian Young died 14th February 2022.
Barbara Jean Anne Cocking died 16th May 2022. Funeral service held at Dunstall's Chapel.
Our loving sympathy goes to the families and friends of Lillian and Barbara.

Sally's Farewell Celebration – 29th May, 2022







Who's on 'Keith's Seat'?



Acknowledgement of Frank's input; handyman, finder of Sally's things and music

Kerry Marshall

They say that behind every successful man there's a surprised woman, but in this case, I doubt that behind the successful woman, Frank is at all surprised by what she has achieved. And, while I might have said Frank was behind Sally, in reality they have walked this path together, a very loving and supportive partnership.

Frank's support of Sally has been important and we in the parish acknowledge his role as the finder of Sally's things and her partner in their wonderful music.

Frank has also been active as the parish handy man taking on the role of property officer for many years, something he has done very well; climbing ladders, crawling under buildings, installing equipment, fixing problems and of course dealing with contractors, a difficult job at the best of times.

Over the years Frank, you have been a listening ear for many of us and your wisdom and insights have been appreciated.

Frank – thank you for being a member of this congregation for the past eleven years, we have gained much from your very important contribution to Sally's ministry and our parish journey.

Regular Events

Sunday Services: 10am service each Sunday during the ministerial vacancy.

Care and Share: Held on the 3rd Monday of the month from 1:30pm in the Church Lounge (February – November)

Lunch group meets monthly on the 1st Friday at noon for food and fellowship at various venues around the city

Jitterbugs Pre-school Music and Movement each Tuesday from 9am (during the school term).

September Newsletter

The closing date for contributions to the September newsletter will be **Monday 22nd August 2022**. Please forward articles to **Bridget** at the church office. Details below.

Contact Us

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Please feel free to phone me with any questions or if you would like a visit.