

St. Paul's Presbyterian Church

"Partners in God's Mission"

NEWSLETTER - April, 2017

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EASTER SERVICES



April 9th, **Palm Sunday** - Palms to Passion 10.30am

April 13th, **Maundy Thursday** – 7.00pm at St Paul's

April 14th, **Good Friday** - Inner City Covenant 'Carry the Cross' starting at St Patrick's at 9 30am.

April 16th, **Easter Sunday** - 10.30am Communion, 7pm Communion

FROM THE MINISTER'S DESK.

I am not the world's greatest pot plant tender. In fact, I am probably among the worst. Either we give the plants too much water or not enough, very seldom finding the sweet spot of 'just right'. So it was not too surprising, I suppose, when I was walking out in the garden, to notice that one of our potted plants had died. Some time later, I looked at the pot again, and there, growing fresh and green, were some new plants. They were not the same sort of plants as the one which had died, but new growth had arisen where there had only been dead leaves and brown, dried out stalks. These plants were growing without any input from us whatsoever, so it was a surprise to me to see them there.

At Easter time, we enter into another story of death and resurrection, played out on a cosmic stage rather than in a small back yard, but a story which has played out in human hearts ever since.

And we enter into this story every year. We know what happens, how it pans out. We know that in the gospel story, Easter morning follows Good Friday, the empty tomb follows the cruel cross. In the familiarity of the story, we can lose sight of how surprising resurrection is. It was something no-one could have imagined. Some people believed in the resurrection of the dead at the end of time, but no-one imagined God raising one person from death into new life. Never mind one person who was the despised victim of the Cross. Resurrection is not like anything that went before. It is not resuscitation or a near death experience such as seems to be described in the raising of Lazarus, or Jairus' daughter.

NT Wright, writer and former Bishop of Durham says this ‘Actually, the early Christians knew that dead people don’t rise. They didn’t suppose that people did rise from the dead from time to time and that Jesus just happened to be one of them.... Rather, they claimed that Jesus had as it were gone through death and out the other side into a new form of physicality for which there was no previous example and of which there remains no subsequent example. They knew as well as we do how outrageous that was, but they found themselves compelled to say it. As one of the more sceptical of today’s scholars has put it, "It seems that they were doing their best to describe an event for which they didn’t have the right language."’

And we find it hard to find the right language, too. As new greenness appears among the dead leaves and dried out stalks of our lives, we look for the words which give flesh to the sense of new beginnings, of forgiveness, of new possibility when all seemed lost. We look for the word, and name it ‘Resurrection’.

May you discover afresh its awesome, mysterious joy this Easter.

Sally.

AN ELDER WRITES

Isabel Morgan

Easter Sunday Trading – In December, 2016, the Napier City Council advertised that it was calling for submissions. After some years of being asked to allow this, the present government had delegated authority to Local Authorities, but requiring them to consult their communities. I missed the notice, but three days before the closing date of mid-January, a friend rang, asking me if I was aware of the imminent closing date. I quickly put together a submission, and it was in on time. I had asked to speak to my submission when hearings took place. Those were scheduled for 22nd February.

From the whole of Napier, 42 people had responded, of those 42, 21 were for open trading on Sunday, and 21 were against. Three people had asked to speak to their submission. One was a member of St. John’s, one was the vicar of St. Luke’s, Havelock North, and the other was me. Speaking to Council is always an interesting experience. This occasion was no different. When we three had presented our case arguments, those councillors who wished to speak had the opportunity.

One councillor said, “I have no religious convictions, but I think they should remain closed”. Another one said “I am a Christian, but I think they should be free to choose ----- freedom of choice”. Another one said, “As an ex-policeman -----“I could not follow his argument, and what his previous employment had to do with it, is a mystery. After some discussion, but quite brief, in which the phrase “freedom of choice” was not infrequently used, a vote was taken. The result was 6-5 in favour of ‘freedom of choice’. One councillor was absent, but had the vote been 6-6, the mayor could have used his casting vote – and it was obvious which way he was thinking.

This proposal must be advertised in NCC Annual Plan. All are free to comment on any item in the A.P. So if you wish to comment, if you feel strongly one way or the other, then you have the chance. The three who spoke to their submission were all against Easter Sunday trading, and all on religious grounds. Apart from that, are you aware that NZ has a mere three and half days per year, at present, when retail trading is not permitted. So there are 361 and half days to shop. How many is enough? As far as I can ascertain, NZ has the least number of statutory holidays of all the OECD countries.

However, walk along any high street and count the empty shops. On-line shopping has made huge inroads into retail trading. It was interesting that NCC had consulted retailers and sport bodies, but not the Churches. God will never let the Church die, but are we in need of some resuscitation?

SOUTH SUDAN: FAMINE

Last week the United Nations declared the first famine since 2011. Already 100,000 people are suffering and a further 1 million are on the brink of starvation. By July the numbers could exceed 5 million as the combination of conflict, drought and a crippled economy destroy livelihoods. Last year inflation topped 800% and people are constantly on the move. Nearly 1.5 million have left the country since war broke out in December 2013.

Wadalla Peter says even in quieter regions like West Equatoria, people cannot afford food and often miss the one meal a day which has become standard. Maridi Service Agency is assisting people who have fled their homelands and need refuge. ACT Alliance is working with refugee communities on the Uganda border and providing food in famine-affected areas. The National Disaster Relief Forum of which CWS is a member, is appealing for more support from New Zealanders. Can you help with urgent food and other relief? Please support CWS's South Sudan Crisis Appeal. (Did you see the heart-rending pictures on TV recently? Ed.)



Photo: In Uganda, ACT Alliance gives a goat to a woman refugee. LWF/C. Kästner

PROJECT PRIMA VOLTA - Recipient of the February Session initiative donation.

Project Prima Volta empowers young people to believe in themselves, to dream big, to seize opportunities and to thrive into adulthood. In turn, they go on to lead rewarding and fulfilling adult lives; and in doing so, they contribute to stronger, more cohesive and progressive communities here in Hawke's Bay and beyond.

Each year **30 teenagers** from entirely diverse backgrounds are accepted for a year-long programme of coaching and mentoring culminating in their performance in a fully staged classical opera. Training together for up to **eight hours a week**, they work alongside international and homegrown professionals as well as local performers and volunteers.

The focus extends from singing and stage performance, to backstage skills required to run a successful production. Along the way, the teenagers develop leadership, respect, trust, problem solving, self-reliance, teamwork, resilience and self-confidence. There is a **ripple effect** as they find common ground with the adult performers, developing friendships and being part of a collective success. After just three years in existence, already five teenage alumni from Project Prima Volta are now studying music at university, with at least one of them being the first from his wider family to attend tertiary study. It stands to reason that not every PPV graduate will go on to become a Pavarotti

or a Dame Malvina Major, or even a member of Sol3 Mio. But, in the end, that's not what Project Prima Volta is about.

KIDS IN THE MIDDLE

Sadly, family violence is a common occurrence in Aotearoa. Every day in homes throughout the country our kids are seeing, hearing and in most cases getting caught in the middle of family violence. The effect of this exposure can be far reaching, devastating and have much more of an impact than we think.

Just under half of the Women's Refuge clients are kids, so Refuge workers are working with and for them every day around the clock providing, counselling, programmes and one on one support where possible. Unfortunately a lot of this work is not covered by the usual funding sources, even though it's absolutely critical for breaking the cycle and helping the smallest members of our society heal and grow.

We all know that loving, stable and secure home environments are the best circumstances for kid's growth and development. On the other hand, living with violence creates a sense of fear, anxiety and stress; meaning that children are constantly living in a state of hypersensitivity, always prepared for fight or flight.

The kids in the Refuge homes say that they just want to be listened to, have their opinions, thoughts and ideas taken seriously, be told what is going on. This is a role for specially trained advocates who will be able to listen and support the children.

The Session Initiative donation for March has been sent to Women's Refuge to support this new programme.

LANDSCAPING

The Landscaping Project Group (Lynne Arnold, Rev Sally Carter, Yvonne Dickson, Kerry Marshall, Bryan Rudd and David Walker) is picking up from where it left off in 2012 by developing a new brief for the project. We really appreciated the feedback and discussions that went on back then and you might have nothing further to add except 'just get on with it'. We will review all that feedback and will 'get on with it' but we're mindful that there have been changes in the intervening years.

For example Napier now sees more tourists coming in on cruise ships, the profile of our congregation continues to change and social media and technology is changing the way people interact in their cities.

We are keen to get on with the project but not before you've had a chance to comment on what might have changed for you. Mindful of our responsibilities for stewardship of our church we want to build a strong platform for the future and in this regard we've identified three principles that might guide our decision making:

Peace: one of the major themes we've talked about was the potential for the parish grounds to be a place of peace and serenity amid the business of our city, a place that reflects the personality and spirit of people in the church.

Connection: the parish grounds should reflect a harmonious connection with our city – we are in and of the city – our grounds should enhance that connection.

Functionality: while we have to face the reality the car parking is a major concern of our parishioners the grounds should be functional in terms of people moving around and in our potential to use the space. They also have to be practical for maintenance and upkeep.

The importance of green spaces in our city and the potential for our facility to generate income are two examples of other principles that might be important but are there others?

What do you think? We're aiming to get a brief prepared by the end of April so if you want to provide feedback or comment please talk to any member of the group, drop us a note or an email, or come along to the 10am morning tea on Sunday 9 April, we'll be there so you can have a talk to us about this important project.

Kerry Marshall, for the Landscaping Project Group.

FROM THE BOARD OF MANAGERS - A FINANCIAL UPDATE

The financial reports to 28 February were approved by the Board at its March meeting. These show that after eight months income is \$137,893 and expenditure \$153,013, giving a net deficit of \$15,120 compared to the budgeted deficit for the year to date of \$30,063.

Income so far this year is well ahead of budget thanks to the generosity of the congregation with the wonderful Thank Offering and a recent donation of \$15,000. However, the Board noted that Offerings are 8% below budget and 4% below the same time last year.

Expenditure is almost on budget which is helpful for cash flow at this time of year. This includes the costs of the earthquake strengthening project, \$29,232.

We are grateful to our Treasurer, Sylvia Low, for all the work she does each week, month and year to keep our finances organised so effectively.

Kerry Marshall, Chair, Board of Managers

A STITCH IN TIME



Further to the March newsletter I now confirm the first meeting will be on 3rd April, 2017. We'd love you to join in the fun and fellowship.

A special little gift box will be made by everyone just in time for that special Easter surprise. 1.30pm. in the Church lounge. Enquiries to Dorothy findot@xtra.co.nz or Phone 8431266

SOME EASTER HYMNS

Ella Haigh.

All glory, laud and honour – written by Theodulph of Orleans, 750-821. The tune, St Theodulph is a later form of a melody by Melchoir Teschner, 1584-1635.

In the ancient French city of Angers, Theodulph, who had once been the Bishop of Orleans was imprisoned in the cloisters for supposedly taking part in a plot. The legend goes that on Palm Sunday, 821, the street is crowded for the annual procession of clergy and laity headed by King Louis the Pious. When the king is opposite the church he suddenly stops and listens intently. It is the sound of a man singing. Upon enquiring who it is, he is told it is Theodulph of Orleans. The king orders his immediate release, restores his bishopric and commands that the hymn, “Gloria laus et honour” should be sung in all future Palm Sunday processions. It is almost certain that he wasn’t restored as bishop and that he died in Angers in 821. He was later canonised as St Theodulph. Originally the hymn had thirty-nine verses.

This hymn was translated by Dr John Mason Neale in the 19th Century. Modern hymnbooks replace ‘laud’ with ‘praise’. Dr Neale was born in London in 1818. In 1836 he gained a scholarship at Trinity College, Cambridge, where he was considered the finest classical scholar of his year. He was a great reader and had a very retentive memory. He mastered twelve languages, and had some knowledge of a least eight more. He is best known for his translations of hymns from the Greek and Latin. He suffered ill-health and died in 1866 at the age of 48.

In the cross of Christ I glory was written by John Bowring. It is sung to the tune Stuttgart, a melody adapted from a chorale by Christian Frederick Witt, 1660-1716.

John Bowring was born at Exeter in 1792. At an early age he entered his father’s business, the manufacture of woollen goods for China and Spain. He easily learnt Spanish, and before he was sixteen he had added French, Italian, Portuguese, German and Dutch. In 1824 he went into politics. He was appointed British Consul at Canton and was knighted on becoming Governor of Hong King. When he retired he took up writing and was the author of original poems and hymns. “In the cross of Christ I glory” was Sir John’s most popular hymn and one of the few still in common use. He died in 1872 at the age of 81. His tombstone bears the appropriate inscription; “In the cross of Christ I glory”.

“Stuttgart” is also the tune we use for Charles Wesley’s “Come, thou long expected Jesus”.

The head that once was crowned with thorns was written by Thomas Kelly, 1769-1854. The tune, St Magnus was probably written by Jeremiah Clarke.

Rev Thomas Kelly wrote nearly eight hundred hymns, but few have survived. He composed many tunes, but these are no longer in use. He is principally known for “The head that once was crowned with thorns”.

Thomas Kelly was the son of an Irish judge. He studied at Dublin University and intended to have a law career. A change of heart resulted in a change of plans leading to his ordination to the ministry. Later he left the established Church and using his ample means, he build four Independent churches in Ireland. While taking a service in one of his churches Kelly suffered a stroke. He didn’t recover and died in 1854.

Jeremiah Clarke, an English composer, was born about 1674. Nothing is known of his origins. The earliest known fact is that he was a chorister of the Chapel Royal at the time of the coronation of James II in 1685. He composed anthems, psalms and hymns, odes, songs, incidental music for the theatre and harpsichord pieces. His best known piece is the so-called Trumpet Voluntary. He was

organist of Winchester College and St Paul's Cathedral. Because of his unstable state of mind at the time he took his own life in his house in St Paul's churchyard on 1st December 1707. He was buried in the cathedral crypt.

ENVIRONMENTALLY SPEAKING

Pest- free NZ by 2050? Of course we can, but it will take sustained effort, money, and the will from both people and successive governments. But is it to be 'pest-free' or 'predator-free'?

Himalayan thar were released in NZ quite some time ago. The shooter lobby has a big voice. Thar were released in the southern mountain areas of the South Island to provide game for hunters. And if you live in North America or Europe, access to NZ is somewhat easier than to the Himalayas. Thar run across scree slopes of our mountains, disturbing and destroying some beautiful and some rare alpine plants. Scree is sent rolling, and largely ends up in rivers. But if you are a game hunter, you'll pit your trigger finger against a fast moving target and recount the glory.

Deer are foreign to our country. They browse seedlings of many species. DOC has to keep them at 'A manageable level'. What is that? Pinus Contorta is a plant pest that is encroaching into native forests. For several years, Napier Forest and Bird carried out Pinus Contorta control/eradication in the Comet area off the Taihape Road. DOC does not have staff or funding to do all the control work needed, so it is just 'contained'.

No fault of DOC.

Isabel Morgan

FROM THE ARCHIVES.

A picture, donated by Stan Mulder has now been framed and is in the rear vestibule. (No. 44). It depicts a view of Napier a few days after the 1931 earthquake. It has been taken from the hill behind what is now Asher Hall and shows the devastation of the town, and the remains of the new brick Church which replaced the original wooden church which was destroyed by fire in 1929. The two streets which can be seen in the picture are Tennyson and Emerson.

THE MANSE:

During the week an amazing team from St. Paul's prepared the Manse at 73 Morris Spence Ave in readiness for the new tenants to move in on Wednesday 29th March, 2017. The lawns and garden are in tip-top shape despite the wet weather this week. The interior of the house is spotless and beautifully presented with new net curtains, repairs throughout, a new stove in the kitchen and smoke alarms. All the volunteers were happy to help. However, it still comes as a cost to our Church. Whether you voted to retain the Manse or sell, this work needed to be completed. If you would like to make a cash donation towards the repairs, that would be much appreciated. Some of you would be happier to do this than be asked to help at a cleaning bee which is very hard work. Envelopes clearly marked Manse Project could be put in the offering plate please or contact Bryan on 8449071. Thank you.

Bryan Rudd – Project Coordinator

PSEC Op Shop

The other Friday evening, Margaret Greig and I went to the opening of the Presbyterian Support East Coast op shop in Carlyle St. Although we have been disappointed not to be able, at this stage, anyway, to open our own op shop, we have a great opportunity here to work alongside PSEC as they build connections with the community and raise money to help those in need.

It is a huge space, and there is a sense of excitement about the possibilities of being in this area. Upcycling, repairing, collecting, selling and, of course, buying are all ways we can get involved. I am looking forward to meeting with people involved in the shop once they get their feet on the ground. Would anyone like to bake a batch of scones for their morning tea one day? The shop is next to Black and White accounting, opposite the BP on Carlyle St and is open during normal business hours. You may have seen [this article](#) about it in HB

Today...(http://www.nzherald.co.nz/hawkes-bay-today/news/article.cfm?c_id=1503462&objectid=11817465)

There will be many opportunities for volunteer work with them. As near neighbours, we look forward to being partners with PSEC in God's mission of Love.

The source of spiritual wisdom is to hold questions and contradictions patiently, much more than to find quick certitudes, to rush to closure or judgment... Richard Rohr