

St. Paul's Presbyterian Church

"Partners in God's Mission"

NEWSLETTER - February, 2017

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FROM THE MINISTER'S DESK.

How has your summer been? A bit blustery perhaps, a bit hot, a bit wet, a bit cold! Perhaps you were able to gather with family or friends ... Maybe you even had a swim or two or have taken time to enjoy the bush, the mountains, the ocean, warmer temperatures and long, sunny evenings.

Perhaps you have enjoyed the break from the routines of regular meetings and gatherings, from school, from work, from church meetings and groups. Perhaps, for you, summer also contains poignant reminders of loss, the challenge of a new phase of life, or unexpected turns which are unsettling.

For us in the Southern Hemisphere, summer is the season of Epiphany – the season of light, of insight, of revelation - the time when we are given glimpses of who Jesus is, what it means that he is the One who shows us what God is like.

Summer time is a time when, with a bit of luck, our brains can rewire and open up pathways which had become entangled by the challenges and habits of the year just passed. Which is just as well, for we come back into a world in which Donald Trump is President of the United States. A world where, so far, daily executive orders reinforce exclusion, misogyny and violence, suppress truth and damage creation. A world in which the light of Christ seems to be hidden behind border walls, in oily rivers and in torture chambers.

This week the readings which we will hear during our worship are among the most well-known: Micah 6:8 asks 'What does the Lord require of you?' 'Do justice, love mercy and walk humbly with God'. We are also reading the Beatitudes, from the Sermon on the Mount – Matthew's take on Jesus' first sermon. The beatitudes remind us that God's eye is on the poor, the humble, the sorrowing, and those who are hungry and thirsty for God's righteousness. The contrast between the kingdom of Trump and the Kingdom of Heaven could hardly be more marked.

Summer's light is bright and warm, although it can cast harsh shadows. May we be warmed by the light, may it shine into our world and make things clear. May we turn our gaze in the direction of God's gaze and not be timid in proclaiming God's justice, God's goodness and God's love, especially for those who are vulnerable, marginalized and those we find it hard to like. May the warmth of summer evenings still our souls and help us find a place to rest under God's kindly gaze, so that we in turn may gaze kindly on those we meet and so take a step towards the Kingdom of Heaven.

Sally.

Church Principles - We are reminded that the third principle of the Church's approach to property transactions is that our decisions must keep faith with the long-term interests of the whole Church - the Congregations of the Future Will Inherit Our Choices.

Kerry Marshall, Chair, Board of Managers

ST PAUL'S CHURCH ADMINISTRATOR – VACANCY

We have a vacancy for a part time Church Administrator. The job would entail working in the church office between 10:00 am and 12:00pm on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday each week.

We need someone who has excellent computer skills, (including Microsoft Office and Excel) is self-motivated, enthusiastic, innovative, has good verbal communication skills and is able to work with little or no supervision.

If this sounds like you, and you are interested please contact Murray Arnold for more information, and send your details to the email address below before the 6th February.

Murray Arnold, muly.arnold@xtra.co.nz 844 3545 a/hrs

YOUR MONTHLY GIFTS FOR SCF AND WORLD VISION.

I have received a Thank You letter from World Vision congratulating St Paul's Church for raising a grand total of \$495.00.

The NZ Government matched a portion of Syria funds raised with an additional \$1.6 million to then reach more children in urgent need of support.

""These funds are right now supporting refugee children to access child-friendly safe places in Jordan for education and safe places""

A preliminary notice for 40 hour Famine 2017 for weekend of June 9 -11 will this year focus on children in Syria.

Peace and Blessings, Marion Fell.

SIGNING IN/OUT BOOK – This is for the security/safety of everyone who enters the Church buildings, so that there is a record to check in the event of an emergency. This applies **Monday – Saturday**. It includes cleaners, pianists, card playing group, card making group, jam sellers, flower ladies, BOM /Session meetings to name just a few. A group only needs the convenor to sign in and put the number of people attending. eg Name - Fireside (15), Date – 12/6/17, Reason – Meeting, Time in – 7pm Time out – 9.30pm , Signature.
The book is kept in the stand outside the Office.

SEISMIC REPORT (FINAL)

I am pleased to report that the Seismic Strengthening Project is now completed and that all that remains is the final certificate of acceptance of work done to be received from the Napier City Council

This has been a rather lengthy project by the time you take in the preparing of assessments, approving of plans, letting of contract for the work to be done etc. and checking work progress through to its completion.

I would like to place on record my sincere thanks of the Project Team; Tim Pike the Engineer, and Atkins Construction, The Board of Managers & Session all for their input to the project and assisting us to bring it to a very successful conclusion and to the Congregation for their patience & understanding.

The Church Building is now in full use and my observation is that everyone pleased to be back home.

Bryan Rudd - Team Leader, for the Capital Development Project Team



These photos show some of the work undertaken and form part of this report.

THANKS.

At the last Session meeting, thanks were expressed to Brian Rudd and the team for their willingness and dedication to seeing the Seismic Strengthening to its completion – in time for the Christmas Services. And thanks, too, to all who prepared Asher Hall for Worship Services for the 9 months we were unable to use the Church. The Chairs, Communion Table, Lectern, speakers and other furniture all had to be placed and then removed after worship. To those involved, your work is greatly appreciated. And to the Congregation, thanks for helping to make our time in Asher Hall a happy one. (Ed.)

A contribution from Alan Hoggarth:

Do you know what would have happened if it had been Three Wise Woman rather than Three Wise Men?

They would have:

- asked for directions
- arrived on time
- helped deliver the baby
- cleaned the stable
- made a casserole
- and brought practical gifts

THE ANGEL TREE

We have received a letter from Jennifer Whyman, the Hawkes Bay Regional Co-ordinator, Prison Fellowship Angel Tree. In it, in addressing the Fireside Group, she writes- “Thank you for your support again this year (2016) to the work of the Prison Fellowship Angel Tree. As you may know, Angel Tree is a programme that provides Christmas presents to prisoners’ children who miss out specifically on a gift from their imprisoned parent. The prisoners make a written application for presents for their children. We also appreciate some children are unable to have contact with their parents due to court orders. Angel tree is an opportunity to provide additional assistance to the family. Without the help of the wider community, this programme would never be the success it is today.

“Your financial donation and donation of gifts has enabled us to continue to serve some of the neediest families in Hawkes Bay. In our region we have approximately 200 children annually, aged between 0 – 18 years old which are without a parent due to incarceration, at Christmas time. We see this gift as a practical message of love and belonging from their parent.

Thank you for blessing our Angel Tree work. In return we pray that the blessing of God’s grace, peace and justice may blossom in your lives.”

(if you would like to know more about the work of the Prison Fellowship, their website is <http://www.fpnznewsblof.org/>) (ed.)

ENVIRONMENTALLY SPEAKING

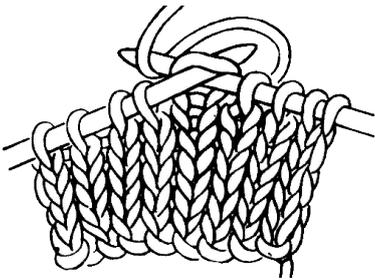
Cars, buses, trucks all add a large amount of CO2 to our atmosphere. I thought of the efficiency of the London Underground, the Paris Metro, and other such like transport systems in the large cities of the world. It is about 200 years since far-sighted citizens realised that as London expanded, there had to be a better, more efficient way to go from A to B. And so the underground was conceived. It certainly has proved its worth, as many of us have experienced.

Probably no NZ city will ever adopt underground transport, but Auckland has to have a better system than one that means more vehicles on roads. What of small cities like Napier? Smaller populations mean that it is more difficult to provide a public transport system that works well for everyone.

Do we need park and drive, bus/train between Napier – Hastings – Waipukurau? The cost of buying an electric car is coming down. Some feel that the government should install re-charging stations all over the country, and make an appreciable cash discount to buyers of electric cars. What do you think of that idea? They (we) are spending big money every year to build and maintain public roads. Transport by rail? A fast passenger train between Hamilton and Auckland?

Isabel Morgan

(And rail between Auckland Airport and the City – as most major cities overseas have. Ed.)



STITCH IN TIME.

The Stitch In Time group meet again in April. We have several special projects and our knitters are requiring wool. We would be happy to collect this if you would like to phone Varna, 843 3139 or Anne, 844 8381 and we could arrange to have it collected. Thank you, *Dorothy Finlayson* for the Group.

ART DECO FETE - 18TH FEBRUARY.

Are you ready? Let's make this a day to remember. It's a lot of work for the convener, David, and he deserves our support. So please do as much as you can. Devonshire teas, cakes, lemonade, produce, jewellery, collectibles, craft, barbeque. Bring your contributions along over the next few Sundays, and perishables the evening before or early on the day of the Fete. We also need a few more helpers to assist on the stalls - contact David if you can help, even for an hour or two, 8437853. (ed).