

# St Paul's Presbyterian Church

"Partners in God's Mission of Love"

## NEWSLETTER - October 2017



### From the Minister's Desk

### Partners in God's Mission of Love

A glimpse of mortality.

As many of you know, just before Christmas, 2016 I was diagnosed with breast cancer. My treatment is over and the signs are good, but it has been a time in which the fact of mortality came into sharp focus.

The first thing I noticed was how violent the language around cancer is. 'Invasive ductal carcinoma', sounded a lot worse than a 12mm lump that looks like a clove.

We talk about people 'losing their battle with cancer', 'fighting a courageous battle' and other military imagery. This does not seem helpful to me. I didn't feel particularly brave or courageous. I had cancer. I am not fighting what is, but learning how to live with it. Some days it is depressing, some ordinary and some delightful. There are moments of deep sadness, moments of relief - just life, really.

A friend and I talked about what would be a better way to talk about cancer... a journey seemed too pleasurable and leisurely to describe the experience... we thought perhaps a rally! Navigating the corners as best we can, some of them blind, some slippery, some predictable and steady.

A story told by Antony di Mello 'I chop wood' is helpful to me:

*When the Zen Master attained Enlightenment he wrote the following lines to celebrate it: "Oh wondrous marvel: I chop wood! I draw water from the well!" After enlightenment nothing really changes. The tree is still a tree; people are just what they were before; and so are you. You may continue to be as moody or even-tempered, as wise or foolish. The one difference is that you see things with a different eye. You are more detached from it all now. And your heart is full of wonder.*

I suspect I have a long way to go until I attain enlightenment, but a cancer diagnosis does tend to focus the mind. I am certainly just as moody, or even tempered, just as wise or foolish as I was before the diagnosis. But I do notice a greater awareness in the ordinariness of life and death. Hearing with joy the downward liquid notes of a fern bird; walking, however slowly, in the calm, still beauty of an estuary in the evening light; allowing the blowing of a gale, the roar of the surf, the flash of lightning to fill us with awe; watching spring bulbs come into bloom; becoming immersed in the beauty of music, spending time with friends, family, whatever it is that is life giving and true.

Atul Gawande in his much admired book 'Being Mortal' says 'Medicine is the easy stuff.... it's all this 'other stuff' which is hard. How are we going to live well? What is important now, knowing that sooner or later, we are going to die? For me, these questions have been an important part of this glimpse of mortality.

This glimpse has made me more acutely aware that dying is a part of life. It is a constant in the path of human existence. One which looms larger at some times than others. Having caught a

glimpse of death on a nearer horizon, I am listening to the words of one of my wise spiritual guides, Henri Nouwen who says *"The beauty and preciousness of life is intimately linked with its fragility and mortality. We can experience that every day - when we take a flower in our hands, when we see a butterfly dance in the air, when we caress a little baby. Fragility and giftedness are both there, and our joy is connected with both."*

*Sally*

### **The Recycling Partnership**

Tony Smith on behalf of Environment Centre Hawke's Bay St Paul's members have now contributed 15.5 kg in total over 4 "collections". The centre has noted that in the last collection there were some packaging items that do not fit the criteria. One specific example was tea packaging – perhaps this came from the church kitchen as it was all Dilmah brand. There were also a couple of other food packaging items, and a tube from hand-cream. Such things are not really a problem as the collection is sorted when it gets to the centre and anything "extra" goes into the rubbish. It is probably better that people put stuff in if they are not sure but please check the board for the 'acceptable' items to help reduce double handling by the centre. Thank you.

### **Environmentally Speaking**

Isabel Morgan  
'Biodiversity' is a term that we are hearing more and more frequently, now that politicians, both local and national, have committed to protecting our endemic and native flora and fauna. And they are under continuing threat. Think of myrtle rust found not long ago in NZ. Think of early Summer, Christmas, without our crimson colour.

1080 is a tool used to control pests such as possum. In the huge wilderness areas, inaccessible to the majority of us, how could we ever hope to control possum? Who was foolish enough to bring in rabbits, mustelids, deer, thar, possum, wallaby - and rosella, escaped or deliberately freed, now in competition with our native parrots for food?

When 1080 was first used, it was indeed a blunt tool and birds were attracted to it because the pellets looked like food. Detractors would say, "The bush is now silent". That ignored the fact that the bush, though not as full of bird song as it once had been many years ago, was becoming rather more silent through predators. The use of 1080 has become much more refined with baits not palatable to birds, selectively dropped and foot trapping is out of the question for the most remote areas, so what is done must be done strategically, and continued.

"Pest-free NZ by 2050"? As the Bible tells us, "Where there is no vision, the people perish". I have a vision of a land where no pests flourish, a world that has really halted and reversed climate change. Where there is no vision...

### **Tidy-up team Garage Sale**

The tidy-up team has been working away to tidy up our spaces – especially the third office, the vestry, the small rooms in Asher Hall and the shed. When their work is finished, there will be some things that we will no longer need. Some will be offered to the Menz Shed, the Family Centre and other groups, but when that is done, we will STILL have things that are no longer needed. So we are going to have a Garage Sale. So, put aside Saturday, 11 November to help or buy or both.

Board of Managers



But before the Garage Sale, the team wants to be absolutely sure that nothing is being sold that is needed for the work of the parish. We will put everything in the **Arnold McConnochie room** well before the sale and make sure that you have plenty of time to reclaim material needed by your group. **Please let the office know which items you need.**

We will need helpers for the garage sale, too. Advertising, setting up, packing down, selling and other things I haven't thought of. Keep an eye on the bulletin and the October newsletter for more. Thank you for your support.

### **Old ones but good ones**

The Lord came unto Noah in 2017, now living in the United States, and said, 'Once again, the earth has become wicked and over-populated. Build another Ark and save 2 of every living thing along with a few good humans.' He gave Noah blueprints, saying, 'You have 6 months to build the Ark before I will start the rain for 40 days and 40 nights.'

Six months later, the Lord looked down and saw Noah weeping in his yard – but no Ark. 'Noah!' He roared, 'Where is the Ark?' 'Forgive me, Lord,' begged Noah, 'but things have changed. I needed a building permit, argued with the inspector about a sprinkler system and my neighbours claim I've violated the zoning laws by building in my yard and exceeding the height limitations. We had to go to the Development Appeal Board for a decision. Then the Department of Transportation demanded a bond be posted for future costs of moving power lines and overhead obstructions to clear the passage for the Ark's move to the sea. I told them that the sea would be coming to us, but they would hear nothing of it. Getting wood was another problem. There's a ban on cutting local trees in order to save the spotted owl. I tried to convince the environmentalists that I needed the wood to save the owls – but no go! When I started gathering the animals, an animal rights group sued me for confining wild animals against their will. They argued the accommodation was too restrictive. Then the EPA ruled that I couldn't build the Ark until they'd conducted an environmental impact study on your proposed flood. I'm still trying to resolve a complaint with the Human Rights Commission on how many minorities I'm supposed to hire for my building crew. Immigration and Naturalization is checking the green-card status of most of the people who want to work. The trade unions say I can't use my sons. They insist I have to hire only Union workers with Ark building experience. To make matters worse, the IRS seized all my assets, claiming I'm trying to leave the country illegally with endangered species. So, forgive me, Lord, but it would take at least 10 years for me to finish this Ark.'

Suddenly the skies cleared, the sun began to shine, and a rainbow stretched across the sky. Noah looked up in wonder and asked, 'You mean you're not going to destroy the world?' 'No,' said the Lord. 'The government beat me to it''.

### **November Newsletter**

Items for the November Newsletter to the Parish Office (stpaulsnapier@gmail.com) by Monday, 23 October 2017

This newsletter was delivered by..... phone.....

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

# October 2017

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1	2 1.30pm Stitch-In Time	3 9am Jitterbugs 7pm Session	4 1.30pm '500' Cards	5	6 12noon Parish Luncheon Group	7 9am Praying together
8 <b>WORSHIP</b> 9.15,10.30, 7pm 9.30 choir practice	9	10 9am Jitterbugs 7.30pm Fireside	11 1.30pm '500' Cards 7.30pm Bible Study	12	13	14 9am Praying together
15 <b>WORSHIP</b> 9.15,10.30, 7pm 9.30 choir practice	16 1.30pm Stitch-in Time	17 9am Jitterbugs 7.00pm BoM	18 1.30pm '500' Cards	19	20	21 9am Praying together
22 <b>WORSHIP</b> 9.15,10.30, 7pm 9.30 choir practice	23	24 9am Jitterbugs	25 1.30pm Afternoon Fellowship 7.30pm Bible Study	26	27 3pm Church Choir Practice	28 9am Praying together
29 <b>WORSHIP</b> 9.15, 10.30, 7pm 9.30 choir practice	30	31 9am Jitterbugs				