



St Paul's Presbyterian Church
"Partners in God's Mission of Love"

NEWSLETTER – March 2024



"Do this in remembrance of Me."

Service of Holy Communion

**Sunday, 10th March at 10:00am. Please accept this as a
personal invitation to be present.**



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Malcolm Leitch-St Paul’s visiting organist for Art Deco Sunday service

Editorial

Pam Clare

Bridget receives many email enquiries at St Paul's office, but some of the most interesting are those asking for archival and church records information. It may be evidence of a child's baptism so they can be enrolled in a church school, someone tracing their family tree and searching for their great grandmother's marriage certificate, a funeral director discovering long held ashes of a Napier couple and wondering if the parish would like to take possession of them as they had left a £1000 bequest to St Paul's. (Sylvia scattered the ashes at an appropriate place on behalf of the Parish, but no evidence could be found of them ever being church members). But a recent email from a Mr Ranen Niblett in the UK was actually offering something to us! While flicking through an old bible belonging to his grandfather, a St Paul's Church newsletter dated July 1955 was found, and would we like to have it? Ranen's grandfather had been the Moderator of the Church of Northern India, and the bible in question had been in their family home in India for 50 years, so how did the family come to have the newsletter? All is explained in Ranen's letter on Page 14.

Reading through the 1955 Newsletter No 143 is a microcosm of NZ church life in the 1950's. The church directory lists two services on Sundays, the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper on the second Sunday in March, June, September and December (as now), and well-remembered regular activities - Brownies, Women's Club, Board of Managers, Badminton Club, PWMU, Fireside Group, Lady's Guild, Worship and Bible Study, Scouts, Girl Guides, Cubs, and on Saturdays, Busy Bees at 2pm every Saturday. And in the Church Register are listed the baptisms, including someone rather well known to us all.

Also in this issue, Meg fills in a lot of gaps about the work of the Samaritans, Kerry has provided an update from Sustainable HB-Centre for Climate and Resilience explaining where the stuff in the recycling bin goes, we meet Trinity Methodist's new minister, and Care and Share put on a fabulous Art Deco fashion parade.

Moderator: Lenten Message

Right Rev Rose Luxford



Tena koutou katoa

Easter is early this year – almost as early as it can be. And that means Lent has crept up on us as well. A friend sent me a text, part of which read, “R u giving up anything, or taking up something, 4 Lent?” A good question.

This season of Lent emerged out of the practice of preparing new converts for Baptism on Easter Eve or Easter Day. By the middle of the fourth-century, a 40-day preparation period had been established. Later, Lent became a time for all Christians to prepare for Easter. It remains a 40-day long period, not counting Sundays; Sundays are considered ‘little Easters’, celebrating the Resurrection.

While Lent is no longer seen as a time to enter into a period of excessive gloom and self-denial, it remains a season that invites people into a more reflective mood.

We hear of people ‘giving something up for Lent’. Some give up particular foods for the season. Others give up things like television, Facebook, obsessive use of mobile phones and so on. All of this is designed to help reflect on what is important in life, to focus on the needs of the spirit, to think of one’s faith commitment, to identify with the majority of the world’s population who have so little.

Others prefer to ‘take up’ something new instead, something that will make a difference. Taking time each day to read and reflect on Scripture, to reconcile themselves to someone they have fallen out with or don’t like, to volunteer for a worthy project, to be in contact with people they have neglected, to pick up rubbish in the neighbourhood, and so on. Again, this is

about being intentional in looking at one's life and contributing something positive to the community.

'Giving up' something can carry with it the sense of it being a grind, doing it through clenched teeth! However, often when we give up something, we gain something valuable.

I recall a recovering alcoholic telling me of the experience of giving up drinking. For years his family had told him he had a problem, but he didn't see it. One night a television programme on alcoholism spoke powerfully to him and he started his journey of sobriety. He reflected on how much he had 'gained' through this. A whole new world opened up - the world looked, smelt and tasted different. He observed colours he hadn't seen for a long time. Relationships with his family and friends improved. Giving up can lead to freedom.

The season of Lent can be used as an opportunity to slow down, take stock, and reflect upon the direction of our own lives. We contemplate Jesus' journey to the cross and what that means for us.

I found a little list of popular Lent Bible verses:

Isaiah 58: 6-7	Take on something
Mark 1: 12-13	Find your wilderness
John 3: 16	Remember his sacrifice
1 Peter 5: 6	Reveal your struggle
Matthew 6: 16-18	Keep a secret

Giving up. Taking up. Reflecting on Jesus's journey to the cross. Let this Lenten season be a time of growing deeper into our faith and seeing the fruits of this play out in our lives and the communities in which we live.

Kia tau te Rangimarie

Rose

The Samaritans – a profile

Meg Sillay



The history of the Samaritans organisation goes back to 1950 in the UK. One week Chad Varah, a newly ordained Minister, found himself conducting six funerals, three of them were suicides, which was worrying enough, but one of those was a 12-year-old girl. Chad was appalled that a young person with her whole life ahead of her, had been so despairing as to choose to take her life.

Chad felt strongly called to support those people who were potentially suicidal. He put a discrete advertisement in the local newspaper, inviting people to visit his church or to telephone. They came in their hundreds. The response was so overwhelming that he asked members of his congregation to come and sit with the distressed people, to listen to their despair and serve cups of tea and scones while Chad worked through the queue. Then the day came when Chad opened his office door to find the rooms empty, apart from the people serving tea and scones. It was at that point the Samaritans were created. Chad realised that you don't need to be an ordained Minister or a qualified therapist to make a difference, all you need is listening skills and a great deal of patience and compassion. That is the model Samaritans still use today. We invite people with genuine care and compassion for others, and train them in listening skills and put them to answer the phones.

Samaritans in NZ began in 1960 in Wellington, when a group of clergy, from all denominations, came together to start a branch using the UK model. They worked out of the crypt of St Paul's

Cathedral. Over time Samaritans has spread across New Zealand, our centre covers BOP, Rotorua, Gisborne and HB.

So, who calls Samaritans? Sometimes it feels as if all the baby boomers have retired to HB. Samaritans are getting many calls from Seniors who now have the time to reflect on their life and revisit their challenges and triumphs. Some have regrets and fears while others have great memories. I find spending an hour on the phones with someone who has lived a long, full and rich life is one of the real rewards of being a Samaritan.

It is very hard to pin down any particular reason why people call. We do get crisis calls and are trained to deal with them, we like to think we work miles back from the cliff face and by listening and supporting and encouraging callers they will never get to the point of suicide. The majority of our work comes from people who are lonely, maybe struggling with mental illness, or just needing to make a human connection.

Our training is comprehensive. We are trained to listen- care for people, be positive, supportive and non-judgemental. That's the easy bit, we also have a list of forbidden activities- the two big "no no's" are problem solving or giving advice -we're very definite that callers get to sort out their own lives, with our support but without our advice. While it sounds easy, you should try it sometime-it's very hard not to make suggestions, solve problems and generally give callers the benefit of your "superior" knowledge. On the days when I have to bite my tongue, I remind myself that once I get my own life together, I might be in a position to advise others, but until then let's just stick with the rules. We are neutral as far as beliefs and opinions go. Once I have my Samaritans hat on, I am accepting of all viewpoints. That

includes all religions, rugby refs, vaccination, the family court, Te Tiriti, Jacinda Ardern, David Seymour, WINZ, feminists and whether or not to use Roundup (the list is not exclusive). It's jolly good discipline for me and my opinions- as my mother used to observe, it never hurts to hear someone else's opinion, you may even learn something.

We get lots of feedback from callers, some fabulous and some not so fabulous. It is wonderful to pick up the phone and have a regular caller say "hullo Meg, great to get you on the phone, do you have time for a chat? My grandson has just got his NCEA results and I am so proud of him. Let me tell you..." The not so fabulous feedback goes "oh no, not you again, I'll ring back later".

Our local centre has 35-40 volunteers. We all work from home so it is possible for Samaritans to actually live and work in the community they serve. We strongly believe that the skills we teach of active listening belong out there in the community and should not be restricted to the immediate location of a national call centre.

We work on the phones 2 hours a week. Samaritans who do the graveyard shift do 4 hours a month.

We are under constant supervision. Once a month we attend refresher training. The topics this year include death and dying, relationships, mental health and wellness, self-care and volunteer support and of course, suicide. This month I will be running a session on loneliness and ways of responding to loneliness.

Incidentally, we are always on the lookout for volunteers. If this sounds attractive to you give Samaritans a call or email me: meg.sillay@gmail.com. I'm happy to talk with you and give you some deeper information about what you might be getting yourself into.

Parish Updates

We were very fortunate to have Rev Ruth Sandiford Phelan leading our worship on a regular basis during the vacancy and we were sorry to farewell her in December at her final service with us. Ruth has taken up a call to Rotorua and was inducted as minister at Rotorua Methodist Church on 8th February 2024.



In our December newsletter Inez told us about the twenty-five Christmas shoeboxes she had filled and packed for Operation Christmas Child.

She recently received this feedback from Samaritan's Purse Operation Christmas Child (operationchristmaschild.org.au).

'We praise God for over 200,000 Operation Christmas Child shoebox gifts that were generously donated from Australia and New Zealand this year. These carefully packed gifts are on their way to the Philippines, Cambodia, Papua New Guinea, Fiji and Ukraine. Many children will hear the Good News of Jesus Christ and find their hope in Jesus!'

And another update....Inez has already started accumulating gifts for her 2024 shoeboxes!

Care and Share – Art Deco Fashion Parade

Eleanor Holmes



On Monday, 19th February, Care and Share put on a delightful afternoon of entertainment and fine food. The room was packed with members from surrounding churches along with many from St Paul's community who enjoyed the experience of Art Deco at its finest. Gorgeous costumes that were in vogue in that era were modelled, along with a story to tell us all about them. One of the male models told us about how he had found out about where his dinner jacket had come from. The jacket hailed from a small place in Scotland and the maker (who was named on the inside pocket) was to be contacted after it was established that he was still alive!

The Care and Share team ably led by Inez and Dorothy gave us memories to savour and enjoy.





A collection of photos from the Art Deco Fashion Parade and Afternoon Tea.

Recycling - Update from Sustainable HB – Centre for Climate and Resilience

Kerry Marshall

We are the Sustainable HB – Centre for Climate and Resilience, formerly the Environment Centre. We have been in the community for about 30 years and have recently rebranded and shifted our focuses towards community resilience, biodiversity, and system change. We belong to three networks that operate 147 hubs throughout New Zealand- Environment Hubs Aotearoa, Zero Waste Network and Community Energy Network.

Our centre in Hastings host our recycling station, seed bank and act as an educational hub to support local communities to work towards low-waste, resilient lifestyle. Specialist recycling leaflets (available in the church foyer) show where we accept



different sorts of recyclable items to divert them from landfill. The latest data showed that we have collected over 7 tonnes of specialist recycling over the past six months. This underscores

the power of collective action within our communities, demonstrating that together, we can truly make a positive impact in building a greener and more sustainable environment.

We also help events' organizers creating zero-waste events throughout HB, you can find our Waste Warrior team at events providing attendees guidance and education on waste minimization. The team



were at Nest Fest in early January and they diverted 18 cubic metres of plastics and cans from landfill within those two days.

One of the newest projects we have in the waste space, is a national food waste prevention project that we're involved in with Zero Waste Network and Environmental Hubs Aotearoa. The project is named Every Bite, aiming to work with communities of Aotearoa New Zealand to reduce household food waste by 10%. We are running the first 4-week Every Bite programme in February, offering practical skills that enable people to take the next steps in their sustainability journey. This project offers opportunities to connect with food and with each other in a positive and hopeful way. Through learning, sharing and celebrating success, together we will re-learn ways to appreciate our food and we will grow community wellbeing, togetherness and resilience.

We have more projects and events on biodiversity, research, environmental education, community resilience etc, so don't hesitate to contact Michelle

(michelle@environmentcentre.org.nz) to know more.

Otherwise, visit us at 201 Southland Road, Hastings or follow us on Facebook Sustainable HB.

St Paul's 1950s Newsletter sent from the UK

Bridget Dunn

In November 2023, when Pam and I were busy putting together the December newsletter, it was such a surprise to receive a 'random' email (see below) from a gentleman in London informing us of a very special document he had found in his late grandfather's Bible. Below is an excerpt from that email:-

"My grandfather was the Moderator of the Church of Northern India which is based on the Presbyterian Ministries in Canada, New Zealand, Australia among other mostly Commonwealth countries.

My grandfather's name was Dr. S.N. Talibuddin and used The New Chain Reference Bible which was gifted to him by a person by the name of Verne back in March 1946. That's what the inscription states anyway. My grandparents visited your church in New Zealand in 1955. From your historical records this would have been in the Ninth Ministry, with the Very Rev James L Gray, BA, 1950-1956. He seems to have had links to India, again, from what I have gleaned from your records.

To get to the point, this Bible was in our family home in India for 50 years when my mother sold the house and moved to another place in India before moving to London with my father who is English. Gradually, various items from India have come over and we were looking at old books and out popped this Bible which was a little moth eaten and needed work. I had several other books to get repaired so included this to the pile and while flicking through it, I saw a newsletter entitled **St Pauls Church News No. 143, dated July 1955**. I have this with me. It has travelled the world! My grandmother often used to talk about the time they made the journey by sea from India to Australia and New Zealand and visiting other places along the way and how they were away for eight months on this tour! She loved New Zealand and would tell us stories about your country which still remains on the list of places to get to for me!!

Anyway, I have this document printed by Swailes Printing Co. Ltd. Thackeray Street in Napier. I then thought I would google you and found you! Now, would you like this document? It would mean so much more to you and your parish than it does to my Mama and I, apart from the fact that it was fascinating to read! I wanted to ask you if you would like me to mail it to you?

Is your address still The Manse, 21 Lincoln Road? I could also scan it and send it by email but I wouldn't be comfortable just throwing it away! I would just leave it in the Bible where I found it! However, if you would like the original, all of us would be delighted to return it to the church from where it was picked up nearly 70 years ago!

Well, I hope your ministry continues to thrive as it has for over a century and a half! Our very best wishes to all of you and may God continue to bless your ministry at St. Pauls Church!

Yours sincerely,
Ranen Niblett (Mr.)”

Obviously, we were only too thrilled to receive the original newsletter dated July 1955 when Ranen sent it by post all the way from London. This newsletter is a fascinating snapshot of St Paul's and the wider Napier community as it was almost 69 years ago. The original whole newsletter has been enlarged and laminated; this is on the church noticeboard in the foyer if you wish to have a closer look at your leisure. You may recognise other names mentioned.

<p style="text-align: center;">CHURCH REGISTER</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Baptisms</p> <p>5th June—Wendy Vianna Bishop Murray David Arnold</p> <p>8th June—Jean M. Brock Kelvin M. Chapman John R. Roberts</p> <p>3rd July—Malcolm Scott Bishop</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Marriages</p> <p>4th June—Raymond M. Thompson to Maureen S. Wright</p> <p>11th June—Allister P. Alexander to Ann M. Denholm</p> <p>18th June—Ernest G. Stewart to Nola M. Mercer</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Funerals</p> <p>7th June—Peter S. Watters</p> <p>11th June—Mary Smith</p> <p>21st June—David Cameron Dunn</p> <p>22nd June—Christina F. Glenny</p> <p>1st July—Llewellyn R. Watkins</p> <p>Mrs. Mary Smith, known to us all as “Granny” Smith, was a faithful member of St. Paul's for many years, and a devoted christian. Our sympathy is extended to her many relatives. Granny was loved by all.</p>	
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Can you recognise this familiar church member from the baby photo taken more than 68 years ago? This person's baptism was held at St Paul's on 5th June 1955. Yes, you've guessed it, it's none other than Murray David Arnold.

Parish Register

Kenneth John Aldred O.B.E. who died at the age of 86 years on 26th January 2024. Ken's farewell was held at St Paul's Church, Napier on Friday 2nd February 2024 at 11am. Our loving sympathies go to Heather, his wife and all Ken's family including his daughters Alison and Zoe; grandchildren Olivia, Tabitha and Toby. We will be featuring a special tribute to Ken's life in our June 2024 newsletter.

Success – A Poem

Read by Zoe Aldred at Ken's funeral service

He has achieved success
who has lived well,
laughed often, and loved much;
who has enjoyed the trust of
pure women,
the respect of intelligent men and
the love of little children;
who has filled his niche and accomplished his task;
who has left the world better than he found it
whether by an improved poppy,
a perfect poem or a rescued soul;
who has never lacked appreciation of Earth's beauty
or failed to express it;
who has always looked for the best in others and
given them the best he had;
whose life was an inspiration;
whose memory a benediction.

Only Silence –

Keith Rowe

Only silence will describe such inhumanity.
Every day it seems, the evening News is a rerun of
yesterday:
the endless deaths of young and old, men and women,
all who stand in the way of another's search for
power.



In Ukraine, families huddle in ruins that were once homes
where laughter and dreams flourished and family love prevailed.
Now the men are enlisted in a cruel war that seems to have no end.
They see things that none can repeat in words: mangled bodies,
children killed before their first steps; communities destroyed.
In the midst of their fear, they dream of their families and pray
that somehow, someone will bring an end to this insanity.

In Gaza youthful conscripts follow without question orders
to kill without mercy until the last shred of support for an event
that mirrored what Palestinians have endured for a century is destroyed.
Their land was stolen, a village here, a garden there, a concrete wall
and lethal weapons beyond imagining, control the movement of a proud people.
The people of Gaza see things that cannot be repeated in human words.
Death is everywhere, its smell hangs on the air, it finds a home in every heart.

And who will tell these blood - stained stories of inhumanity and misplaced power
when tomorrow comes, the guns are silenced and politicians feign repentance?
The stories will be embedded in the lives of children scarred by these inhuman
events.

Mothers and wives will relive the long days of worry and fear, hunger and despair.
Those who obeyed commands to kill will be scarred forever, haunted by their own
deeds.

But those who saw the most, who though in life remain in death's embrace,
will remain silent lest their very words betray the enormity of those dark times.

We recall our forebears, survivors of Paschendale and Gallipoli, Crete and Greece,
those whose lives were damaged by what they saw and what they did.

They too remained silent lest their very words justify all that was done in those
dark times.

They found no words adequate to describe what they saw, felt, feared and did.
Only their glazed eyes touched by tears remained as signs of inhumanity laid bare.
When you have faced the evil depths of inhumanity only silence can describe it all.
In their silence do they somehow share in the silence of a weeping God?

Who's on Keith's Seat?



Meet Trinity's Rev `Ofa Taukolo, who was recently inducted as Presbyter of Napier Methodist Parish. As a probationer, she is on her way to ordination after studying at Trinity Methodist Theological College in Auckland. During this time, she undertook two yearlong placements, the first to Ponsonby Tongan Church with a very large Tongan congregation, and the second to Devonport Methodist Church. This was a much smaller parish, and `Ofa's first experience of an English-speaking church, but one which she found she enjoyed very much, welcoming the huge challenge of general

ministry and learning new skills outside the traditional Tongan style of worship.

`Ofa (meaning "Love") was born and grew up in Tonga where she studied for her Bachelor of Divinity. After graduating, she moved to New Zealand in 2010 with her husband Ivan whom she had met at the Bible College. Their two children were born in Auckland, son Po'ese, who is almost 10, and their daughter Lute, who is 8, named for Ivan's mother who has moved here with the family. They are enjoying living in Napier and had a strong feeling that God was calling them when they made their first visit here last year.



`Ofa's induction, held at Trinity Methodist Church on Sunday 28th January was a joyful occasion with the English speaking and Tongan congregations who worship at Trinity joining together in partnership. `Ofa was accompanied by her whanau and friends, and the service was led by Rev Nicola Teague Grundy, Superintendent, Lower North Island Synod, and Rev Kalolo Fihaki, Superintendent, Vahefonua Tonga o Aotearoa. The Tongan choir sang, and during the service, ministers and parish representatives from other denominations including those of us attending from St Paul's, surrounded `Ofa to pray with her.

`Ofa is looking forward to leading a combined worship service on the first Sunday of each month. She says that there has been a Tongan congregation for 25 years at Trinity, and it is 20 years since Trinity last had a Tongan presbyter. Some of us may remember the Rev Dr Epeli Taungapeau.

Say hello to `Ofa when we worship with Trinity over Easter.



Upcoming Events

The *Pastoral Care Group* is combining with *Care and Share* on **Friday, 2pm, March 22nd** to host a hymn singing afternoon in the **church lounge** with afternoon tea provided. Come along to the church lounge for fellowship and fun. We plan to sing Easter hymns and other favourites.

Regular Events

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 of each month 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).

Napier Repair Café: Held at Asher Hall, the upcoming dates are **23rd March, 27th April and 25th May**, 11.30am to 2.30pm.

June 2024 Newsletter

Contributions for the June quarterly newsletter should be received by **Monday 20th May, 2024**. Please forward articles to **Pam** at pamclare@xtra.co.nz or **Bridget** at the church office.

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