



St Paul's Presbyterian Church

"Partners in God's Mission of Love"

NEWSLETTER – September 2021



"This do in remembrance of Me."

Services of Holy Communion

September 12th 9:15 & 10:30

Please accept this as a personal invitation to be present.



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From the Minister's Desk

I wonder what you find yourself doing during



lockdown that you don't usually do. For me it's baking and paying more attention to the birds in our garden - feeding them and, of course, photographing them. For us, it is



tauhou (waxeye), the occasional tui, the squawking mynah, and the sparrows and finches. The birds like different things - the tauhou love oranges and other fruit (fortunately our tree has many oranges this year) and the sparrows like peanut butter and birdseed. The tui like sugar water, but not at our place apparently! I hope you are finding ways to keep your spirit sturdy.

But while for many of us, lockdown provides an opportunity for a slower pace and a greater appreciation of our surroundings. It can also be a time when we feel overwhelmed by the events playing out in our community and in the world and helpless to meet the huge needs around us - Afghanistan, Haiti, homeless people, essential workers stretched to their limits. Even the changes in our own lives which lead to additional stress and anxiety as we live in these more anxious than usual times.

Our presbytery Mission Catalyst, Stuart Simpson, posted what I found to be a very helpful article. 'If you can't take in anymore, there's a reason.' It's by Nadia Bolz-Weber, one of the writers I often turn to for wisdom and hope. (You can read the whole article [here](#).)

Bolz-Weber says "...I just do not think our psyches were developed to hold, feel and respond to everything coming at them right now; every tragedy, injustice, sorrow and natural disaster happening to every human across the entire planet, in real time every minute of every day. The human heart and spirit were developed to be able to hold, feel and respond to any tragedy, injustice, sorrow or natural disaster that was happening IN OUR VILLAGE.

To help us feel less overwhelmed and more in tune with our own gifts and needs, Nadia offers three questions:

"What's MINE to do, and what's NOT mine to do?

What's MINE to say and what's NOT mine to say?

And the third one is harder:

What's MINE to care about and what's NOT mine to care about?

To be clear – that is not to say that it is not worthy to be cared about by SOMEONE, only that my effectiveness in the world cannot extend to every worthy to be cared about event and situation. It's not an issue of values, it's an issue of MATH."

So, let's be kind to one another -- yes, it helps. Let's be kind to ourselves. Breathe as deeply as you can, Enjoy the sun when it shines. Feed the birds. Listen to the promptings of your hearts.

This quote, said to be from the Talmud, often comes to my mind at times like these.

"Do not be daunted by the enormity of the world's grief. Do justly now, love mercy now, walk humbly now. You are not obligated to complete the work, but neither are you free to abandon it." [Here is one person's response to this in song](#)

We do what we can, where and when we can. And trust in God to make sure that other hands and hearts do the rest.

Sally

Editorial

Pam Clare

Déjà vu seems to be the lockdown word of the moment. Could it be overtaking "unprecedented" and "pivot"? A quick google explains that the expression is derived from the French, meaning "already seen", and when it occurs it seems to spark

our memory of a place we have already been, a person we have already seen, or an act we have already done.

We may all be experiencing it as we become accustomed again to Zoom meetings and ordering groceries online, quiet days at home where we pay more attention to the birds and flowers in our gardens and having time to admire the bursting magnolias rather than the autumn colours of last year's lockdown when we are out on those neighbourhood walks.

In this September edition, Adair writes about her own sense of déjà vu on returning to Napier after 35 years and recognising Asher Hall where she had attended Ballet Summer School as a teenager. St Paul's is her base for her two-year ministry internship and, six months in, it is wonderful to read that she feels so well accepted, supported and encouraged in her new role.

We remember Douwe Wierdsma, our church organist for fifteen years. A personal memory is seeing him in full flight at the keyboard adorned in a large straw hat as the sun poured in through a small high window at the back of the church. I didn't realise then that one-day Dorothy and I would also have to contend with that window when the sun is in a certain position in the sky at 10.30 on a Sunday morning.

Do you know who Everen Jacob is? She is our twelve year old World Vision sponsored child and our retiring offering on the last Sunday of the month contributes towards providing a better future for her and her community in Chigodi, Malawi. Marion Fell provides an update on this work and also on a little project she has underway supporting some kindergarten children right here in Napier.

Anne Silson has come upon an old newspaper cutting outlining the story behind the stained-glass windows in the church lounge and front office, Dorothy reports on Share and Care's monthly gatherings and Kerry has provided us with a thought provoking and timely article from the Anglican Parish of Gosford which reflects on the defacing of their street sign promoting covid vaccination, during the turmoil of anti-lockdown protests in Sydney.

Thank you to all these contributors. The closing date for your contributions to the December newsletter will be Monday, November 15th.

Thoughts on Six months

Adair Oosterbroek

It was quite the buzz to drive up to St Paul's on our reconnaissance trip back in October last year, and to recognise Asher Hall! More than 35 years ago, in my teens, I came to Napier at least twice during the summer holidays to attend Ballet Summer School. It was a great time for which I have very fond memories...my relationship with St. Paul's was off to a good start.

Next, I met Sally in the flesh (we had connected online previously), and over the course of that Sunday I met many of the congregation and most of the elders, though for much of that



time none of us knew who each other was. The afternoon of introductions went well and before too long it was established that St. Paul's would be my base for my two-year ministry internship – it was happy news!

Now more than six months later I'm very grateful for all that worked together to see me here. It seems to me that God really does know what He's doing (insert winking face here!), and I believe the St Paul's family, Sally, and this inner-city situation – in very beautiful Napier – are the perfect fit for me at this time.

It's been wonderful to feel so well-accepted, supported, and encouraged. I'm enjoying the opportunities presented by the two different services, and since our KCML classes on worship, the more traditional 10:30 am service in developing in meaning for me. I'm deeply challenged by the very visible homelessness around St.



Paul's and frequently wonder what Christlike love looks like for us as an inner-city parish.

It's very special to be around the St. Paul's congregation, most of whom, have walked this journey of faith for a very long time now. Your lives are an example and an inspiration in very many ways. I'm looking forward to hearing more of your stories in the months ahead and to celebrating the faithfulness of God in them...and then together through the next year and a bit.

A thoughtful reflection found by Kerry

The Anglican Parish of Gosford (NSW) recently had its street sign promoting covid vaccination defaced with the words 'mark of the beast'. This happened during the turmoil of anti-

lockdown protests in Sydney and promoted the following response on facebook from one of the parish's leaders (reprinted with permission). I wondered what our response would be if our street sign was defaced?

"Jesus was crucified on the axis of willful misunderstanding, intentional misinterpretation, and premeditated misrepresentation. It is the most devastating manifestation of betrayal.

When a clandestine thirst for power colludes with those who have a perceived loss of identity fed by subtle propaganda the forces of good will always be in danger of being overcome by those of evil.

Last Saturday's protests and the subsequent vandalism of the sign were a manifestation of this dynamic.

Conspiracy theorists aided by manipulative media are willfully misinterpreting and misrepresenting the science around the pandemic and vaccination. It is difficult to discern what they gain from this action other than a warped sense of power and control. Whatever the motivation, the result is an increase in the public health risk, the continuation of lockdown and the devastation of life and livelihood.

A pandemic is not only the happy hunting ground of bad science but also bad theology. "The Mark of the beast" is a quote from the book of Revelation and has nothing to do with vaccination. A comprehensive understanding of the biblical narrative will always lead us to the conclusion that life is precious and that we should do all we can to preserve its quality. This includes the application of our intellect and scientific knowledge and ability.

It has been said that all the world's pain has been caused by people who were utterly convinced that they knew exactly

what they were doing and that what they were doing was right.

The reality is that when it comes to the pandemic, we don't always know exactly what we are doing. It is a rapidly changing situation. We do not know the exact ramifications of the effects of "long Covid". We know that vaccines work and are necessary, but we do not know the full extent of their side effects. We know that to limit the spread of the virus we must limit human contact; we know that will have an economic downside, but we don't know exactly what that will be. What is required here is some humility and forbearance.

That does not mean that people should not be held to account for their actions by the proper administration of the law or that governments should not be held to account by the fourth estate and ultimately at the ballot box.

We know that those who misrepresent and manipulate think they know what they are doing but they do not.

We have very little personal control over our lives now, perhaps that was ultimately what the protests were about last weekend, as destructive as they were. Our lives are in the hands of fallible medical experts and even more fallible politicians.

However, what we do have control over is our own emotional and spiritual response to this situation. I was already angry and disgusted at the protests, emotions that were only deepened on Sunday when I discovered the sign had been vandalised. The question I must ask myself is do I want to live in that space? The answer for me is clearly NO!

Forgiveness does not excuse their actions. Forgiveness frees me from the negative effect of those actions. The protestors thought they knew what they were doing. They did not.

The protesters wanted freedom, we all do, but they will not find it in their actions, especially those expressed in anger and violence.

Forgive them for they know not what they do.

And I have the added bonus of the meditative process of cleaning the sign.

Father Rod''

Views from Church:

The Story Behind the Stained-Glass Windows in the Church Lounge

Pam Clare

Anne Silson recently passed on a newspaper cutting from The Daily Telegraph which explains the story behind the stained-glass windows in the church lounge. They were commissioned as memorial windows for St Stephen's new church which opened in 1991. However, when St Stephen's joined with St Paul's in 2006, the windows remained at the Napier Family Centre until renovations to St Paul's in 2012 gave the opportunity for the windows to be transferred to the lounge and front office.

The article from The Daily Telegraph follows:

'St. Stephen's church minister Michael Coppins and Mrs. Lola Armstrong stand before one of two memorial stained-glass windows which were dedicated in the new church on Sunday.

The two windows are dedicated to Mrs. Armstrong's brother, the late Dave Christie, a former session clerk and stalwart of the former St. David's church in George's Drive which merged with St. Peter's church in Wycliffe Street two years ago under the name Napier West. When the decision was made to sell St.

David's church, St Peter's changed its name to become St. Stephen's.

St. Stephen's church was demolished late last year, and the new church opened in February.

The late Mr. Christie's loyalty to his church could always be counted on, Mr. Coppins says.

The windows were created by Chris Smith of Havelock North.'



St Paul's Child Sponsorship

Marion Fell

Dear Sponsor,

Here is my personal report for you this year:



I am now 12 years old.



Currently, I am in primary school studying grade two.



World Vision is constantly monitoring my well-being. Currently I am in good health.

This year me and my family participated in and benefited from:



School books

I received books and study materials to help me with my education personal development.



English club/education

I improved my English skills, which will help me in the future.



School library

My school now has a library to help children with their education personal development.



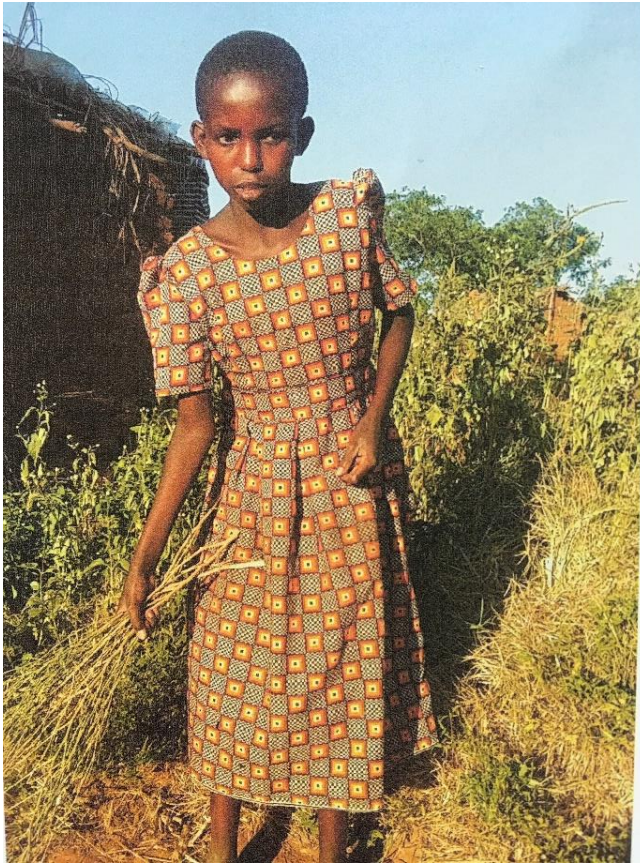
Water supply construction/improvement

We worked with others in our community to build a water source provide safe water for children.



Child/early marriage prevention workshop/training

I am more aware of the harmful effect of early marriage.



We recently received an update from our sponsored World Vision child, Everen Jacob, who lives in Chigodi, Malawi, which is about half an hour's drive from Lilongwe, the capital city of Malawi.

She is now 12 years old and has received sponsorship from St Paul's since the age of five. Thank you to you who have supported Everen by contributing to

the retiring offering on the last Sunday of each month.

CARE AND SHARE

Dorothy Finlayson

Winter Warmth:



There are many positives about winter. The Care and Share members found several ways to keep warm. Mabel has been knitting rugs for the Napier Family Center. Many thanks to all who gave wool for our knee rugs. Even at 90 years of age some members keep active and are an inspiration to us all. Thank You. We have gathered for lunch on two occasions – one for Pea, Pie and Pud and the

other for Fish and Chips. There are only three more gatherings this year – the third Monday in each month so do join us at 1.30pm in the Church lounge to have fun and be surprised.

September – an **S** Theme

October – **A Flower theme**

November – **A Christmas Theme.**

We would love to see you there.

Swinburne House Children's Books

Marion Fell

Over past years our association with and generous support of Swinburne House has allowed Christmas book gifts to be gladly received by these preschool children.

You are now invited to join a new venture: A farewell book gift to present to celebrate a 5 year old's birthday and starting of school. Farewells for remainder of 2021: x3 in September & x1 in October.

Please ring or email me if you are willing to support this new venture. ph 06 8444216 or 0276867928 or email: marionfell01@gmail.com

1 + 1 = 3?

Most of you will know that's not right but did you know you can give \$10 to the parish and the parish will get \$15? Seems too good to be true but some people will already be doing this. How? It's simple.

If you are giving \$10 in the weekly offering you can increase that to \$15 and then get \$5 back from IRD at the end of the year. That way you have paid \$10 and the Parish has received \$15. Just keep your annual giving receipt and then after 31 March lodge it with IRD.

If you are not already on the envelope system, just see Liz Willis or Sylvia Low or better still, you can set up an automatic weekly, fortnightly or monthly payment with your on-line banking (that way your donation is made even if you are unable to get to church).

The parish's bank account number is 02 0700 0013101 00

Just make sure you put your name and envelope number in the reference and details fields.

Prayer

Sally

In this time of lockdown uncertainty, here is a prayer I found from Tui Motu magazine:

Whenever we wash our hands
infuse us with a sense of service
to those in our bubbles
in our country
and around the world.

Spirit of healing and community

Strengthen us
to keep to the restrictions of this time
with hope for the good of all.

Upcoming Events: Stay Tuned

PARISH REGISTER
<i>Rae Wildbore</i> Passed: Douwe Wierdsma (St Paul's Organist and Choirmaster 1990– 2005) Our loving sympathy to Dieuwke and family.

Remembering Douwe Wierdsma

We were saddened to hear of the recent death of Douwe Wierdsma. He will be remembered by parishioners as contributing to our church life as a gifted musician and choirmaster with the ability to improvise and transpose at will.

In 1985 Douwe and his wife Dieuwke and their two young children arrived in New Zealand from Holland. Douwe was contracted to teach music at a local high school and later was an itinerant teacher of music in

schools with clarinet as his specialty instrument. The family worshipped at St Paul's, and in 1990, following the passing of Percy Wilkinson, Douwe took over the position of organist and choirmaster. Sadly, for health reasons, he was forced to retire from this role in 2005.



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Phone

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