



Mairangi & Castor Bays Presbyterian Church

NEWSLETTER

December 2018

Minister: Rev Dr Tokerau Joseph



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CHURCH DIRECTORY

Minister

Rev Dr Tokerau Joseph

Email: tokerau.j@gmail.com

Ph: 478 6180

Administrator

Jo Wyman-Macer

Office hours:

Wednesday via phone and email

Thursday - Friday 9am to 1pm in office

Ph: 478 6180

Email: office@bayspc.nz

Street Address

10 Hastings Rd

Mairangi Bay

Vehicle Access

Between 8 & 10 Penzance Rd

Postal Address

PO Box 65299

Mairangi Bay

Website

www.bayspresbyterian.org.nz

Parish Clerk

Stewart Milne

Ph: 478 5786

Mobile: 027 293 8499

Treasurer, property and finance

George Wyman

Ph 478 6411

Support worker for the elderly

Margaret Pont

027 225 8893

REGULAR PARISH ACTIVITIES

- **GIRLS' BRIGADE** - Tuesdays during School term.
Church Hall 6.30-8pm.
Kay Barbour Ph 478 7603



- **LADIES HOME GROUP** - Wednesdays 10.15am.
Contact Heather on 479-8822 for further details.



- **GARY SYME'S BORN AGAIN BODIES**
Wednesdays Church Hall. 1.00-2.00pm
Further information Gary Syme Ph 479 2212



- **ENGLISH CONVERSATIONS**
1pm—2.30pm Wednesdays New Meeting Room 2.
Further Information Stewart Milne 478 5786



- **HOUSE GROUP**
Wednesdays 7.30pm at the Shadbolts
Contact Dorille Shadbolt Ph 479 3953.



- **LUNCHEON GROUP**
2nd Thursday of month 12-2pm in Church hall
Further information Jill Wyman 021 066 1059.



- **DEE'S SOCIAL GROUP**
Thursdays 10am-2pm Mairangi Bay Church Hall
For further information Stewart Milne Ph 478 5786.

- **FRIDAY NIGHT DISCUSSION GROUP**
Meeting 3rd Friday 6.30pm shared meal.
Venue circulates. For further information contact
Jenni & Allan Jones Ph 478 5694.



- **MAINLY MUSIC**
Fridays during the school term.
Church Hall 10-11am



mainly
music

AN UP-DATE FROM TOKERAU

Kia orana and greetings.

The Christian season of Advent is upon us. To help us appreciate its place in our tradition the following is a brief background.

Advent is a season observed in many Western Christian churches as a time of expectant waiting and preparation for the celebration of the coming of Jesus at Christmas. It is the beginning of the Western liturgical year and commences on the fourth Sunday before Christmas. The term Advent is an anglicized version of the Latin word *adventus*, meaning "coming". It is the translation of the Greek word *parousia*, commonly used to refer to the second coming of Christ.

It is unknown when exactly the period of preparation for Christmas began. Some have speculated that it goes back to the time of the Twelve Apostles or that it was founded by Saint Peter himself. By the fifth century, a forty-day season of preparation for the Epiphany was being practiced in parts of Gaul. It was certainly in existence from about 480 and the novelty introduced by the Council of Tours of 567 was to order monks to fast every day in the month of December until Christmas. Rome eventually adopted a four-week Advent before Christmas.

For Christians, the season of Advent anticipates the coming of Christ from two different perspectives. The season offers the opportunity to share in the ancient longing for the coming of the Messiah, and to be alert for his Second Coming. It is both a time of thanks for the gift of Christ to us in past time and anticipation of his return. Associated with Advent was a period of fasting known also as the Nativity Fast or the Fast of December. Therefore, it is a time for self-examination; to remind ourselves of how much we need a saviour as we prepare to meet Christ at Christmas.

There are different ways we can celebrate Advent. Practices associated with it include keeping an Advent calendar, lighting an Advent wreath, or praying an Advent daily devotional. Other ways of preparing for Christmas include setting up Christmas decorations.

Advent doesn't get much attention compared to Christmas, though interest in Advent is growing steadily in many churches and in many Christian homes. Some Protestants ignore Advent because it isn't taught in Scripture and because they associate it with Roman Catholicism. I have to admit that the Presbyterian Church I grew up in did not make a great deal of Advent or of explaining it to people. In some ways secular culture seems to make a huge emphasis on preparing for Christmas – even if for money's sake.

Yet, I remember as a young fellow how exciting the build-up to Christmas was. That child-like delight could not be hidden as I eagerly anticipated opening presents and having fun with family members. Sadly, I don't have the same excitement about presents today (except when seeing my children and grandchildren opening theirs). But my appreciation of what Christ has done, is doing, and continues to do for me and the world is unwavering.

My prayer is that we, as a faith community here at Mairangi & Castor Bays Presbyterian Parish intentionally continue to testify to God's grace in Christ as we prepare for his coming as a child at Christmas. I hope that you all have a most enjoyable time during the festive season and, most important, keep safe. On behalf of Tangi and our family, I wish you all a very merry Christmas and Happy New Year.



UPDATE FROM PARISH COUNCIL

At our Parish Council Meeting on 20 November we :

- Spent time on pastoral matters. Tokerau led us in prayer for those needing support
- Were updated on the many activities that are being planned for the period between now and Christmas including : the final Hindi Service for the year(25 Nov); Games and Food evening (30 Nov); Packing of Gift parcels (2 Dec); Choral Service (9 Dec); Luncheon Group Christmas Lunch (13 Dec); Communion Service (16 Dec); Dees Christmas Lunch (13 Dec) ; Christmas Eve Carols (7pm 24 Dec); Christmas Day Service (0930 25 Dec) and more ...
- Agreed to accept the quote for an enhanced Seismic Assessment for the hall. Note – the church has been strengthened to meet earthquake requirements and we need to have the hall checked out again and strengthened if necessary.
- Received positive feedback from the special communion service and lunch held on 20 November
- Discussed the results from the Parish Survey which was initiated by the Presbytery and decided to take an early opportunity to share these with the congregation and to pick up key points for Parish Council to follow up on.
- Agreed to engage a valuer to provide an estimate of costs to the church if we decide to accept the Auckland Council's intention to sell the accessway from Penzance Road to the church and property owners at numbers 8, 10 and 10A Penzance.



Stewart Milne

CHRISTIAN WORLD SERVICE ENVELOPE

With this Church Newsletter you will find a donation envelope from CWS. As you can imagine our church gets many approaches from different charities to send out donation requests. This is the only one that we send out to our members on an annual basis. CWS has a very good reputation for delivering overseas aid. Donations can be sent direct or through the church.



LUNCHEON GROUP

Our last meeting for the year will be on Thursday 13th December from 12- 2pm
BRING A PLATE OF XMAS FOOD TO SHARE and be treated to a
Christmas Extravaganza
from
THE GLENFIELD ENTERTAINERS.

Trade table & raffles operating.
Gold coin entry.

Note that there is no meeting in January and the first meeting next year is on
February 14th.

KAREL LORIER'S REFLECTIONS

NZ Sculpture on the Shore

During the reformation in the 16th century the protestant reformers were suspicious of art. They were concerned that people might pay devotion to works of art as idols. Much religious art was destroyed during this time. We lost a lot through this as art raises important questions for reflection on our spiritual journey.



The recent NZ Sculpture Onshore event which supported the Women's Refuges had works of art which moved me deeply. I am still pondering them. That's part of the ambiguity of a work of art. I will write about three of them.

The first, "Fist that Knew," by Joshua Olley, stone (glacial erratic). A tightly closed fist encloses a small bird.



The work is beautifully done. I had trouble photographing it because people were eager to touch the smooth stone work. What does it mean to me? We humans, who have come of age and know about ecology continue to use our power to destroy it- even vulnerable birds? God whose eye is on the sparrow which don't fall without God's knowledge, is protecting a vulnerable bird? A human hand, realising how vulnerable birds are because of the exploitation of nature, protects this bird? The ambiguity is tantalizing. I have no idea what the artist intended. These are just my reactions to the work.



The second, "An Installation" by Heidi Latsky, featuring the Touch Compass Dance Company, showed people posing as works of art. Latsky writes *"A commentary on the body as spectacle and society's obsession with body image. Members of the disability, performance and fashion worlds are often stared at and objectified in their daily lives. Reverting the gaze is integral to disability culture. In this installation, the performers have the power to choose what they do or do not reveal, giving them control over a personal journey that cannot help but be affected by*

an audience.” I found this a very moving installation. As a portrait photographer I am aware of how much people over-value their physical appearance, as if their value as people depends on it. In God’s sight, as Jesus taught us, we are all valuable regardless of our appearance, health, wealth, religious observance, gender or race. We have a long way to go to accept people who are different from what we assume to be the norm (i.e. someone like us). All too often we judge people by their appearance.



The third art work that moved me.

“Leap of Faith,” by Shona Lyon, was a work in bronze. The term “leap of faith” was first coined by Soren Kierkegaard, (1813-1855) Danish philosopher, theologian, poet, social critic and religious author. I read some of his writings during a time, in my late teens and early twenties, when my faith was tested. I could no longer accept the fundamentalist understanding of the Bible which I was taught as a child and in my early teens was struggling to find a way ahead. A friend suggested reading Kierkegaard’s writings and I came across the term leap of faith. We make such a leap of faith, when, from all the many options available to us in our time, we choose the way of Jesus, love, compassion, and forgiveness. This is an enormous leap.



The sculpture suggested this to me with the figure with its toes barely touching the solid rock and launching itself with arms open into unknown space. At certain times the commitment to Jesus appears to be like that until we discover in the way of Jesus a place to stand, a turangawaewae.

CHURCH GIVING

There are a number of ways people contribute financially to support the running of the church and our ministries to the wider community:

- Regular giving through the Envelope System. We will soon be preparing numbered offering envelopes for January – June 2019. If you would like to be added to the system for income tax donation purposes **contact Norma Baker on 443 3108 before December 4th**. If you have spare envelopes you can still use them. Please let Norma know if you have plenty.
- *The Automatic Payment system*. This is particularly good for busy people and can be used for intermittent or regular donations. The account number of the church is **03 0180 0052341 02**
- Cash or cheque donations into the Sunday plate
- Receipts are issued annually for regular giving and can be used for tax deductions.

BITS AND PIECES

Early February: John Shadbolt will do an armchair travel discussion which was postponed due to other commitments, date to be decided.

Sunday 9 December 10am:

Sunday Christmas Choral Service

followed by
Christmas mince pies



Wednesday 12 December 6pm:



Mairangi Bay Carols by Candlelight.

Come and join our Mairangi Castor bays Presbyterian members singing at the Mairangi Bay Playground for a Mairangi Bay Community Event. Families are invited to this local event. Bring a picnic dinner/rugs/fold up chairs & enjoy the Mairangi Bay School choir along with other community groups.

SURVEY OF OUR PARISH

Back in October the Northern Presbytery sent our parish a survey consisting of a large number of questions designed to assess how things are going for us including alerting us to any areas where it may be worth considering a change in priorities.

Our Parish Council decided that we should open this up to anyone in the congregation who wished to complete it. Thank you to the 33 people who did.

On Wednesday 21 November Rev Andrew Norton, who is managing the surveys for each of the 85 parishes in the Northern Presbytery, presented the survey results for our parish to the Parish Council.

Andrew started by saying that our results were “very encouraging”. He then went on to share with us an overview of the results. Against each of the questions under the various headings the respondents were asked to rate either “Strongly Agree”, “Agree”, “Disagree” or “Strongly Disagree”. The questions were designed to elicit a response of “Agree” if things were going well.

Under the headings of : Leadership (Minister and Elders) ; The Experience of Worship Services; The Culture of our Congregation and The Mission of our Congregation - more than 90% of the responses were “Agree” or “Strongly Agree”.

In terms of a description of our congregation the majority of results indicated positive trends although there was an appreciation of rising costs and static or reducing income which from our perspective are not positive trends.

Areas where the survey showed we are making some progress but still have a way to go include: Attracting and retaining young families and youth; Knowing the needs of the local community and following up on those needs; Ensuring that the congregation is reflective of the wider community; and Celebrating faith transitions.

Along with the detailed results (which are available for anyone who wishes to see them - they can be emailed to you) there were a number of helpful comments from participants which Parish Council will be following up on. However as Andrew pointed out we are clearly on the right track with our focus on worship, community activity and pastoral care.

CALENDAR OF PARISH EVENTS FOR 2018

EVENT	TIME	PLACE	FREQUENCY	CONTACT
Youth & children	10am	Mairangi Bay Church	Sundays	Pauline Gulliver 021 0244 9616
Girls Brigade	6.30pm - 8.00pm	Mairangi Bay Church Hall	Every Tuesday in school term	Kay Barbour 478-7603
Parish Council	7.30pm	Mairangi Bay Church Lounge	3rd Tuesday of the month	Stewart Milne 478 5786
Born Again Bodies	1 - 2.00pm	Mairangi Bay Church Hall	Every Wednesday	Gary Syme 479 2212
English Conversations	1 - 2.30pm	Mairangi Bay New Meeting Room 2.	Every Wednesday	Stewart Milne 478 5786
Ladies Home Group	10.15 am	10A Newhaven Tce Mairangi Bay	Wednesdays	Heather Gibson 479 8822
Luncheon Group	12.00 noon	Mairangi Bay Church Hall	2nd Thursday of the month	Raewyn Henderson 410 4423
Church Choir	7.15pm	Mairangi Bay Church	Thursdays leading up to special services	Norma Baker 443 3108
Dees Social Club	10am	Mairangi Church lounge	10.00am-2.00pm Every Thursday	Margaret Pont 021 670 019
Board Games & Morning Tea	10.00am-2.00pm Meeting Room 2	Mairangi	3rd Tuesday of the month	Margaret Pont 021 670 019
House Group		22A Hastings Rd	TBA	Dorille Shadbolt 479-3953
Friday Night Discussion Group	6.30pm	To be Advised	3rd Friday of the month	Karel Lorier 414 6321
Mainly Music	10.00am-11a m	Mairangi Bay Church Hall	Every Friday in school term	Tangi Joseph
Board and Card Games	10am-12noon	Mairangi Bay Church Hall	3 rd Tues	Margaret Pont 021 679019
Transportation	Arranged as required and as requested			Norma Baker 443 3108