



Mairangi & Castor Bays Presbyterian Church

NEWSLETTER

JULY 2021



Friday night fun - Games and a shared meal

Minister: Rev Dr Tokerau Joseph

CHURCH DIRECTORY

Minister: Rev Dr Tokerau Joseph
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Thursday—Friday 9am to 1pm

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***This month's newsletter contains photos of parish activities.
Many thanks to Karel for collated photos.***

REGULAR PARISH ACTIVITIES

- **ACTIVITIES MORNING - 1st Tuesday of the month 9.30am - 12pm**
Book Group 9am / Games & Gatherings 10am
Discuss, swap, borrow books, play cards & board games & a cup of tea
Contact Raewyn **410 4423** or Margaret **021 679 019**



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



- **LADIES HOME GROUP -**
10.15am Wednesdays
Contact Heather on **479-8822**



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



- **ENGLISH CONVERSATIONS**
1pm - 2.30pm Wednesdays Meeting Room 2.
Further Information John Shadbolt 479 3953 Grace Liu 021 0487978



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



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



- **DEE'S SOCIAL GROUP**
Thursdays 10am-2pm Mairangi Bay Church Hall
For further information Tangi Joseph 022 657 3223.

- **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
Ph Angel Matapo 022 486 5409



- **FAMILY STYLE FUN NIGHT**
1ST Friday every month Church Hall 6pm
Ph Angel Matapo 022 486 5409

UPDATE FROM TOKERAU

Last week, I spent time talking with someone recently released from prison. We spoke about prison reform and rehabilitation. With respect to the latter, this person said that any transformation needs to begin from a point of complete powerlessness. I didn't quite grasp this concept until I came across an article by Jake Owensby about addiction. I wish I read it before preaching last Sunday. I'd like to share some of the article with you.

The pathway to recovery, as well as the key to coping with loved ones in the grip of addiction, begins with learning one crucial lesson. We are powerless.

This is a lesson that nobody really likes learning. That's because you can only learn about your own powerlessness by experiencing it first-hand. Nobody can do your homework for you. Addicts learn this lesson through misery. They want to stop. They've lost careers, relationships, and health. Their souls are rarely at peace. And yet they are driven by a craving they can neither stem nor control.

The lesson comes by way of a broken and desperate heart for family and friends of the actively addicted. They've tried love and persuasion and coercion. And yet none of this has changed the loved one's addictive behaviour. As it turns out, addiction's foundational lesson is also a core lesson for faith. A life of faith is rooted in the acceptance of grace. And grace is a gift for the powerless. Not a reward for the spiritually muscular.

Jesus teaches this lesson in a myriad of ways. For instance, he once crossed the Sea of Galilee with his friends after a long day of teaching. As evening approached, they had scrambled into a boat and cast off. Jesus had promptly fallen asleep. A windstorm swept across the sea. The boat started taking on water. The disciples feared that they might go under. So they woke Jesus. He promptly silenced the wind and calmed the waves.

Only after the storm had passed did Jesus ask them about their faith (Mark 4:35-41). Jesus first let them experience powerlessness. Then he asked them to reflect on their faith. He wasn't interested in giving them a creed or a catechism to memorize. Jesus had come to open their hearts and minds to the God who is always already present.

In the third and fourth century, the Desert Mothers and Fathers devoted themselves to learning precisely this lesson. They committed to a life of rigorous asceticism and prayer. They would spend hours in their humble cells wrestling with their own inner demons.

Contrary to what you might expect, their aim was not to conquer and eradicate their selfish or violent or lustful impulses. Instead, pushing themselves to their

human limit, they would eventually fail to perfect themselves. Those unwelcome thoughts and desires would pass briefly and then inevitably return. These desert monastics struggled to defeat their own worst angels until those angels showed themselves to be too strong for them. In their failure, they discovered for themselves their need for grace. For a love that will always embrace them in their raggedy imperfection just as they are. By falling flat on their face they experienced being picked up and dusted off by a power greater than themselves. Learning their powerlessness taught them their need for God.

Paul once urged us “not to accept the grace of God in vain.” (2 Corinthians 6:1) What I take him to mean is that God’s grace transforms us. Paradoxically, acknowledging our powerlessness makes us powerful. Only, it’s a power that the world knows too little about.

Accepting grace makes us compassionate. It moves us to embrace the raggedly imperfect people around us. Not because we can change them or improve them or get some reward. But because we now know that we are the beloved.



Photos from the Hindi Mission Service.



LUNCH GROUP

MID WINTER CHRISTMAS LUNCH THURSDAY JULY 8TH 12- 2PM
Bring a PLATE OF FOOD TO SHARE & enjoy fellowship over a cup of tea or coffee.

We will be entertained by THE GLENFIELD ENTERTAINERS which includes our very own Bronwyn & Peter Stone.

Christmas raffles & trade table operating.

Gold coin donation at the door.

A WORD FROM KAREL

Chess and The Homeless Boy

Forgiveness is central to Christian faith. Christians are forgiven and forgiving people. In recent years there has been growing interest in the acts of forgiveness and reconciliation. This has been heightened by what happened in countries which are torn by strife, for example, South Africa, and Northern Ireland. In the US the John Templeton Foundation, which promotes scholarly research into the moral and spiritual dimensions of life, funded a Campaign for Forgiveness research to the tune of US\$7 million (about \$10 NZ). This funded 47 projects researching how forgiveness works for individuals, in families and among nations. It included the effects on those who forgive and those who do not.

This research is not just theoretical with no practical application. The lead researcher, Everett Worthington, encountered the almost unimaginable. In 1996 while writing his book “To Forgive is Human,” an assailant sexually abused and murdered his 76-year-old mother with a crowbar. Later his brother who found her, committed suicide in reaction to the trauma. Worthington’s initial response was to seek revenge. He wanted to bash the attacker’s brains out with a baseball bat. What did forgiveness mean now?

He had a sleepless night. He recalls: *“I saw myself looking at that baseball bat. I thought to myself whose heart is darker, mine or his? Who did I write this book for? Everybody else? That was the moment I forgave him. It changed my whole life.”*

Usually in services of Christian worship we pray the Lord’s prayer with the line, “Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us.” In Matthew’s gospel the prayer is followed by the comment (Matt 6:14-15) *“If you forgive others the wrongs they have done to you, your Father in heaven will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive others, then your Father will not forgive the wrongs you have done.”* When Peter asked Jesus, *“Lord, if my brother keeps on sinning against me, how many times do I have to forgive him? Seven times?”* Matthew 18:21-22 *“No, not seven times,”* answered Jesus, *“But seventy times seven.”* In other words, don’t keep count.

This conversation is followed by the Parable of the Unforgiving Servant, (Matthew 18:23-35) which shows the importance of forgiveness because we have been forgiven much.

Forgiveness is central. Research conducted through the John Templeton Foundation Project and other recent research has revealed the following

which I bullet point for the sake of brevity.

- Forgiveness is essential for the spiritual, physical, and mental health of individuals and for the groups and communities to which they belong.
- Contrary to expectations, when asked, Christians did not show any greater degree of forgiveness than people of other faiths or no faith. However, they reported fewer grudges and resentment than the others in the studies.
- Forgiveness requires strength and courage. It is never easy, this is especially so when we have been brought up in a culture where resentment, revenge and punishment are the norm. Convictions, punishment, imprisonment, banishment, and social ostracism are seen in such cultures as the obvious solution to solve the problem of those who offend - despite evidence to the contrary.
- A lack of forgiveness can be dangerous to the health of those who do not forgive, with increased blood pressure, heart problems, anxiety, stress, addictions and the risk of physical and mental illness.
- Similarly, the offender who is not forgiven suffers. There can be a break down of relationships, employment and social acceptability which have huge implications for them and their community.
- Lack of forgiveness can bring about endless cycles of revenge, paying back for past wrongs, this tit-for-tat, an eye for an eye, or utu can keep going for generations.
- It is okay to forgive even if the offender does not want to be forgiven or seek reconciliation.
- There are occasions when it is not helpful to forgive, such as when a person is in an ongoing abusive marriage or relationship where there is no change. That can result in a recurring cycle of forgiveness and abuse.
- Forgiveness has two parts. One is a conscious decision to forgive. The second is emotional forgiveness, which takes time as on occasions feelings of anger and resentment rise in us. Professional help may be needed with this.
- Cultivating a Christian attitude of forgiveness is important for a healthy spiritual life. It is part of what Jesus calls the Kingdom of God, St Paul calls living "in Christ" and John's Gospel calls "abundant life." Included in that is accepting forgiveness when we are forgiven.
- Until 2020 it was believed that children could not forgive or understand forgiveness. Research reported last year, showed that children as young as 4 or 5 can understand forgiveness.
- Frequently, the most difficult person to forgive is ourselves for the wrong we have done.

The Good News of the Christian gospel is that we are a forgiven people.

Forgiving sets a prisoner free – you.

If you want to discuss this article you can contact me on 021903762 or email karellorier@gmail.com.



Val Grosse with volunteers leading Tai Chi exercises at our Dees Group on Thursdays.



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:

- Cash or cheque donations into the Sunday plate
- Regular giving through the Envelope system.
- 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**

If you would like to be added to the system for income tax donation purposes **contact Norma Baker on 443 3108** Receipts are issued annually for regular giving and can be used for tax deductions.

UPDATE FROM PARISH COUNCIL

We commence our Parish Council Meetings with one of our number 'Constituting the Meeting' – either with a prayer or reading or both. Our June Meeting was constituted by George Wyman with a piece from Daily Bread on one of life's lessons which was 'Hanging in there or Perseverance'. Tokerau later incorporated this into the Whanau Service on 20 June which was based around the theme of Fear and Faith.

We then:

- Spent time on pastoral matters and Tokerau led us in prayer for those of our members who are unwell
- Were advised that our Special Appeal for funds has resulted in the \$15k deficit which we were facing for the year ending 30 June being turned into a surplus which should allow us to continue with our various mission projects for the coming year. A special note of appreciation to those who have contributed. The amounts donated will be incorporated into your tax reclaim certificates at the end of the Tax Year. The Appeal closes on 30 June.
- Reminded the Convenors of our Committees that the approval of our Parish Plan now clears the way for proceeding with the action points which it contains
- Learnt that Maureen Little from the Presbyterian Support Budget Advisory Service has agreed to speak to us on Sunday 11 July
- Indicated a preference for the midweek devotions on You Tube and Facebook which Tokerau produces (and stars in) and which are increasingly popular should continue during the period of his study leave if possible. Tokerau and Karel have offered to assist with a training session and we are opening this up to members of the Congregation who are prepared to participate. Please make contact with Ian Watson.
- Agreed to accept the invitation from the Mairangi Business Association to participate in their Christmas Carnival (20 and 27 November) by way of holding a book fair in the Church on 20th (Glen Stanton will be organising this and will appreciate help) and Carols (plus Cook Island and Hindi Music) on the 27th
- Were reminded of the Mid Winter Dinner after church at Montrose on 25 July. Book with Dorille
- Received and considered the point that our pew Bibles are the Good

News version whereas some of those taking the readings in church use other versions which makes it difficult for those following from the pew Bibles. Parish Council decided to encourage the readers to use the Good News version of the Bible when taking the readings during the service.

Stewart Milne



English Conversations - Wednesdays 1pm

Quiz night is Back!

Save the date, Saturday 21st August @5-8pm “ish” in the hall. Start putting together your teams, compete against or with your family and friends.

Food Bank : We are currently donating an average of 5 bins of food a month to the Family Works Food Bank. This is distributed to identified needy families across Auckland. When I took the last lot in it was as usual greatly appreciated and the person receiving it who was new to me said “You must have a big parish”. My reply was “Not big in numbers but big hearts.” The need is very much there. Stewart Milne

When Nature is in slumber
Idle in the deep
Nonetheless, she's dreaming of
T rue promises to keep
E ventually, she'll awaken
Revitalized by sleep



Psalm 74:17 "Thou hast made summer and winter."

dfm / dlm

QuotesIdeas.com

Favourite Hymns Service - Sunday 8th August

Your mid-winter tonic!

Get your thinking caps on for your favourite hymn, for our annual service
Please contact Bronwyn Stone (479 6631 or email: pebros@gmail.com) by
Wed 14th July. Details required are:

Your name and contact phone number

Favourite Hymn (Title /first line / where the music can be found)

Which TWO verses you would like us to sing?

Why this is significant to you / why you chose this?

Roast lunch at Montrose - Sunday, 25 July 2021 12 noon.

We will be having our annual Winter Roast Lunch at Montrose. Please
contact Dorille on 09 479 3953 by Wednesday, 21 July 2021 to confirm your
attendance as she needs numbers for catering purposes. We look forward to
you joining us. Thanks Dorille

Vaccinations

We are getting closer to having the opportunity to be vaccinated against the
Covid 19 virus. The Interchurch Bioethics Council has produced a useful
Questions and Answers sheet which is recommended for anyone who still
has questions or is unsure as to whether to accept vaccinations. Copies are in
the foyer.

CALENDAR OF PARISH EVENTS FOR 2020

EVENT	TIME	PLACE	FREQUENCY	CONTACT
Activities Mornings, Board & Card Games	10am-12noon	Mairangi Bay Church Lounge	1st Tues of the month	Margaret Pont 021 679019
Born Again Bodies	1 - 2pm	Mairangi Bay Church Hall	Every Wednesday	Gary Syme 479 2212
Church Choir	Sun 9am before Choral services	Mairangi Bay Church	Thursdays before special services	Norma Baker 443 3108
Dees Social Club	10am -2pm	Mairangi Church lounge	Every Thursday	Tangi Joseph 022 657 3223
English Conversations	1 - 2.30pm	Mairangi Bay	Every Wednesday Meeting Room 2.	John Shadbolt 479 3953
Friday Night Discussion Group	6.30pm	To be Advised	3rd Friday of the month	Karel Lorier 414 6321
Girls Brigade	6.30 - 8pm	Mairangi Bay Church Hall	Every Tuesday in school term	Kay Barbour 478-7603
House Group		22A Hastings Rd Mairangi Bay	TBA	Dorille Shadbolt 479-3953
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
Mainly Music	10.00-11a m	Mairangi Bay Church Lounge	Every Friday in school term	Angel Matapo 022 486 5409
Parish Council	7.30pm	Mairangi Bay Church Lounge	3rd Tuesday of the month	Stewart Milne 478 5786
Transportation Available	<i>Arranged as required and as requested</i>			Norma Baker 443 3108
Youth & children	10am	Mairangi Bay Church	Sundays	Angel Matapo 022 486 5409