



## **Mairangi & Castor Bays Presbyterian Church**

### **JULY 2023 NEWSLETTER**

**Minister: Rev Dr Tokerau Joseph**

[www.bayspresbyterian.org.nz](http://www.bayspresbyterian.org.nz)

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*Family Games and Shared Meal night, 4th June*

## **UPDATE FROM TOKERAU**

I delivered two lectures at KCML in Dunedin on Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> June. The papers were based on my doctoral research on ethnic relations in the PCANZ. Very briefly, the first topic noted that despite our New Zealand population becoming increasingly ethnically and culturally diverse, most of our congregations do not reflect this diversity. This is in contrast to our Book of Order and Confession of Faith, Kupu Whakapono, affirming an ecclesiology that is grounded in the unity and diversity of Christ and the Trinity. We are one in Christ, without denying our cultural heritage, and we are a people of the triune God of community. The second paper looked at our Christian identity that incorporates both gospel and culture aspects. When we emphasise one aspect over the other, it can shape the kind of Christian community we belong to. Emphasising the gospel aspect may disregard the cultural input or expression of faith by members. But if the gospel is to be lived out in a cultural context, then whose culture is used to express faith? Conversely, if the culture aspect is emphasised then it may be more appealing to a particular ethno-cultural group. The result is more like homogeneity rather than diversity. Therefore, it is important to evaluate our Christian identity as individuals or communities to see how balanced or imbalanced gospel and culture might be in our life of faith.

I'm pleased that we are intentionally and actively trying our best to be faithful to our ecclesiology here at Mairangi & Castor Bays Presbyterian Church. Our cross-cultural or inter-cultural efforts have seen our Hindi mission connecting with more Indians here on the North Shore. Through the English Conversations group, a growing number of Asians are becoming involved with various activities in our church life. Although not all are joining us in worship, the developing relationships with them are encouraging. They are providing opportunities for learning and appreciating those who may be different from us. The goal is not assimilation; rather, the shaping or evolving of us all as we navigate and negotiate what it means to be people (brothers and sisters in Christ) of the triune God of community.

The focus of our mission and ministry is not ethno-cultural diversity. It is testifying to the love of God in Christ in the power of the Spirit. But we can't do this as if the reality of this diversity is irrelevant or absent. Auckland is New Zealand's largest city, with a population of 1.67 million. With almost 40% of its population comprising people born outside New Zealand it is increasingly diverse. Currently around 12% of the city's population is Māori, 53.5% is European, 16% have Pacific Island heritage, and the most dramatic increase over the last two decades has been in Auckland's Asian population (from Taiwan, Hong Kong, South Korea, India, the People's Republic of China, etc.) which now stands at around 28% of the total. It is projected that

by 2048, one in every four New Zealander will be of Asian heritage. These statistics are a clear indicator of the kind of people we can expect to engage with as a church. They also challenge us as to how we can engage with them and how that might shape our church membership and practices moving forward.

I'm confident that as we continue to be a welcoming Christian community, people of all cultural backgrounds will recognise and respond positively to God's welcome of them.

*"Therefore welcome one another as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God." Romans 15:7*

## **Tokerau**

### **Girls Brigade Mairangi Bay needs a new leader.**

Girls Brigade has been an activity held in our Church for 61 years. Kay Barbour is retiring in October. If there is anyone willing to discuss the requirements to become involved with leading this group please contact Alastair Emerson Ph 0276880076



## **Dees social group**

**The Dees social group** is going well with numbers now up to 12 members. Families are forever expressing their gratitude and thanks with what Dees offers for them and their loved ones.

I would like to acknowledge that without the support of an amazing Dees team of volunteers, this would not have been possible. You are truly "God's Angels" as a family member would always comment when picking up her loved one.

## **Tangi**



## **A Word from Karel**

### **Housing**

I know it is election year because there has been emphasis by politicians on solving the problems of crime. The simple solution is to lock criminals up, and boot camps. Research in NZ and overseas shows that these apparently simple solutions, although they may appeal to the electorate, simply do not work.

The evidence is that there is a strong correlation between poverty, and particularly a lack of secure affordable housing, and crime. Ram raids, assaults and car thefts for joy riding are not generally perpetrated by young people who are engaged with schooling and come from secure comfortable homes. It is therefore no surprise that although crime is generally decreasing there has been an attention-grabbing series of ram raids and gang activity. Social Media through which the perpetrators publicise their “daring feats” has added to this.

We have a housing shortage in Aotearoa New Zealand. There are people living in cars, even on occasion in the park close to where I live. Others live in emergency housing in motels which were never designed for long term occupancy and often are too small for the family. Insecure housing leads to children’s education being disrupted by frequent changes of school. Research and estimates show that children lose about six months of learning with each shift. Importantly, it is difficult for their social development as they lose old friends and must find new friends in each school where there are already existing social networks.

This lack of good secure housing is affecting the well-being of NZ in a big way. We are losing potentially talented young people who can contribute to the nation. Māori and Pacifica are proportionally over represented. This situation has arisen through government policy over the last 30 years as housing researcher, Kay Saville-Smith, reported to a Christchurch conference on housing,

“The housing system is “struggling to move on from a national experiment” administered in the early 1990s. That was when government support was removed for first home ownership (in the form of large-scale concessionary mortgage lending), which led to a collapse in the construction of modest bottom-quartile homes; and the provision of affordable housing for low-income households became a social welfare matter through the accommodation supplement.” (Newsroom June 4,2023)

Those of us who have long memories will remember how the “State Advances” inexpensive loans helped many families build suitable houses. State Housing was a great help to many people. But in the last thirty years with market forces operating houses have become unaffordable for many people while they have become a popular form of investment for those who can afford to do this. Consequently, house prices have grown rapidly but are now dropping but are still high in terms of most people’s incomes.

Attempts by the government to stimulate more building of affordable housing has not reached the level of housebuilding required to meet the demand. The recent weather events have made this even more difficult. A major rethink on housing is required to face the present situation. Future climate change will mean there will likely be a shortage of good horticultural land. So, it would be wise not to build in those area. Expanding the urban areas too far will result in high infrastructure costs and ongoing high transport costs for the residents. Probably the solution will be higher density housing for which there are attractive models overseas.

Housing problems are not new. The prophet Isaiah wrote at about 740 BCE “You are doomed! You buy more houses and fields to add to those you already have. Soon there will be nowhere for anyone else to live, and you alone will live in the land.” Isaiah saw the nation facing a very different situation from what we face today. He saw the injustice that had arisen in the nation because of people neglecting the just way of God. That injustice created a situation where the morale of the nation was low, making it vulnerable to attack from enemies.

We in Aotearoa New Zealand are facing a situation where there is huge inequality between those who are housed and those who are homeless. Richard Wilkinson and Kate Pickett wrote a book published in 2009 called the “Spirit Level,” showing that inequality in a nation negatively affected everyone in the nation - both the rich and the poor- on a whole raft of social indicators including longevity, health, and general well-being. Their research has been confirmed by subsequent research.

For us as followers of Jesus who taught us to care for the poor and meet him in the least of his brother and sisters,” this inequality and in some cases exploitation of those who are homeless is intolerable. We cannot do something about this complex housing situation on our own but together we can bring about change. It requires an all-out effort at government and local government level.

Rebecca Macfie, in an article about housing in Newsroom, writes about the Oxford Terrace Baptist church that lost its 1881 building in the 2011 earthquake. Rather than rebuilding a replacement for the old church with insurance, they built something new.

“Built around a rectangular courtyard are a modern place of worship, a café, offices for a range of NGOs, and 11 rental apartments where, pre-quake, there was a car park. Seven of the apartments are homes to families who have come off the social housing waiting list, paying no more than 25 percent of their incomes in rent, with the landlord topped up by the government’s income-related rent subsidy. Two are rent-by-the-room places for students and young adults, and two are affordable rentals for families housed by the church.”

Following Jesus good things can come out of adversity.

# **UNDERSTANDING AND PREVENTING FAMILY VIOLENCE**

Family violence in New Zealand is defined as any behaviour that coerces, controls or harms a family member. Within the legislation, family is extended to include caregivers. It is defined according to the level of dependence that has been created through the relationship. Family violence has the opportunity to thrive where there are power imbalances and where victims are isolated from their natural forms of support. The importance of a wide, connected family, is the ability to care, look after, and keep an eye out for more vulnerable family members. The nature of the violence used within family violence is variable. The overwhelming majority of people who experience family violence will show no physical scars. The damage is more frequently emotional and psychological, but can continue long after a relationship has ceased. Further, we know that psychological trauma has a direct impact on physical health.

Around one in five of our homicide events have an older person as a victim. We include older people as those over 55 years of age because Māori and Pasifika have more physical health problems over this age.

- Offenders in these events can be the partner of the victim, a carer or their adult children.
  - We know life transition increase risk.
  - Where the kids leave home and there is increased isolation.
  - Where a decision is made to retire or sell the family farm
  - Where there are significant health issues that increase our dependence on other family members.
- The risks of violence occurring (and getting worse) are increased by:
- Societal bias, where there is a lack of appreciation of the value of older people.
  - By a lack of resources in the community to support families and older people.
  - By a lack of awareness of the potential for harm to occur.

As I mentioned, violence isn't always physical. It can include behaviours such as limiting access to financial resources (financial abuse), preventing the exercise of religious beliefs (spiritual abuse), limiting access to health resources, limiting ability to engage in social activities (controlling behaviours). Essentially violence is about preventing people to be independent and living the life they see as of value.

Where there are service failings by government agencies such as health and social services, there is again increased pressure placed on families, increasing the potential for harm to occur. Carer fatigue is real, and we see it a lot.

However, it isn't all bad. There are things you can do to keep yourself and others safe, to support friends and to facilitate a supportive community.

- Trust your instinct. Recognise when people don't have the power to make their own decisions.
  - Do they always have to ask their kids or their partner for permission? Even for small stuff?
  - Respond when you notice that friends or family members are losing confidence or becoming increasingly isolated.
  - Reach out
  - Check in
  - Build trust
  - It might be that they are safe. But by ensuring they have at least one safe, trusting relationship, you are further enhancing their safety.
- Understand your legal and financial rights.
- It can be useful to have someone from outside the family to act as a secondary option for things like Enduring Power of Attorney. It is possible to appoint more than one person in this role, and you should be encouraged to do so.
  - Keep an eye out for people who are providing long-term care for ailing family members.
  - Martyrdom seldom helps anyone.
  - Carer fatigue is real.
  - Respite care is not a sign of failure.
  - We were not all designed to be nurses.
  - You can help and support in other ways.

There are support options in the community. Our own church initiatives, while not designed around violence prevention, actually contribute to keeping people safe. Initiatives such as Enliven by Presbyterian Support and NGOs such as Age Concern are also incredibly important in recognising and responding when there are concerns about safety.

But the most important actions you can take for others is to be a trusted, safe, friend and to listen. If you are experiencing violence yourself, if you can't exercise your independence, talk to someone. This is the first, and most important, step.

Helpful links: Elder Abuse Response Service National Helpline: 0800 EA NOT OK / 0800 32 668 65, Email [support@elderabuse.nz](mailto:support@elderabuse.nz) or text 5032 Family Violence Information Line: 0800 456 450 (available 9.00am -11.00pm daily)

***Pauline Gulliver***



## Kenya Trip – Dorille and John

‘Third time lucky’ – our visit to Kenya had been delayed by two years of Covid. In June/July 2022 we finally made it.

For us Kenya’s well known game parks were the main attraction. We had planned to visit the Masai Mara to coincide with Great Migration of 1.5 million Wildebeest and Zebra from Serengeti in Tanzania into the Mara. As the rains move across the continent, the plains animals move from area to area where the grass is best – they take no notice of borders of course!

The Masai Mara is largely huge open grasslands with the odd rocky outcrops and small streams that create winding trees and bushes. We even chanced on Hippo in these little areas.

Safari camps are carefully controlled to ensure that conservation is paramount.



There are virtually no roads there, only crisscrossing tracks that are rough and nearly impassable where safari trucks have bogged down in the wet. So getting around in Land Rovers and Land Cruisers is pretty hard on the body. Great fun through when you pull up to a pride of lions, a family of Cheetah, or a difficult to find Leopard!

We stayed at two camps, Porini Lion and Governors, both tented but with ensuite bathroom and nice furnishings. Governors is a little more up market – right on the side of the Mara river. Careful not to fall in – something may be waiting for you!!

Hyenas, various antelope and other creatures can be found, including Crested Crane and Topi, an antelope found in East Africa.





Highlight of the trip is hot air ballooning over the Mara, high up on Dorille's bucket list. A pre-dawn start on a ridge overlooking the plains as about 25 huge balloons are raised with air blowers. The large baskets carry fourteen



people (4 to a slot) and the pilot. Up and away as the sun breaks over the ridge with the shadow of the balloon going ahead of us.

Large herds of Wildebeest break into a run, swirling through the grass like moving water as our shadow spooks them. From the air we can see Wildebeest, Zebra, Thompson Gazelle, one or two Elephants, and even a couple of lions sprawled out on one of the tracks.

A short hour later we descend to a nearby area set out with long tables, white cloths and silverware, champagne, tea, coffee, eggs and bacon, fruit – the full works – right in the middle of the bush.

Although we missed the main migration (where thousands of animals cross the river and get eaten by crocs), we did visit one of the crossings where this is often filmed. We spotted a couple of dozen large crocodiles waiting for prey, and a camera team on the other bank waiting for action!



A great trip all round.

### ***Dorille & John***



## UPDATE FROM PARISH COUNCIL

- At the June meeting of Parish Council we:
- Shared pastoral matters with concern for those of our Congregation who are currently struggling with health problems. They are in our prayers.
- Received a report from our Indian Congregation on the fete which they are organizing for 25 May.
- Were advised by our Treasurer that the Special End of Year Appeal has resulted in \$5,101 being donated which together with a grant from Northern Presbytery for our Hindi Mission should result in a breakeven result at year end on 30 June.
- Were notified of the approval by Fire and Emergency NZ for our Fire Evacuation Plan and Procedures. We are getting Wardens appointed for each of the groups who use our premises.
- Considered and agreed to a draft budget for 2023/24 which will be recommended to the AGM in August
- Received reports from the Worship and Christian Education Committees as well as from the Presbytery Business Meeting held on 10 June.
- Discussed the matters being handled by the Church and Community Committee including:
  - Arranging a pre-election meeting open to the public where representatives from the various political parties can advise of their policies.
  - Developing our Facebook Page and its links to the website and to the WeChat Website
- The future of Girls Brigade which has been an activity in our Church for 61 years. During that time Kay Barbour has been associated with the Brigade and is retiring in October. If there is anyone willing to become involved with this matter please contact Alastair Emerson.
- Agreed that we will proceed with the Inter Church Life Survey in August with the option for our members being able to complete the survey via hard copy or on-line
- Received advice that the majority of Parish Council Members who are coming to the end of their current 3 year term are willing to be reappointed. This will be handled at the AGM in August.

**Stewart Milne**



**Up and Coming - Favourite Hymns service**  
**Sunday 6th August.** Start finding your favourite songs verses and be ready to request them

## **Come and join the Next Family Games Night Friday 7<sup>th</sup> July 6 – 8pm**

**FAMILY NIGHT** The June Family games night was a huge success. More than twenty people attended, young and old enjoying the night with a variety of games such as ping pong, badminton, bowling and board games. The evening concluded with a potluck shared meal which everyone always looks forward to. It is also a time of socializing and connecting with everyone. Please spread the word to your families and school contacts as **ALL ARE WELCOME TO JOIN for a NIGHT of FUN and LAUGHTER.**



### **George Wyman's Constitution at Parish Council June meeting;**

**I am going to talk about laughter. Often if I did not laugh I could cry. God has brought me laughter, and everyone who hears about this will laugh with me. (Genesis 21.6)**

**A comedian said, "We didn't think up laughter, that wasn't our idea. That was given to us by God who knew we were going to need it to get through life. Because he knew we were going to have hardship,**

**He knew we were going to have struggles,**

**He knew stuff was going to happen.**

**Laughter is a gift.**

**A quick look at the creatures God made can bring laughter, whether because of oddities such as duck-billed platypuses or antics such as playful otters. He made mammals that live in the ocean and long-legged birds that can not fly like kiwis. God clearly has a sense of humor, and because we were created in**

**His image, we too have the joy of laughter.**

**We first see the word laughter in the Bible in the story of Abraham and Sarah, God promised this elderly couple a child. "A son who is your own flesh and blood will be your heir". (Genesis 15.4). And God had said," Look up at the sky and count the stars... so shall your off spring be". When Sarah finally gave birth at ninety, Abraham named their son Isaac, which means "laughter". As Sarah exclaimed, God has brought me laughter, and everyone who hears about this will laugh with me" (21.6). It amazed her that she could nurse a child at her age! God transformed her skeptical laughter when she'd heard she'd give birth into laughter of sheer joy.**

**Thank God for the gift of laughter.**

**Yes Laughter has been a "good medicine"**

**Finding humour in your life helps even in the most difficult times**

**Dear God, Thank you for giving me the gift of laughter.**



# REGULAR PARISH ACTIVITIES

- **SENIORS SOCIAL CLUB**

**1st & 3rd Tuesday of the month 10am - 12pm**  
Contact Tangi 022 657 3223 or Raewyn 410 4423



- **GIRLS' BRIGADE - Tuesdays during School Term only.**

**6.30-8pm Church Hall**  
Kay Barbour Ph 478 7603



- **BORN AGAIN BODIES**

**1.00-2.00pm Wednesdays Church Hall.**  
Further information Ian Rankin Ph 479 2320



- **ENGLISH CONVERSATIONS**

**1pm - 2.30pm Wednesdays Meeting Room 2.**  
Further Information Stewart Milne 478 5786 Grace Liu 021 0487978

- **HOUSE GROUP**

**7.30pm Wednesdays at the Shadbolt's**  
Contact Dorille Shadbolt Ph 479 3953.



- **DEE'S SOCIAL GROUP**

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

- **MAINLY MUSIC**

**Fridays during School Term only. Church Hall 10-11am**  
Ph Karen Ruffell 021 02263846



- **FAMILY FUN NIGHT & SHARED MEAL**

**1st Friday of the month Church Hall 6pm**  
Ph Tangi Joseph 022 657 3223

- **PARISH COUNCIL**

**7.30pm every 3rd Tuesday of the month Church Lounge**  
Ph Stewart Milne 478 5786



*Please send photos of Parish activities through to  
[office@bayspc.nz](mailto:office@bayspc.nz)*

## Quick Contacts

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