



ST MARGARET'S
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH SILVERSTREAM

NEWSLETTER
APRIL 2020

Impact

You never really know the true impact you have on those around you. You never know how much someone needed that smile you gave them. You never know how much your kindness turned someone's entire life around. You never know how much someone needed that phone call or act of kindness. So don't wait to be kind. Don't wait for someone else to be kind first. Don't wait for better circumstances or for someone to change. Just be kind, because you never know how much someone needs it.

Nikki Banas

Greetings

Sometimes a word triggers memories of an event or a person from our past. In all the words that are being used around the current pandemic, I was reminded of the word from my past which had become a bit of a buzz word. It was a word that was used so frequently that in the end, for me at least, it lost its meaning. You may remember the excessive use of the word “meaningful.” That word became meaning less. Currently the word “unprecedented” may well be heading in a similar direction. Certainly there are some unprecedented things occurring. Never before, in living memory has the whole world been involved in a pandemic. Never before have the borders to this country been closed to all but returning citizens or permanent residents. And to my knowledge never before have we at St Margaret’s suspended worship because of health risks associated with gathering together.

“Unprecedented” – well perhaps. The story of Noah tells of an unprecedented flooding of the world which resulted in an unprecedented agreement between God and Noah on our behalf. We are reminded of that agreement whenever we see a rainbow. Then again in Moses’ day the Egyptian pharaoh exposed his people to an unprecedented series of calamities because he was reluctant to let the Hebrews leave. Then there was the unprecedented gift that the people in the desert received of manna from heaven and the water from a rock.

“Unprecedented” – very definitely when we consider the actions of God announced to Mary nine months before the birth of her son whom she called Jesus, whom we call the Christ. Unprecedented, that God came to earth as a human being, was born and lived as one of us. And it was as one of us he was falsely accused, tried and executed. But then God’s unprecedented action again took place with the resurrection of Jesus the Christ at Easter. It is God’s love for us that meant that God would take all this unprecedented action.

But despite being in unprecedented times the assurance that God continues to love us remains in place. It is with this assurance that we can look forward in hope knowing that despite whatever may happen, there is nothing that can separate us from the love of God. Paul made that claim back in his letter to the church in Rome when he expressed his conviction that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depths, nor anything else in all creation (and that includes pandemic viruses), will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord. It is an unprecedented love.

My prayer is that you stay well, stay safe, as we navigate these unprecedented times.

Blessings.



Personal Notes

We offer our best wishes to those who have birthdays over the next month:

- Jean Slyfield 27 March
- Peter Rothbaum who turns 11 on 9 April
- Dianne Pratt
- Malcolm Foster
- Bev Walker
- Lorna Moir
- Lynn Russell
- Sandi Rothwell

Session Notes

None of our St Margaret's Church groups (including Session) will be able to meet face-to-face during the lockdown period, and the activities that were planned for coming weeks will need to be cancelled or postponed.

Session will continue to work to support the church family in whatever way it can. Please don't hesitate to contact your elder or any member of Session if you need help, advice or comfort during this time.

Would you like to be part of the St Margaret's Church Calling Community?

We are setting up a calling community and you are invited to join! Anyone who has a telephone and a voice can be part of this community. We are still working on the details, but in simple terms, it is a telephone tree that will enable contact with some other members of the church family – some you may know well and other you haven't chatted to before.

You can decide whether you want to *make calls* or *receive calls* or *both*. We will be phoning people to ask whether they would like to take part, but if you haven't had an invitation by the end of March, please phone Delena West (977 6338).

A helping hand

Do you need help with things such as shopping for groceries or collecting medication from the pharmacy? If so, please phone Delena West (977 6338) who has a list of people ready and willing to help. Prompt and friendly service is guaranteed, so please don't hesitate to ask for help whenever you need it!

Please remember if you are over 70 do not leave home. There are offers (see above) who will go to the supermarket for you or if you have other needs. We all like to pick our own groceries, but at the moment this is not possible. Stay put!

Future Worship

We are exploring ways in which we can share together in worship even though we are unable to be together. Currently we are not quite set up technologically to provide access to some of our own St Margaret's home grown worship. However, our Moderator – the Right Rev Fakaofu Kaio – will be leading the way in showing us how to pull close while being apart. He will be producing a weekly video including prayer, and reading the Scriptures and reflections to encourage us all. More details are available on our web page <https://stmargaretschurch.net.nz/> under the heading Worship Resources and on our St Margaret's Silverstream Family Page.

Easter

Covid Level 4 means we are unable to join together to celebrate the dramatic and world changing events of Easter. For us that is unprecedented. So I invite you to join with me in prayer, wherever you are at 7:30 pm on Thursday recall the following:

The Betrayal	Matthew 26:20-25
The Inner Agony	Luke 22:40-44
The Loneliness	Matthew 26: 40-45
The Desertion	Matthew 26: 47-50, 55-56
The Accusation	Matthew 26: 59-67
The Mockery	Mark 15:12–20
The Death	Luke 23: 33-46



You may like to end your period of reading and contemplation with the words
“Lord, have mercy on us”

Then at 10.00 a.m. on Friday join me in prayer as we reflect on the events of the previous day.

Christ bore our sins in his body on the cross,
 that we might die to sin
 and live to righteousness (1 Peter 2:24)

Merciful God,
 you gave your Son to suffer the shame of the cross.
 Save us from hardness of heart,
 that, seeing him who died for us,
 we may repent, confess our sins,
 and receive your overflowing love,
 in Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

Contemplate:

One of the hymns that we sing at this time of year is one written by Paul Gerhardt and we sing to that wonderful tune entitled the Passion Chorale. We often sing it quite slowly:

O sacred head sore wounded,
with grief and shame weighed down;
O kingly head surrounded
with forms the only Crown.

And then in the second verse we ask
what language we should borrow
to praise the, heavenly friend,
for this by delaying sorrow,
thy pity without end?

If all that we do on this Good Friday is to try to identify with Jesus and his death than we miss the point. For Christians there is only one Suffering Servant. It is a job that has been filled for all time.

Yes, suffering and death are sad things, so subdued and sad worship is entirely appropriate. But the goal of Good Friday is not to suffer with Jesus, not to become like him on the cross. Instead, reflect on the words of from Isaiah 53:11 – 12:

Out of his anguish he shall see light;
he shall find satisfaction through his knowledge.
The righteous one, my servant, shall make many righteous,
and he shall bear their iniquities.
Therefore I will allot him a portion with the great,
and he shall divide the spoil with the strong;
because he poured out himself to death,
and was numbered with the transgressors;
yet he bore the sin of many,
and made intercession for the transgressors.

So for us Jesus has suffered, offering to us new life, opening up for us new hope of joy and peace. And for us that offering will take on fresh power and joy in two days' time at Easter. That fresh power and joy we shall celebrate on Easter Day is a fresh power and joy available to us even now as we distance ourselves from others to distance ourselves from the risk of virus.

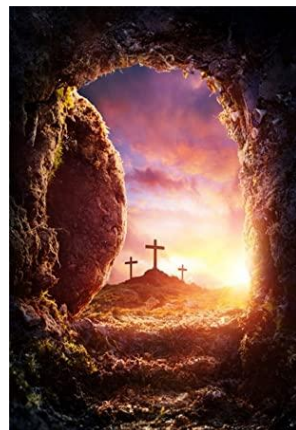
And a short prayer:

Eternal God of unchanging power and might,
look with mercy on your whole church.
Bring to completion your saving work,
so that the whole world may

see the fallen lifted up,
 the old made new,
 and all things brought to perfection
 by him through whom all things were made,
 our Lord Jesus Christ,
 who lives and reigns with you,
 in the unity of the holy spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen

Easter Day - again take time to pray:

Glory to you, O God:
 on this day you won victory over death,
 raising Jesus from the grave
 and giving us eternal life.
 Glory to you, O Christ:
 for us and for our salvation you overcame death
 and opened the gate to everlasting life.
 Glory to you, O holy spirit:
 you lead us into the truth.
 Glory to you, blessed Trinity, now and for ever.
 Eternal God, we praise you that your glory has dawned on us,
 and brought us into this day of resurrection.
 We rejoice that the grave could not hold your son,
 and that he has conquered death,
 risen to rule over all powers of this earth.
 We praise you that he summons us into new life,
 to follow him with joy and gladness.
 By your spirit,
 lift us from doubt and despair,
 from fear of a world seemingly virus filled,
 and set our feet in Christ's holy way,
 that our lives may be signs of his life,
 and all we have may show forth his love.
 Praise, glory, and thanksgiving to you, our God,
 for ever and ever. Amen.



Read John 20:1–18

Karoline Lewis in her book simply entitled “*John*” says that John doesn’t tell us about God’s grace but invites us to use all of our senses to experience it. In John, grace tastes like the best wine; smells like the broad expanse of the grassy field when Jesus fed 5000; or like the very dead stench of Lazarus giving way to the pound of perfume poured upon Jesus by Mary. In our reading, grace is this scent of the springtime garden at dawn; the sound of a beloved voice speaking our name; the

leaping, uncontrollable joy that propels Mary back into town, crying out that she has seen the Lord!

Rather than merely read the words, experience these stories in your life – for if you can taste and see God’s grace, how do we not cry out in joy that we have seen our God?

So as you read, reflect on these questions:

- the moments where you have experienced grief like Mary’s when it seemed like the whole world should stop and grieve with you?
- What are the moments in which joy has made you unable to be still?

And a wee blessing prayer:

Go out into the world, aware of the presence of new life continually around you. Go out, living in the promises of the God who will not abandon us, but whose love endures for ever. Go out into the world, proclaiming the good news: we have seen our God! Christ is risen! Christ is risen, indeed! Amen

History Project

If you are looking for something to do that here is a suggestion.

This year marks the ninetieth year since St Margaret’s foundation stone was laid. While we have records and memories of those ninety years most of the latter are still in people’s heads. An activity you may like to do while in lock down is respond to the following questions about your time in the St Margaret’s congregation.

1. When did you join St Margaret’s and who was the Minister at that time
2. Who were the key people in the congregation when you joined?
3. In what ways were the church buildings and grounds different to what it is today?
4. What significant events occurred in the first ten years that you were in the congregation?
5. What significant personal memories do you have of your time in the congregation at St Margaret’s?
6. What else would you like to share of your time in the congregation of St Margaret’s?

We would like to correlate these as an anecdotal St Margaret’s history. Once you’ve written your responses, add your name and send them to Pat Lerwill at her snail mail address 17 Gloucester Street, Silverstream or her email address lerwillp@gmail.com



Children, Youth & Families @ St.Margaret's April 2020

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Hi everyone

As you are most likely aware, programmes for our young people have been postponed until further notice. If you have any queries, please contact the relevant person below.

Also our family picnic that was due to be held on Friday 3 April has been postponed until later in the year.

If you are able, please check our Facebook page for regular updates.

Stay safe everyone.

CONTACTS

Sunday School Nikki - 5288106

Youth Group Jo - 021616376 or Delena 9776338

Playgroup Pat – 9380374

Girls Brigade Delwyn – 9769116 and Emma - 0210 822 0990

Winter Warmers

which was to have been held on 9 May is now cancelled.

Lectionary:

5 April Isaiah 50:4-9a Psalm 118:1-2,19-29 Philippians 2:5-11

Matthew 21:1-11

12 April Acts 10:34-43 Psalm 118:1-2,14-24 Colossians 3:1-4 John 20:1-18

19 April Acts 2:14a,22-32 Psalm 16 1 Peter 1:3-9 John 20:19-31

26 April Acts 2:14a,36-41 Psalm 116:1-4,12-19 1 Peter 1:17-23 Luke 24:13-35

3 May Acts 2:42-47 Psalm 23 1 Peter 2:19-25 John 10:1-10

REPORT FROM THE BOARD OF MANAGERS

July 2019 - February 2020 (8 Months)

	Actual February Month	Actual 8 mths YTD	Budget 8 mths YTD	Surplus (Deficit) Actual 8 mths v Budget	Projected Year Revised
Offering	6,959	58,830	52,500	6,330	87,182
General Donations	1,230	7,630	13,125	(5,495)	12,233
Donation & Grant Family Worker	see note below				
Fundraising	5	23,475	22,500	975	25,000
Hall Use (excl GST)	0	3,403	1,750	1,653	5,000
Other incl. Interest	1	2,823	1,900	923	8,260
Total Income	8,195	96,161	91,775	4,386	137,675
Expenses (excl GST)	10,296	110,538	96,517	(14,021)	161,110
Surplus (Deficit)	(2,101)	(14,376)	(4,742)	(9,634)	(23,435)

Notes:

The Budget figures are based on the amounts approved at the AGM, generally divided into 12 equal months, except where some items such as Fundraising occur at specific times during the year.

The Projected Year Revised figures have been drawn from a combination of Actual results for the 8 Months YTD and a review of expectations for the remaining future months.

Fundraising Actual is made up of:

Downton Abbey Film evening	500
Plants sale (net of Plants cost)	2,619
Annual Fair	13,479
All Things Christmas	<u>6,877</u>
	<u>23,475</u>

Donation & Grant Family Worker - \$25,000 received September 2019 is not included as income or expenditure as it is considered.

Tax Rebates for Donations: Donations have to be received by 31 March 2020 to be eligible for Rebate in the 2020 Tax Year. IRD have advised that they now require all receipts to be issued against the names of donors rather than numbers, as part of anti money laundering regulations. Donations can be paid direct into the Church's Bank A/c BNZ Upper Hutt 02-0772-0361834-00 but please include Name and, if desired, Envelope No.

Fire Extinguisher inside Church: A new dry powder extinguisher has been mounted on the back inside wall by the door to what used to be the Vestry. This is to provide added protection for both the Church and the Audio Visual equipment rack.

Working Bee: We had planned a working Bee to do some light sanding and painting around the new Hall windows, both inside and out along with a number of other maintenance and tidy up chores to be done around the property. The plan was to use Saturday morning 4 April but the virus and government announcement has postponed that. However, the work does still need to be done.

