



SIGNPOST AUGUST 2019

Gisborne Presbyterian Parish

www.standrewsgis.org.nz

Transitional Minister:

Rev Mary Petersen 027 2448396
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Administrator: Liz Lyell

Office Hours 9 – 1 pm weekdays
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Message from the Minister

Dear Friends

Bible Month

has been highlighted in services at both

Matawhero and St Andrew's during July.

The Presbyterian Church regards the Bible as the supreme rule of faith and life, and the supreme standard of the Church.

High esteem for the Bible is reflected in the **Presbyterian tradition** of prominently displaying a Bible on a lectern or table at the front of the church. Another Presbyterian tradition, dating back to the foundation of Reformed Churches in the 17th century, is carrying the Bible into the church at the beginning of a service and symbolically out into the world ahead of the people at the end.

Not many Presbyterian Churches continue to do this - but it is a tradition still maintained at St Andrew's.

However, this is not to be seen as veneration of the Bible itself but of the **way in which God can speak** through it the 'Word of God' we need to hear.

Yet, if you believe that God still communicates today and did not finish 'speaking' when the

Bible was completed, then the Bible is not the only 'Word of God'. The Spirit of God continues to inspire and give wisdom in many different ways. In Gisborne Presbyterian Parish most services now include, after the Bible readings, words in which we acknowledge this understanding:

*For the Word of God in Scripture,
for the Word of God around us,
for the Word of God within us,
Thanks be to God.*

There are **different understandings of what is meant by 'the Word of God'**. For some, it means a very literal acceptance that every word in the Bible was determined by God; though for others it means that the Spirit of God inspired the writers but that their personality, time, knowledge and situation shaped the words, and determined what was recorded and what was left out; for others there may be an intermediate point on the spectrum.

There are many things in the world, around us and within us, which 'inspire' us and speak to us of God and may be the Word of God for us today.

For some the wonder, awe and mystery of the universe is a powerful image of God. It may be that every new discovery is exciting, stretching and stimulating and expands our idea of God and our relationship with God - whether that is about knowledge of stars, planets and galaxies beyond ours, or about aspects of life on earth, or about advancement of medical technology or understanding how our brains work. For some, however, new scientific discoveries about the universe or ourselves, confuse or challenge understanding of God. Some will abandon faith, and God, in order to accept new scientific knowledge.

Science and Faith do not have to be opposites, however. If you have questions about science and faith, or want to explore different perspectives, please come to the three sessions on Mondays 12, 19 and 26 August at 5.30 p.m. in St Andrew's Lounge.

May you be inspired by the Word of God in the Bible, but also around you and within you.

May you be inspired by wonder, awe and mystery.

God bless you
Mary Petersen

MINISTRY NEWS

Presbytery Central has approved the request of the Parish Council to extend the term of ministry of the Rev Mary Petersen with Gisborne Presbyterian Parish until the end of February 2020, on 75% time and stipend.

Parish Council

WEEKLY PARISH EVENTS TO WHICH ALL ARE WELCOME

WALKING GROUP - meets at the community hall 9 am every Monday to enjoy a leisurely walk around town. Everyone, any age is invited to join the group and to enjoy a cuppa together afterwards in the lounge.

OPEN DOOR

is our Parish weekly get together on Tuesday mornings from 10am in St Andrew's Lounge for a cuppa, friendship and chat please come and join us!



PASTORAL CARE

If you need transport to the Church Service at St Andrews or if you



would like someone to visit you, or your family or friends, or have another pastoral need, please phone the office.

MAINLY MUSIC

Wednesday mornings are a time of organised chaos in the church lounge when pre-school children and their parents & grandparents enjoy a musical time together. There is still room for a few more families if you know someone who would like to come.

MATAWHERO GARDENERS

Members of GPP and friends are weeding, lunching, prayer/discussion **2nd Monday** each month at Matawhero Church from 9.30am.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED...

We urgently need more volunteers to assist with serving morning tea on Sunday after the service. You only need to be available to take a turn every 2 months or so.

Leaders for Open Door...Helping with Car Boot Sales and the mainly music team can always use assistance, or provide baking on Wednesday for the mainly music session and many other volunteers needed in other areas.

Please contact Liz in the office if you would like to know more about volunteering:
phone office: 868 5513



STUDY SERIES AUGUST 12, 19 & 26th
Mondays 5.30 pm to 7.00 pm
St Andrew's lounge - Rev Mary Petersen

*Extract of a letter from Sylvie Gibbins
Philanthropy Manager, Presbyterian
Support East Coast.*

On behalf of many children in Tairāwhiti who are not safe at home, thank you for deciding to become a Family Works Guardian Angel.

We are so delighted!

Gisborne Presbyterian Parish joins three other special Presbyterian churches on the East Coast who have taken tangible steps to keep local children safe.

With your help, the Family Works team can support stressed families to turn their life around. You may never meet the children you help, but as a guardian Angel you will be their unseen advocate.

You may never meet the courageous families who decide to change how they live, but you will be playing a vital role in their success story. This is why your Family Works Guardian Angel gifts are so valuable.

Thank you again for your kindness to Gisborne children who cannot speak for themselves.

PARISH ANNUAL MONSTER GARAGE SALE SATURDAY 7 SEPTEMBER 8.00 am

*Please contact Jenny Lawton if you
would like to work on a stall*



*Please hold onto large items of furniture
until 5th or 6th September as we do not have
Convenor: Jenny Lawton 868 4268
or phone the office: 868 5513*

ADVANCE NOTICE **Gisborne Presbyterian Parish Annual General Meeting** is on **SUNDAY SEPTEMBER 22**

after the 10.30am service at
St Andrew's.

Reports by Mon 19 August please!

Too few, enough, and too many

By Jim Taylor

A few weekends ago, I spent a morning disentangling barbed wire.

The community group that maintains a trail network wanted to clear away an old barbed wire fence that once defined a block of private property, now municipally owned.

Local children run and cycle along a trail that now cuts through the property, to get to and from their elementary schools. But the old barbed wire still lurks just off the trail. A child who trips and falls, or whose bicycle goes out of control, could get badly hurt.

Cleaning up the old rusted wire was not easy. Long grass hid it. Bushes had grown around the fallen wire. Fence posts had fallen, sometimes backwards, sometimes forwards. The multiple stands were twisted together. Where previous workers had dragged sections of fence away from the trail, the wires were literally tied in knots.

So we set to work. And I was reminded again of how well humans can work together in small groups, when we know clearly what our task is.

We didn't need anyone to tell us that loose ends of barbed wire can lash out. That springy coils need to be handled carefully. We didn't need supervisors with clipboards telling us what to do. We just went to work.

Seen from overhead, we probably looked as if we were performing some kind of folk dance: One step forward, one step back, pass the coil to your partner, duck under, turn around...

Perhaps that's how folk dances evolved originally.

The Goldilocks equation

Someone, somewhere, must have done a study on the ideal size of working groups. In our small groups of three or four, we solved problems without supervision. We didn't need a management hierarchy. Or a policy manual.

But as groups get larger, factions develop. Different people have different ideas on how the job should be done. Or shouldn't be done. Some members try to dominate others.

In his book *Sapiens*, author Yuval Noah Harari calls the smallest self-governing unit the extended family, up to 100 members. When it grows to a tribe, or a clan, it needs a defined social structure, to keep families from fighting each other. The bigger the group gets, up to kingdom and nations, the more formal structure it needs, so that former foes can work together under a common central authority.

Conversely, the smaller the group, the less formal structure it needs. Although some organizations still feel they need a seven-member executive for five active members.

So what's the optimal size for any working group? My personal hunch is that any group of more than twelve tends to split. A single unified discussion turns into two running conversations. Or into two task groups. Some people feel ignored or overlooked.

I wonder if that's why Jesus chose only twelve disciples, when he could have had thousands. And why the Hebrew people had twelve tribes.

Author Lynne McTaggart contends that the ideal group size is eight. Eight people who concentrate their attention on a single issue can affect the way events unfold, she claims.

Whatever the number is, I wonder why so many organizations measure their success by the size of their membership. Surely what matters more is what those members can accomplish by working together.

SNIPPETS FROM PARISH COUNCIL

4 JULY 2019

- Morning tea with the tenants is being arranged on 29 July to provide an opportunity for Parish Council and parishioners to meet those who work out of offices in the Hall
- Study Group on Science and Faith, will be held from 5:30 - 7pm. 12, 19, 26 August
- A review of key holders list is to be carried out
- Marie Burgess, Convenor, Works & Property presented a draft three-year maintenance plan for discussion
- Communication Policy –was discussed and agreed to, and will be published in Signpost
- Riverbank - our sponsorship of Joel has come to an end. Parish Council has agreed our new project will be to become a Guardian Angel Church which will involve giving a minimum of \$30 a month. This project is run by PSEC and the monies will help support local families.
- Mary has agreed to stay on as Transitional Minister so a request has been made to the MSB and Presbytery to extend Mary's term as Transitional minister at 75% for 6 months
- Grandparents "God's Big Story" packs are available for distribution
- AGM confirmed this will be held after the service on 22 September
- Parish Council 2019-2020, all present agreed to stay on for the next term and it is hoped others will consider putting their names forward
- Confidentiality, this matter was raised as a reminder of how important it is to not pass information on unless cleared to do so.

Jan Ewart

SPRING FLOWERS



A request for donations from those under 80 towards spring flowers for our Services on September 15th

Please bring to the office or pay online:

GPP: 03-0638-0462917- 00

Ref: Spring flowers

Thank you!

ADVANCE NOTICE 29 SEPTEMBER



**Combined Service at
Matawhero Historic Church
with St David's & St
Andrew's**
followed by morning tea

A free Invitation Pack

to guide **Grandparents to share**
'GOD'S BIG STORY' with your grandchildren,
is available from the church office.

The pack contains recommendations of Bible Story books, a chart showing 24 Biblical stories, and stickers for children to put on the chart when they have read the story with you.

*This pack was created by
the Children and Family Team of Presbytery Central.*

Knitting Appeal– Middlemore hospital is desperate for knitted or crochet clothing for premature babies. Dot McCulloch has some patterns, wool and needles if required. The clothing can be given to the church office to be passed on to Dot for transport to Middlemore. The hospital has a large neo-natal unit and is the centre in NZ as the collection hospital for pre-term babies clothing.

Phone Dot: 867 6199 or 021111 5551