

2019 - 2020

## Signpost Christmas Edition December & January



### Gisborne Presbyterian Parish

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

Transitional Minister: Rev Mary Petersen

Administrator: Liz Lyell

### THE END OF A JOURNEY

We have been following a notional *signpost* which says **“Future of ministry at GPP”** for some time now. At last, we seem to know where it is pointing and that is toward the Rev Jin Sook Kim, whom the MSB met by Zoom in September, and many of us met face to face in October.

Sally Carter and myself, Adrian Skelton, have been making regular journeys to Gisborne over the past three years because the next steps in ministry (after Fraser retired on medical grounds) had not been clear. Some signs on that route from Napier to Gisborne are explicit: **“Goats for the next 70km”**, it used to say, just south of Lake Tutira. (Strangely, it now only says it from the opposite direction from Wairoa). A goat count was taken regularly but sadly the records are lost. Still, every bend and curve, each rise and fall of the road, we know so very well.

The coffee stop at Café 287 or East End Café has made Wairoa a feature of many trips. (Once, even a meal at an easily missed motel just north of the Wairoa Bridge). At times the light around Wairoa – with the river close to the road – has a magical quality. At other times the rain or mist has accompanied the whole trip. Such is life.

A fair amount of Presbyterian conversation between us has surely, by now, put the Church, if not the world, to rights. Glenys Single has been able to join us for several occasions and that has imparted an extra valued dimension to the journey and the business in Gisborne.

Early in the process, we found our way to asking Mary Petersen if she would undertake a Transition Ministry – a deliberate interim exercise of exploration as to where God was leading the parish.

Mary’s background and experience made her well-qualified; but even so, she has exceeded the expectations of what one person can achieve in two years! With such assured leadership in place,

Sally and I only resumed our more regular journeys when it was time to act on the fruits of Mary's ministry and seek, with you, longer-term settled ministry for the parish.

It has been a privilege to be involved with GPP and patience is something we have all learned to practice. The last two years have been anything but fallow. You have kept moving on this journey and are now adept at reading the signs. After crossing one hill after another we are pleased to see a new horizon – beyond which there is a straighter road.

Sally and I shall not be so closely involved from now on – other than as colleagues to Jin Sook. We are not far away: 215 km to be precise. We wish you safe and worthwhile future travels.

***Adrian Skelton (and Sally Carter) have been MSB convenors since 2016***

### **INDUCTION SERVICE**

The Induction Service for Rev Jin Sook Kim is on  
**Saturday 29 February** at 2 p.m. at  
St Andrew's Presbyterian Church Gisborne.  
Jin Sook will begin her ministry with  
Gisborne Presbyterian Parish  
on 1 March 2020.





## CHRISTMAS MESSAGE FROM REV MARY

Dear Friends

Frequently heard statements at this time of year include “I can hardly believe that Christmas is nearly here again” and variations on “the years seem to pass so quickly”. Yes, another year has nearly come to its end and Christmas is nearly here, so what does this time really mean for you?

**What will Christmas mean for you this year?** – a time of joy and excitement or sadness and regret? a time of eager anticipation for being with family and friends or anxious concern about what might happen when all are together? treasured memories of special people in your life or another reminder of the ache of loneliness? will there be thankfulness that you have survived another year, a busy December, finished the year’s work or study, completed goals you set yourself for this year? Or will you be so busy with plans and preparations, rushing from one event to another, and longing for rest and relaxation that there is little time to reflect on what Christmas really means?

**The word ‘Christmas’** comes to us from “Christ Mass” - the observance of a special service to honour the Christ coming into the world as a vulnerable baby. Yet celebrations at this time of the year have a much older origin. The festival of the winter solstice is about light in dark times – and in the northern hemisphere this was in December. The church overlaid a ‘pagan’ festival with its own festival in an attempt to wipe out its former significance. The commercial world has overlaid the Christian festival with layers of *you deserve this expensive gift, buy now/ pay later, show how much you love someone by how much you spend on them* – and for many has succeeded in wiping out any Christian significance. The messages, and the bright lights, seem to appear earlier each year – Christmas displays were in some shops in September.

In our long summer days, when there is so much more light than darkness each day, we lose some of the symbolism that is so profound in the northern hemisphere, where Christmas is in winter. Yet the meaning of God’s light spreading throughout the world is still a very significant part of the meaning of Christmas. **Light dispelling darkness** is also the theme of the Hindu festival of Diwali and the Jewish festival of Hannukah – at similar times of the year.

One of the interesting things about light is that we understand it because of darkness, we measure it by what we know about the dark. **Light stands out because of darkness.** In this dark world of pain, suffering, horror, and conflict we could be overwhelmed by the darkness – but **there is light and hope.** The strands of light always filter through. In your personal ‘dark night of the soul’, **in whatever challenges you are facing, there is light and hope.**

If you have no time to stop and reflect or think deeply as we approach Christmas, may I encourage you to at least **hold onto light and hope** in all that you do. May you be enlightened by the Spirit of God. May you be encouraged and sustained by hope, through the love of God. **May you bless others by being light and hope** to all – and may you **step into 2020 knowing that the God of light, hope, peace, love, and joy is always with you.**

God bless you

Mary



## 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: 868 5513



## 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, prayer/discussion **2nd Monday** each month at Matawhero Church from 9.30am.

The best way to stay on your feet  
is to get down on your knees

*May you have the spirit of Christmas, which is peace, the gladness of Christmas, which is hope and the heart of Christmas, which is love*  
Rev F Paterson

7pm Sunday December 15th  
Interdenominational



**Carol Service & Readings**  
**at St Andrew's Church.**  
*Please bring a plate for supper.*

**Combined Churches Choir practices in**  
**St Andrew's church on Thursdays 5<sup>th</sup>**  
**& 12<sup>th</sup> December at 7 pm & Fridays 6<sup>th</sup>**  
**& 13<sup>th</sup> at 1 pm**

**REMEMBERED AT CHRISTMAS**

**A special service**  
**at Matawhero Church**  
**Wednesday 11th December**  
**at 7.00 pm**

*Service of Remembrance & Hope*



Christmas can be a sad time when you have  
lost significant people in your life.  
**Remembered at Christmas**, includes a time  
when, if you want to, there will be the  
opportunity to light a candle to honour and  
remember your special someone.  
*All welcome*

**REV MARY**  
**PETERSEN**

is running 2 advent bible  
studies starting on  
**Monday 9th December**  
at 5.30 pm in the lounge.  
The second study will be on  
**Monday 16<sup>th</sup> 5.30pm**



*All welcome*

**WANTED!**

**Vacuum cleaner**

If anyone has a vacuum cleaner that is in good  
working order, is surplus to requirements then  
you might consider donating it to the church  
for general use.

**Accommodation**

Rev. Jin Sook Kim will be looking for a 2-3  
bedroom rental property when she arrives in  
late February 2020. If anyone has, or knows  
of a suitable place that might be available in  
the new year please let Liz Lyell or  
Jenny Lawton know.

## CHRISTIAN WORLD SERVICE

*Please support the CWS 2019  
Christmas Appeal  
Envelopes and information available in the  
foyer*



This Christmas you can give this gift of life to someone who longs for safe water. Every day in the south-west of Uganda, grandmother Farazia prays for a rainwater tank. She wants her grandchildren to be clean and in school rather than walking up to 5 kilometres a day to collect dirty water from the river.

The family of 6 children lost their parents to HIV and AIDS, and their young brother to a waterborne disease he picked up from drinking this water.

Farazia is saving up her half share of the tank – a \$366 donation will pay the rest. Our partner the Centre for Community Solidarity will help them build it – as long as they have the funds.

With your help, clean water will change  
their lives.

**Water is the essence of life.  
Give Water this Christmas.**



*End of the year get  
together  
11.30 am - 1pm  
Sat 7<sup>th</sup> December*



### **St Andrew's Lunchtime Concert Series**

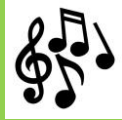
***Claudia & Sofia Tarrant-Matthews,  
present and past competitors in the  
Gisborne International Music  
Competition. These talented sisters  
each play both piano & violin, and  
accompany each other  
as well as performing solo.***

***Prepare to be amazed!***

**Thursday 5 December  
12.30pm**

**St Andrews Presbyterian Church  
Koha welcomed for the performers  
Tea and coffee provided**

*Presented by the Gisborne Presbyterian Parish  
assisted by Marjorie Redstone Trust, J.N. Williams  
Memorial Trust and H.B. Williams Turanga Trust.*



## CAROLS IN THE VINES

Community Christmas Carol  
Singalong

Bushmere Estate - The Vines

166 Main Road, Makaraka

Wednesday 18th December 2019

Gates open at 5:30pm

Carols begin at 6:30pm

Bring a picnic - food also  
available for purchase

Admission (at gate) \$5.00 pp  
Children free

## CHANGE OF CELEBRATIONS DAY

For some time it has been the custom at St Andrew's to welcome anyone who wants to share special news with the church family, including about birthdays, anniversaries and events, to do so during the service on the second Sunday. However, it seems that there has been some grumbling and mumbling in the background about the length of that service, although no-one has actually complained to the minister! Everyone should be aware that the content, reverence, and dignity of the Communion service appropriately means that it is likely to be longer than most other services. Adding the Celebrations time to that service creates an unknown factor and can extend the service beyond the time planned. The Parish Council has decided that from now on the Celebrations time will be held on a different Sunday. Accordingly, for December 2019, January and February 2020, Celebrations will be on the fourth Sunday of the month.

**If you would like to donate  
a Christmas present to go  
under our Christmas tree,  
the gifts will be given to  
'Family Works'  
(Presbyterian Support) for  
their families in need.**



**Please wrap and label your  
gift – gender (adult), child  
(boy or girl) and age.**

Thank you in advance for  
your generosity at Christmas

MAY YOU HAVE THE  
GIFT OF FAITH,

THE BLESSING  
OF HOPE

AND THE PEACE  
OF HIS LOVE

*Merry Christmas*





## CHRISTMAS BAKING REQUEST FOR CAR BOOT SALE

**Saturday 14 December**

**Request for Christmas Baking to sell on  
14 December. Shortbread, festive  
biscuits, Christmas cakes, meringues,  
etc. All baking help gratefully received.**



Please bring to the office by Friday 12<sup>th</sup>  
December. Labels provided, as long as you let  
us know what the items are. If you are unable  
to bake, ingredients for bakers are very  
welcome too!

## Let us be the gift we long for

Sometimes our lives seem  
like an endless Advent:  
Always waiting,  
being ready,  
hustling, preparing  
for the big moment, the fulfilment,  
the dream come true.

When will there be peace on earth,  
when will poverty be history  
our inbox full of good news, happy hashtags,  
joy instead of hate speech?  
How long before we need no ribbons,  
white or red or green?  
And we wait.  
how long, we ask, how long?

This Advent, may we *be* the promise kept,  
the word made flesh, the kingdom come  
not just on high and holy days  
but in ordinary times as well.

So may we enjoy this time of preparation  
thrilling to angel song and sparkling lights  
*Snoopy's Christmas* and *Silent Night*;  
may the little boy drum for us,  
pum-a-pum-pum  
and the wise ones' gifts be ours  
birthing each day  
the Christ of our imagination.

Let us be the gift we long for  
long after the paper's discarded  
and the cards are put away;  
be the love that keeps on loving:  
joy in our world, day after day.

*Bronwyn Angela White – 'Something new to say'*

## TIME CHANGE TRIAL

Gisborne Presbyterian Parish agreed in June 2019  
to change the time of the St Andrew's services from  
10 a.m. to 10.30 a.m. for a trial period from July  
2019.

The parish needs to meet again in a Congregational  
Meeting to determine whether to continue that  
timing of services ( 9 a.m. at Matawhero and 10.30  
at St Andrews) or revert to 10 a.m. at St Andrew's  
or work on some other combination of times e.g.  
10.30 a.m. just for the first Sunday or ?

The congregational meeting for that purpose will  
happen on Sunday 26 January at St Andrew's, in  
the hall after the service.

## EXCERPT FROM PRESBYTERIAN SUPPORT LETTER TO THE



### PARISHIONERS OF GPP

*As a Family Works Guardian Angel, you belong to a wonderful group of people who care about the wellbeing of local children. Your support has been a lifeline to families in crisis and has supported:*

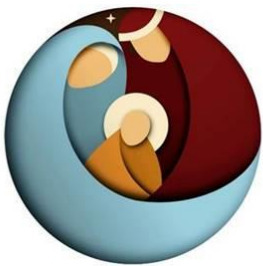
- *Counselling children in trauma*
- *Family Social Work*
- *Parenting Support*

*Last year, one of the Family Works social workers met a young man who was doing well in his life.*

*Over several conversations they realised that she was the same social worker who had intervened in his life when he was a young child to keep him safe.*

*It was an emotional time for them both when he simply said to her:*

***"You are my Guardian Angel –  
you saved me."***



*Moderator's  
Christmas  
Message 2019*  
CHRISTMAS BEGINS  
WITH CHRIST

### Christmas - the greatest expression of love

*"For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life."  
John 3:16.*

There are many ways of showing love and affection. We can do this in words, actions, gestures and more. We each express love in ways that can best relay our intentions. There is no right or wrong way. Each expression shows our heart and soul. Our hope and aim is that it is well received. Love is an enormous part of our make-up. Whatever way it is given, with right and honourable intentions, it will be received and appreciated.

Christmas is love. Love is Christmas. "God so loved that he gave his Son". This is the greatest expression of love. The personal touch, person-to-person, kanohi ki te kanohi.

At Christmas, God is reminding us that love is the greatest gift. Jesus, God's Son, the baby of Bethlehem, was given to humanity, the world. God so loved that God came to us in a baby born in a manger. God identifies with humanity. God is showing and teaching us God's personal love.

As we replicate and follow the way of God, let us try our best to *be there*: the personal touch, face to face, being present wherever possible. We are God's gift to our families, our friends, and our communities. Be there in person this Christmas. It makes all the difference.

It is said that the next best expression of love is your voice, followed closely by your written word. If you can't be there for your loved ones this Christmas, send a voice message, send a written message – an email, card, letter. If you can't be there in any of these ways, there is always, and forever, your prayers.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.  
You are loved.

Yours in Christ's service  
Fakaofu

**Right Reverend Fakaofu Kaio**  
**Moderator Presbyterian Church of Aotearoa New Zealand**

On Saturday 30 November, St Andrew's Day, 45 people enjoyed a St Andrew's Day Dinner in the church hall. A delicious meal was organised, cooked and served by members of the Parish Council and other volunteers. Plenty of food was available – enough to feed three strangers outside on the church steps too. Thank you to all those who helped to prepare the meal. Entertainment was provided by Frank Darcy on the piano and Robbie Woods on the clarinet. Stories of Scottish connections were shared – some quite hilarious. A good time was had by all with much conversation and connection with new and old friends.

