



SIGNPOST FEBRUARY 2021

Gisborne Presbyterian Parish

www.standrewsgis.org.nz

Minister

Rev Jin Sook Kim

email: jinsook.kim.nz@gmail.com

mob: 021 02952589

Administrator

Liz Lyell

Office Hours 9 – 1 pm weekdays

ph: 868 5513



MESSAGE FROM OUR MINISTER

New Year's resolutions and Epiphany

*(‘Manifestation of Christ
to the world’)*

There is a tradition, namely a New Year’s resolution which people may do every year. It is a personally made promise to improve one’s life desirably in the coming year. As you may imagine, resolutions can come in many forms, such as changing a bad habit, quitting smoking, eating less junk food and doing more exercise to name a few.

One of the origins of New Year’s resolutions dates back to about 153 B.C. when January is named after Janus, a mythical god of early Rome. Janus had two faces – one looking forward, the other looking backward. It allowed him to look back on the past and forward toward the future. The Romans began each year by making promises to the god Janus, for they believed Janus could forgive them for their wrongdoings in the previous year. In any case, the Romans may have had

to reflect on things that they had done in the previous year to make New Year's resolutions.

In doing so, they may also have wished to live their lives happier.

In Christianity, Epiphany (‘Manifestation of Christ to the world’) can be said to play the similar role of New Year’s resolutions among believers.

The crucial difference between the New Year’s resolutions and Epiphany is that while the former is made by people from their own reflections in the past, Epiphany is created by God to reveal the truth of life to those who wish to live with hope, peace, joy and love always in the grace of God. How do we get this ‘Epiphany’ then? It is through a very simple way that you can do in your own time. But there are things we need to do.

“Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you.” (Matthew 7:7)

(May the year 2021 be full of hope, peace, joy and love in your lives through Epiphanies of Christ!) **Rev Jin Sook Kim**

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 have a pastoral need please phone Rev Jin Sook Kim:
021 02952589



MAINLY MUSIC



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 9.30am Matawhero Church.



ZOOM KORERO ON FRIDAYS

Join in the fun every Friday at 10.30 am for **ZOOM korero** from your computer. A link and passcode number will be sent out with the Order of Service each week.

Thank you to Jill Wallis for providing the last few lines of Amanda Gorman's powerful poem from the inaugural ceremony in the United States.

*"When day comes we
step out of the shade,
afire and unafraid,
the new dawn blooms
as we free it.
For there is always
light,*

FAITH
is like Wi-Fi,
it's invisible but
it has the power
to connect you to
what you need.

*If only we're brave enough to see it.
If only we're brave enough to be it."*

KORERO ME KAI (CONVERSATION WITH FOOD)



Korero me Kai (Sharing food and discussion)

KmK has now been operating weekly since 10 August 2020.

The sessions have all been different and although we follow a certain format this changes dependent on who is present or where the discussion goes.

Attendance averages around 6 people with generally about 3 – 4 who the KmK are wishing to reach, disabled, lonely, homeless. The menu has been kept simple, inexpensive and varied. We have been fortunate to have had 4 Church members and 1 attendee provide meals. To date we have only bought in one meal the rest have all been provided by the cooks.

Help: we have had one very regular attendee who assists us with setting up and getting organised and clearing up afterwards which has been a great help.

Koha: we started off with a donation of \$200 and have collected a further \$72.90 so are able to reimburse those who provide food if required.

Feedback: we have not done a formal evaluation but we have two very regular attendees and they participate very well. On one occasion we had two homeless people join us and there have been others, mostly church members who have come to “check it out”

What more do we want?

We have 3 regular Church helpers along with Jin Sook but we could certainly do with more **volunteers to cook a simple dish or help lead the sessions.** It doesn't have to be a weekly thing but offering to be on a roster so as we can share the load would be wonderful. A roster is in the Church Office. If you need more detail talk to Jan Ewart, Jan Gordon, Pete Cowley or Jin Sook

We would like you to **encourage people to attend KmK**, so if you or anyone you know might enjoy the time of sharing and talking over food you/they would be most welcome

Jan Ewart 27/01/21



MY FAITH JOURNEY (Part 4)

In February 2003 I moved back to Gisborne, something I always imagined I would do.

Rev Ken Wall, Gwenda Crawshaw and Jean Robertson warmly welcomed me and I was happy to join the St. Andrew's Choir and amazingly Lucy Brooks was still playing the organ. Her stirring recital of *In a Persian Market* was a favourite concert piece. It was great to catch up with the late Bob and Janet Scott whom I'd met at several Sea of Faith Conferences. Bob was the facilitator of the local group.

Janet invited me to join *Caregivers* a small group of Anglican and Presbyterian women- Catherine Chrisp, Jocelyn Stevens, Janet Scott, Helen Topp, Jean Adams and Pam Hall, met monthly to discuss current World and New Zealand issues.

Very soon Ken put me on the roster to take services at other churches, Tolaga Bay was my favourite for the friendly country atmosphere where we were given wonderful morning teas. St. David's, the Methodist Church, Te Hapara Baptist and even St. Andrew's Wairoa plus the four Rest Homes;

At Albert Park – Bevan Wright brought along genuine sherry and after communion, if there was any left, he would finish it off!

During 2003 St. Andrew's hosted the Rev. Les Hewitt and some of his parishioners, all locally and happily billeted. Local outings were made around Eastland. The visitors particularly enjoyed a morning at Whangara where they were warmly welcomed to the location of Witi Ihaemara's *Whale Rider* film. At the **Arboretum** photographs show the visitors lying on their

backs regarding the spectacular tall trees. There was a special afternoon when we had a coach excursion up the coast and David Reeves with his knowledge of the area was the excellent guide.



In March 2004 there was a return visit when twelve of us from St. Andrew's took off for Sydney, met at the Railway Station to catch the train to Dapto where we disembarked and were met by a convoy of friendly folk who drove us to Gerringong and our billets.

Therein followed a memorable stay.

During Rev. Shirley Barker-Kirby's ministry, it was arranged with Presbytery that I be commissioned as a Communion Celebrant.

The Signpost needed a new Editor and I took on this task for many years.

Gisborne's Rymans and Beethams Villages grew like Topsy and I was on the Roster to take occasional services.

Some time ago I had attended a lecture 'What shall we tell our children' by Dr Val Grant. It was so informative that I contacted Val to ask if I could use her material. She was very pleased that her message would have a wider audience.

In January 2004 I presented this sermon at St. Andrew's, then to Tolaga Bay in March, 2004.

At St. David's January, 2016 and also to Te Hapara Baptist and Gisborne Methodist congregations. It was received with great interest by all these parishes.

On presentation of the same sermon on one other occasion a lone voice dissented in terms which has; and it has to be said, of this part of my faith journey: been painful.

In 2020 I celebrated twenty-five years as an accredited Lay Preacher. It has been a great journey, to have given this service within my community.

Beverley M Smith

BLESSINGS OF COVID 19

cathnews.co.nz/2020/11/16/blessings-covid/

Monday, November
16th, 2020



In the spiritual realm, crucifixions and resurrections are not separate, and, as Jesus demonstrated, what is resurrected is always greater than what has died. We have all experienced this way of growth in some form or other. We need to be emptied in order to be filled. Ignatian teacher Margaret Silf writes in her book *“The Way of Wisdom”* that when the ground gets hard, it needs to be broken by the plough before new growth can happen. That image works for me. But what happens when the plough upturns a nation? A world? Before Covid19 we experienced this movement with the Christchurch massacre.

We were stunned. How could something like this happen in our country?

Then we reacted with a flood of love that took us to unprecedented newness.

From that horrifying crucifixion came a resurrection that brought growth to us and to the world.

So how does that relate to Covid 19?

Admittedly, we are still in the tomb where the pandemic is concerned.

We wait with uncertainty.

But if I put my head out to look over the past year, I see indicators of new growth.

Here is my blessing list. I hope you can pause a moment to reflect on yours.

Covid 19 is a leveller. It does not distinguish between countries, cultures, rank or class.

The teaching in that is a blessing.

We have been blessed by wise and caring leaders who have been tireless in their efforts to control a dangerous situation. There was no Covid textbook.

They had to create systems of protection for us, systems that worked.

We continue to be grateful.

There were blessings in lock-down.

As a nation, we seemed to come closer in separation.

We were aware of our neighbours and seeds of kindness grew and flowered in surprising ways.

Lockdown brought time for reflection, a time to come home to ourselves and our values.

We became more responsible.

We felt more real.

During the lockdown, we could smile as animals and birds roamed free while we sat in cages.

The world seemed cleaner and fresher without us.
I remembered Mark Twain's words,
"Man is the highest creation. Now, I wonder who found that out?"
And I felt the blessing of humility.
It has certainly been an extraordinary year.

No matter how we view the effect of the pandemic, we know that we are not the same as we were in November 2019.
The economy may not be in good shape, but we are. We have grown in many ways.

Please, God, may that growth continue.

Joy Cowley is a wife, mother, grandmother, great-grandmother and retreat facilitator.



SMILE CORNER

Here are 20 funny quotes about the Bible that children have uttered.
From the mouths of babes...

- ✚ As the offering plate was being passed, a 4-year-old said, "You don't have to pay for me, daddy. I'm under 5."
- ✚ When you get scared, God will bring you your quilt.
He said the Comforter would come.
- ✚ It says "the Lord thy God is One."
But I think He is a lot older than that.

- ✚ Noah built a large boat and put his family and some animals on it.
He asked some other people to join him, but they said they would have to take a rain check.
- ✚ Jesus had twelve opossums. The worst one was Judas Asparagus. Judas was so evil that they named a terrible vegetable after him.
- ✚ Solomon had 300 wives and 700 porcupines.
- ✚ The greatest miracle in the Bible was when Joshua told His son to stand still and he obeyed him.



ALL SESSIONS HELD IN LOUNGE

- Week 1 Tuesday 23 February 4.30 – 5.30pm
(theme: God)
- Week 2 Tuesday 2 March 4.30 – 5.30pm
(theme: Image of God)
- Week 3 Tuesday 9 March 4.30 – 5.30pm
(theme: Sin)
- Week 4 Tuesday 16 March 4.30 – 5.30pm
(theme: Covenant)
- Week 5 Tuesday 23 March 4.30 – 5.30pm
(theme: Crucifixion & Resurrection)

AND ARE WE YET ALIVE

..... We, as worship leaders in our new world, what are you doing to renovate and explore the world of religious music? New Zealand now has a huge library of contemporary hymns, written by New Zealanders, fresh in their choice of language and imagery, up to date in their theological and social thought, directed at our world here in these beleaguered islands, not the storied European continental past. Be brave. Look the 'new normal' in the eye and sound as though you are the bravely-voiced faith community of this new day, not the croaking remnant of an exhausted past.

Here is a newly-minted hymn text that while it remembers with gratitude the sacrifices made by those who have brought us safely through the Covid crisis, embraces the values of kindness to each other and to the planet which have emerged as powerful spiritual forces during the lock-down period, and looks forward to a hopefully better future for us all. Try it to the familiar tune *Diademata* (or any other metrical equivalent), and let it set the blood pulsing through the veins again.

It is no accident that it begins by honouring a traditional hymn (from England), written for people outside the establishment Church of the time. Methodists gathering in London after a year of persecution and hostility really meant it when they sang, 'And are we yet alive and see each other's face?' That seems a good parallel to our own faith communities now emerging, blinking, into the daylight of a still dangerous, but post-Covid world – a strange world, yet one full of fresh opportunities, and, one hopes, of dreams and visions.

And are we yet alive
And see each other's face,
A company of friends, restored
Through God's almighty grace.
Now, hand in hand once more,
Within this sacred place
We thank you for deliverance,
Held fast in your embrace.

A new world ours to make,
Where kindness rules the day,
Where neighbours share,
And nations care,
Where children, fearless, play;
An earth no longer torn,
Between the rich and poor,
A planet freed to heal its wounds,
While nature breathes once more.

For all who made us smile
And take fresh heart again,
Who spoke the truth,
And held out hope,
The women and the men
Who offered us their lives
That many more might live,
For doctors, nurses, scientists,
Our gratitude we give.

With every human soul,
Held precious in your sight,
We recognise our common bond
And face the powers of night.
The light of Christ we take,
Our light to light the way
Towards a future yet unknown
But, surely, God's new day.

Colin Gibson 2020

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