

**MARCH 2018**

ST ANDREWS

MATAWHERO



**PARISH MISSION STATEMENT**

We are a diverse community called together by  
Jesus Christ to welcome, love, serve and care

HAERE MAI – AFIO MAI EVERYONE IS WELCOME

**GISBORNE PRESBYTERIAN PARISH**

St Andrew's Church, 176 Cobden Street Gisborne  
Matawhero Church, Church Road, Matawhero

## *Letter from Minister*

*Dear Friends*

*The Easter message is at the same time both very simple and very profound. God loves you and is always with you. That message offers us hope in even the darkest of times.*

***God can be strength, a rock for each one of us, in the turmoil of life.***

*We are never alone, even in the bleakest of times.*

*Jesus experienced some really bleak times. He was despised, hated and hunted by the political authorities because of his teaching about God's kingdom – encouraging people to live God's way of compassion and care for others. Jesus showed people that God had a claim on their life and had made them for a purpose of service to others. He lived that way as an example to all. The Roman authorities saw him as a rebel, challenging the authority of Caesar, the Roman Emperor. Their way of dealing with rebels was to crucify them. They tortured and crucified Jesus. Yet through all that Jesus trusted God. In the imagery from the psalms, God was his rock and strength.*

***God is our rock but God is also love. Jesus' life, death and risen life among us, show us God's love in the most powerful way.*** *The followers of Jesus, throughout the centuries and today, are his new body – we are the life of Christ in the world now.*

*The Easter story has many images that can touch us deeply. Sorrow and love mingled together is the image of Jesus on the cross on Good Friday. Yet sorrow and love are also part of the image of Easter Sunday. The cross is now empty. The tomb is now empty. Yet God's sorrow and love still mingle in the meaning of these empty images. We think of the joy of Easter morning but when we look carefully at the meaning of what happened, God's sorrow about the evils of humanity is still there and God's love is very evident.*

*Each of the four gospels gives us a different version of the story of that first Easter morning – different memories and different details, different responses. The women remembered and believed yet the disciples were puzzled or afraid. What goes through your mind when you hear these stories again? Are you excited? Is your response one of praise and thankfulness to God?*

***Jesus is alive.*** *The risen Christ had such an effect on his followers that 2000 years later people all over the world today are still retelling this amazing story.*

*Death does not have the last word. The body of Christ, his people, his followers, including us - is alive. Together we are the living, breathing, embodied Christian community.*

*May you know the power of the deep love of God in your life this Easter and may you be very aware of the love of God holding you, whatever happens in your life.*

*God bless you. Mary Petersen*

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**BIRTHDAYS IN MARCH**

**Barbara McGregor,  
Eunice McIntyre, Mike Willis,  
Janet Goodall**

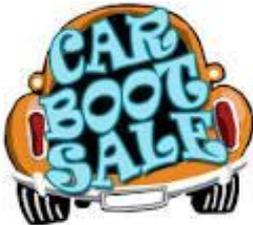
**WALKING GROUP** Departs St. Andrew's 9:00am each Monday morning – whatever the weather. Do join us for an hour's exercise followed by a 'cuppa'.

**OPEN DOOR** Tuesdays at 10:00am



**PASTORAL CARE**

If you need transport to the Church Service at St Andrews please give Val Hall a call 868-8226 early "in the week. (If you are able to offer a ride contact Val)



**St Andrew's Car Boot Sale**

In car park behind church  
Monthly on 2nd & 4<sup>th</sup>  
Saturdays -come and support us by buying at the stalls

**Starts at 9am**

**SATURDAY 10<sup>th</sup> March**

**SATURDAY 24<sup>th</sup>**

*Lots of bargains*

*Financial summary for January prepared by Pat Flockhart – see Pat for any questions relating to this.*

**FINANCIAL SUMMARY**

**1/07/2017--31/01/2018**

\$

**Month**

**31/01/2018**

**Income**

Giving & Donations 4664

Other Income 7120

11784

**Less Expenses**

12652

**Cash Deficit for month**

-868

**Year to date**

**July 2017 to 31 January 2018**

**Income**

Giving & Donations 35750

Other Income 32878

68628

**Less Expenses**

82331

**Cash Deficit Year to date**

-13703

## **EASTER SERVICES**

We are already in the season of Lent, as explained in the February issue of *Signpost* - the time of preparation before Easter. The church holds special services during Lent, but particularly in what is known as Holy Week – from Palm Sunday to Easter Sunday.

### **This year the Easter services and events include:**

**Sunday 25 March** PALM SUNDAY

10 a.m. at St Andrew's & 7 p.m. at St Mary Star of the Sea Church combined with Anglicans and Catholics

**Monday 26 March** 5.30 p.m. at St Andrew's and

**Tuesday 27 March** 1.30 p.m. at St David's

Final sessions of the *Journey to Easter* studies.

**Thursday 29 March** 7 p.m. at Matawhero

*SHIMMERING SHADOWS, CANDLES & COMMUNION*

**Friday 30 March** 9 a.m. at St Andrew's

*GOOD FRIDAY SERVICE*

**Sunday 1 April** EASTER DAY (NB that Daylight Saving ends and clocks go back one hour)

10 a.m. at St Andrew's

*EASTER CELEBRATION INCLUDING COMMUNION*

## The Meaning of Easter

That every hill has a cross on it?

That every garden a tomb?

That every dawn is a rising?

That no word spoken is ever truly lost?

That every life ends and goes on?

That even corroded hopes can be polished fine again?

That life can find a way even through great horror?

That even the feeblest song can have new verses written?

That poems said in the day can be remembered in the night?

That no damage can finally undo everything?

That bonds forged in hopefulness are not so easily broken?

That stories each have their own life and power?

That every end is also a beginning?

That love always finds a way?

That living and dying are dying and living?

That life goes on past even the darkest day?

That death kills nothing in the end?

*c. Paul Turley 2012*



### **Harvest Festival Service at Matawhero on 18 March 10.00am**

Please think about what you might like to bring to the Harvest Festival service – this does not need to be something you have grown, it can be jam, relish, tinned and packet goods or a symbol of something that you are thankful for.

Our gifts will be given to  
Family Works  
(Presbyterian Support)

## Opportunities for Study and Discussion



### **JOURNEY TO EASTER**

There will be a three week series of **Easter Studies in March**, enabling those who choose to participate, to look deeply into the Easter story in Mark's Gospel. This series will be offered twice:

**Mondays 5.30pm** on 12, 19, 26 March at St Andrew's lounge  
**and**

**Tuesdays 1.30pm** on 13,20,27 March at St David's Church Kaiti.  
For more information please contact Mary Petersen by text to 027 244 8396 or email [mjpetersen@xtra.co.nz](mailto:mjpetersen@xtra.co.nz) or leave a message with Liz in the church office.

*All welcome to whichever day/time suits you.*

There will also be a three week series of studies  
**Exploring the Bible** offered in June or July.

# FROM THE MODERATOR

This weekend, New Zealand will celebrate Children's Day. The official Children's Day website says that the three key elements of caring for children are:

1. Giving time
2. Aroha and affection
3. Praise and encouragement.

These are great 'work-ons' for everyone, including the Church. We should be pouring these things into the children in our churches and our children's programmes, as a fundamental plank of our interaction with children.

We also have something more for them as well. We have the message of a God whose love is so deep that he sent Jesus – his son – to die for them. But, how will they come to know this Jesus? They will know him first because we spend time with them, show that we love them very much and use every opportunity we can to encourage them. Even if nothing else is said – this love will open their ears to the message of the Gospel when we teach it.

In our work with children, I cannot emphasise enough how important this fundamental commitment to love and encourage our tamariki is; it not only cements in their hearts and minds what a great place church is, but their parents will see how they thrive in our company and how much they love being at church.

An old theology taught that punishment was the key to obedience. We now know that the opposite is true. Love is the key and the sooner we recognise this, the quicker we will find that our churches are filling up with children and their parents.

God bless you and your children this Children's Day!

**Richard**

# INTO THY HANDS

Colin Gibson

As we approach Easter, it is time to start thinking about an appropriate selection of hymns. For well-established congregations at least this is a moment for some lateral thinking.

The secular world in which we are all deeply embedded treats Easter as a welcome holiday – time off from the world of work and responsibility. Shopkeepers have long clamoured for freedom to trade right through the festival, and the state has finally agreed that commerce wins the day. After all, our valuable tourists might want to shop, even if we don't, and concert managers need to be certain that New Zealand doesn't shut down for a merely religious occasion; the fans, too, need to be able to spend their money non-stop. Unions are reassured that none of their members will be prevented from taking a break – all they will lose will be their pay. And the grand Lenten themes of self-denial and spiritual self-examination, let alone the Easter themes of resurrection and salvation appear to have lost their grip on a population more possessed by self-interested worry about climate change and their fluctuating return on their investments than about any conceivable afterlife, about security from poverty and terrorism in this life rather than any form of insurance cover against the possibility of hell and damnation.

May I suggest another modest way into the Easter story, signalled in the quotation which heads this article. 'Into thy hands I commit my spirit': we'll all recognise it as the words which the gospel writer Luke attributes to Jesus, his 'loud cry' at the very moment of his death on the cross. Here, as many commentators (and preachers) have remarked over the centuries, is a final expression of deliberate self-surrender; an ultimate and profound self-giving to the divine one whose loving care Jesus responded to and trusted to the end and beyond the end.

Our world is not keen on losing sight of itself. Our egos demand our constant attention and the flattery (honest or pretended) of others. Like President Trump we are inclined to believe that we are a genius – despite all the evidence to the contrary. And we are encouraged to see ourselves as self-shapers: in control of our destiny, making our own luck.

Against all this super-egotism, Christians might well wish to align themselves – especially at Easter – with the Christ whose death was an act of total surrender into the loving hands of God. And in her hymn "something beautiful for God", Shirley Murray has written the perfect text for such an attitude of selflessness. The words of the hymn echo the title of a famous book written about Mother Teresa, is known for her selfless work on behalf of the poor and destitute in the slums of Calcutta. And they take

up the very spirit of her prayer of blessing addressed to the women gathered in Beijing in 1995 for the Fourth United Nations-sponsored

Conference on Women. *'That each one of you may live in love and peace with one another, making our families and our world something beautiful for God.'*

The hymn, given a beautiful setting by Barry Brinson of Christchurch, is found in *Hope is our Song*, published by the New Zealand Hymnbook Trust in 2009. It is eminently singable and quickly learned. Better still, it is simply poetry of a high order, a lovely expression of Easter surrender, trust and humility.

***Something beautiful for God,  
In my seeing,  
In my being  
Something beautiful for God  
Let the Spirit make of me.***

***Something only I can be,  
In my choosing,  
Or refusing,  
Something only I can be  
Let the Spirit work in me.***

***Something meaningful and true,  
In my living,  
And believing,  
Something meaningful and true  
Something beautiful and new.***

(Published in Word & Worship – Lay Preachers Association)

## **Images of God**

In a recent sermon, I heard one word that gave me much to think about – *Image* – being the image of God and what it meant to me.

*The image of God* as caring, welcoming, healing, loving, not forgetting the wisdom and Spirit of God. Everyone needs to have an image that they feel is helpful to them: we are talking here about images, not the reality of God to which any image can only point. The traditional image of God as supernatural being works very well for many. But let us recognise that God is a mystery, the extent of which lies beyond any human words or image, and that there can be many images of the same God.

By way of comparison let's think of the various ways we can depict the City of Gisborne, One person might have a photograph of the city, another a tourist guide, another might have written a poem about the magic of the city, They are all about Gisborne but none would be mistaken for the city itself. They would all be recognised as no more than images or pointers about the city.

This is precisely how it is when we think about God. But if God is mystery, does this mean there is nothing we can know about God? Through the teachings of Jesus we find the nature of God to be one of love, forgiveness, justice, peace, and sacrifice for others.

Dean Richard Randerson writes” *Debate about God and religion may be upsetting for some, but for many it opens up the possibilities of exploring those things which are of greatest importance in life.*

*The way in which we understand the stories and images contained in Scripture is also important. The Bible contains different literary forms: an historical thread winds through it all, but the Bible also contains poetry, symbolism, parables, prophecy and teaching.*

**(From a recent Christian Comment published in Gisborne Herald)**

**Beverley M. Smith**

**Accredited Lay Preacher Presbyterian Church of Aotearoa, New Zealand**

In 1970 a clergyman bought a cottage and learnt later that a farmer's wife had complained “that a ‘God botherer had moved in’  
He came to cherish the description saying ‘I am bothered by GOD.

## CELEBRATING ONE HUNDRED YEARS – A TRIBUTE TO SIR LLOYD GEERING

- Religion is a total mode of the interpreting and living of life.
- By osmosis we have reached an understanding and clarification of the Axial era 800-300BC when the world's great religions had their origin.
- The Old Testament: a set of documents that reflected limited beliefs and prejudices of people who wrote them.
- Understanding that the recorded miraculous events are in conflict with science.
- In the religious experience of humankind, two opposing tendencies can be observed – the one towards diversity and the other towards unity. Certain values flow from each, but perhaps the greatest value of all arises from the interplay between the two.
- The transition from polytheism to monotheism. That human psychology had much to do with it. Our searching for unity in the human psyche longed for some way of unifying it.
- Nietzsche – that Jesus came not to redeem mankind but to demonstrate how one ought to live. That the slave morality proclaimed by Christianity leads people to the denial of life and encourages them to attempt to escape from the world to find ultimate fulfillment in another world.
- Everything in the universe is connected. Even the world itself, God has put into the human mind, but in such a way that people cannot discover from beginning to end, what it is that he has done. (Ecclesiastes) we need to pause for a moment to realize what an extraordinary fact it is – that in our minds we are able to create a picture of the universe. It means that, through us tiny earthly creatures, the universe attempts to look at itself.
- Ecclesiastes – the most remarkable book in the Bible. It questions or negates nearly everything we usually associate with religion, whether Jewish, Christian, Muslim whatever.

It's a very secular book. Life is very short, often unfair and it's over. Insofar as he does refer to God we find what he is really talking about are the works of nature. These sometimes favour us and they sometimes harm us.

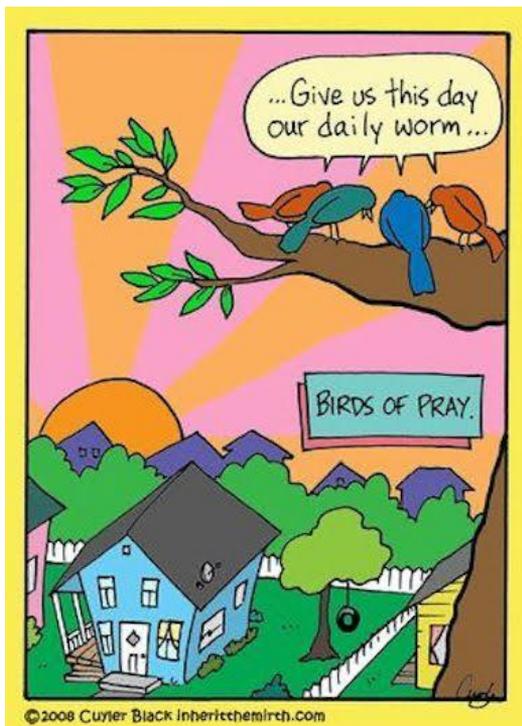
- Books: 'The Greening of Christianity', 'Human Destiny', 'Relativity', 'Rethinking Religion', 'Understanding Jung', 'Wrestling with God' 'Who owns the Holy Land' and .... I could go on and on!

Lloyd, the foregoing has increased our theological understanding from your many lectures and your books. And now we recall that it is more than fifty years since John Robinson alerted the people in the pews that their image of God must go. How grateful we are to you Lloyd for addressing 'The changes in Christian thought' and reminding us of humankind's evolving cultural paths.

### ***Beverley Smith***



**Sir Lloyd Geering, Rachael Kohn & Beverley Smith – Sea of Faith Conference, 2013**



Original watercolours by Graham Morris (Gisborne). A great selection - for sale \$2, a fund raiser for the church.

Available in community hall foyer.

## DID YOU KNOW?

**Did you know** a cat has 32 muscles in each ear

**Did you know** Perth is Australia's windiest city

**Did you know** Elvis's middle name was Aron

**Did you know** goldfish can see both infrared and ultraviolet light

**Did you know** the smallest bones in the human body are found in your ear

**Did you know** cats spend 66% of their life asleep

**Did you know** Switzerland eats the most chocolate equating to 10 kilos per person per year

**Did you know** money is the number one thing that couples argue about

**Did you know** macadamia nuts are toxic to dogs

**Did you know** when lightning strikes it can reach up to 30,000 degrees celsius (54,000 degrees fahrenheit)

**Did you know** spiders are arachnids and not insects

**Did you know** each time you see a full moon you always see the same side

**Did you know** stewardesses is the longest word that is typed with only the left hand

**Did you know** honey is the only natural food which never spoils

**Did you know** M&M's chocolate stands for the initials for its inventors Mars and Murrie.

### **STRIDE FOR STROKE FUN WALK & RUN**

**SUNDAY MARCH 25<sup>TH</sup>** 10 am event start at Beacon Reserve, Oneroa cycle/Walkway. Entry \$10 Adults. \$5 for 16 yrs & under. Children under 5 free.

Spot prizes. More info at:

[gisbornestrokesupport.org.nz/fun-run](http://gisbornestrokesupport.org.nz/fun-run)



The mainly music team would welcome several volunteers to join their enthusiastic team. This only involves helping 2 - 3 times a term. Grandparents (or parents)... if you enjoy pre-school age children then this is a fun activity to assist with. Come and join us on a Wednesday morning during term time. For information phone Val 868-8226 or Catherine 867-4937.

### Social Committee

If you would be interested in being part of a group to organise occasional social gatherings, outings or events, please contact Liz in the office. The 'events' could be as simple as a meal together, the co-ordinated group watching of a movie, or an outing somewhere. If you have some ideas for doing things with others, rather than on your own, and are willing to help make them happen, please volunteer to be part of this committee.

## **DATES TO REMEMBER IN MARCH 2018**

Friday	2	1.00pm	Choir practise
<b>Sunday</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>9.00am</b>	<b>Matawhero Communion</b>
		<b>10.00am</b>	<b>Worship Service St Andrew's</b>
Monday	5	9.00am	Walking Group
Tuesday	6	10.00am	Open Door
Wednesday	7	9.45am	mainly music
Friday	9	1.00pm	Choir practise
Saturday	10	9.00 am	Car Boot Sale
<b>Sunday</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>NO SERVICE AT MATAWHERO</b>	
		<b>10.00am</b>	<b>St Andrew's communion</b>
Monday	12	9.00am	Walking Group
		5.30pm	Easter Studies in lounge
Tuesday	13	10.00am	Open Door
		1.30pm	Ryman Service
Wednesday	14	9.45am	mainly music
Thursday	15	3.30pm	Dunblane Service
Friday	16	1.00pm	Choir practise
<b>Sunday</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>10.00</b>	<b>Harvest Festival combined service at Matawhero</b>
			<b>NO SERVICE AT ST ANDREW'S</b>
Monday	19	9.00am	Walking group
		5.30pm	Easter Studies in lounge
Tuesday	20	10.00am	Open Door
Wednesday	21	9.45am	mainly music
Thursday	22	2.00pm	Leighton House Service
		7.00pm	Parish Council Meeting
Friday	23	1.00pm	Choir practise
Saturday	24	9.00am	Car Boot sale

<b>Sunday</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>NO SERVICE AT MATAWHERO</b>	
		<b>10.00am</b>	<b>Palm Sunday Service St Andrew's</b>
		<b>7.00pm</b>	<b>Combined Service at St Mary's</b>
Monday	26	9.00am	Walking Group
		5.30pm	Easter Studies in lounge (Final)
Tuesday	27	10.00am	Open Door
		1.30pm	St David's final for Easter Studies
Wednesday	28	9.45am	mainly music
<b>Thursday</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>7.00pm</b>	<b>Maundy Thursday at Matawhero Church</b>
			<i>Shimmering Shadows, Candles &amp; Communion</i>
<b>Friday</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>9.00am</b>	<b>Good Friday Service – St Andrew's</b>
<b>SUNDAY APRIL 1</b>		<b>10.00am</b>	<b>Easter Celebration including communion</b>
			<b>NO SERVICE AT MATAWHERO</b>

*" I shall pass through this world but once!  
Any good thing, therefore, that I can do or  
any kindness that I can show to any human  
being, let me do it now, in his name, and for  
his sake! Let me not defer or neglect it,  
for I shall not pass this way again. I shall  
pass through this world but once."*

***-Earl of Essex Epitaph***

# LIGHTER MOMENTS

## LIFE NEVER GETS OLD

- Your kids are becoming you...but your grandchildren are perfect!
- ~ Going out is good... Coming home is better!
- ~ You forget names...But it's OK because other people forgot they even knew you!
- ~ You realize you're never going to be really good at anything...especially golf.
- ~ The things you used to care to do, you no longer care to do, but you really do care that you don't care to do them anymore.
- ~ You sleep better on a lounge chair with the TV blaring than in bed. It's called "pre-sleep".
- ~ You miss the days when everything worked with just an "ON" and "OFF" switch.
- ~ You tend to use more 4 letter words ... "what?"..."when?"... ??
- ~ Now that you can afford expensive jewellery, it's not safe to wear it anywhere.
- ~ You notice everything they sell in stores is "sleeveless"?
- ~ What used to be freckles are now liver spots.
- ~ Everybody whispers.
- ~ You have 3 sizes of clothes in your wardrobe.... 2 of which you will never wear.
- ~ But "old" is good in some things: **Old Songs, Old movies, and best of all, OLD FRIENDS!!**

## **CWS Appeals for Tonga & Papua New Guinea**

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

**With winds of over 233 km per hour and heavy rains, Cyclone Gita caused extensive damage, especially in Tonga. People have lost their homes, gardens and livelihoods. Christian World Service has launched an appeal to help in Tonga.**

**Funds raised will go to the Tonga National Council of Churches and long term partner Tongan Community Development Trust to help with relief and recovery operations. Donations can be made online or sent to CWS, PO Box 22652, Christchurch 8140. Please pray for those affected by the storm in American Samoa, Fiji, Samoa and Tonga.**

**Now Papua New Guinea has experienced a major earthquake. Reports are still coming from remote communities who have been affected. Please keep our Pacific neighbours in your prayers.**

***Thank you.***