

St John the Baptist Anglican Church

Newsletter April 2019

47 Church Street, Northcote 0627

09 480 7568 / sjbanglican@gmail.com / www.stjohnsanglican.org.nz



A note from Stan...

After the events of the 15 March, I struggled to make sense of what happened in Christchurch. There were so many perspectives to this tragedy: emotional, theological, political, racial...I could go on. I began reading people's views and found I could be uplifted, angered, outraged, and encouraged all at the flick of a screen or turning of a page. Under all these perspectives was a deep feeling of sadness; for the victims, for the survivors, and whanau, friends and the public. We had lost something besides physical presence. We had lost our innocence as spectators to a violent world: as onlookers to things that were only on screens, albeit in our homes. We were no longer unique being part of the world that was relatively peaceful and free of such violence. Now we are part of the mainstream where phrases like, 'terrorist, semi-automatic weapon, armed police, internal intelligence and multiple gunshot victims,' are part of everyday language.

One of the people whose perspective has helped me is Professor Murray Rae, a senior lecturer of theology at Otago University. Professor Rae uses two the readings for Sunday 17 March 2019 to express himself. Attached is part of his sermon of that Sunday he posted to Facebook ...

I haven't ever posted a sermon on Facebook before. But silence in the face of the atrocity we have seen in Christchurch isn't appropriate. Here is my sermon for this morning to be shared soon at Pine Hill Church.

Psalm 58 Luke 13: 31 -35

On Friday we were exposed once more to the unfathomable depths of human evil. We may have believed that it couldn't happen here. But we were mistaken. In fact, while some have spoken of this event as unprecedented in New Zealand, tragically it is not. Wayne reminded us down at Araiteuru marae yesterday that in 1864, during the land wars in New Zealand, about 100 Māori women, children, and the elderly took refuge in Rangiaowhia in face of Governor Grey's attempts to conquer Māori settlements in the Waikato and seize their land. The

women, the children and the elderly took refuge while the men prepared to engage in battle elsewhere. Bishop Selwyn was told, and was asked to convey the message that Rangiaowhia would be a place of sanctuary. But on a Sunday morning the crown forces went to Rangiaowhia and slaughtered all those who had taken refuge there.

The massacre on Friday was not unprecedented in New Zealand. Atrocities like that have struck us before. We have been exposed before in this country to the depths of human evil, and it is probably the case that we will be again. Hatred takes root in the soil of indifference, and in fields of complacency. It grows there undetected until it unleashes its terrible violence and destructiveness. We cannot pretend that New Zealand's soil provides no nourishment for the seeds of hatred and evil. We cannot pretend as some memes on social media have put it, that this is not us.

Racism, intolerance and hatred are nourished here too. The man who drove past the mosque in Linwood on Friday and yelled out the window, 'I'm here to celebrate', or those who watched the live feed on facebook of the killer at his work and cheered him on, are people in our midst, here in Aotearoa New Zealand, in this place that we thought was immune to all this. We are not immune. So what are we to do? Many of us will have started out already to embrace our Muslim friends, to try to assure them that this is their home too. Sadly, for now, they have good reason to doubt it.

We may try to reach out to ethnic minorities in New Zealand and try to assure them that they are welcomed and their culture is respected. But sadly, their everyday experience frequently tells a different story. We ought to reach out in these ways wherever we can, but we also have other work to do; it is the work of confession. We are not, as a country, as hospitable, as welcoming, as compassionate as we imagine ourselves to be. The seeds of hatred, nourished by indifference and complacency, can grow here too.

Our gospel reading this morning is a reading for the season of Lent. It continues the story of Jesus making his way toward Jerusalem. Jesus knows what he will

face there. He did not need the warning some Pharisees brought to him that Herod was seeking to kill him. Jesus already knew of the darkness and evil that lay ahead. And yet he continues on. But for a moment he pauses, and utters a lament for the city toward which he journeys. 'Jerusalem, Jerusalem', Jesus says, 'the people that killed the prophets and stoned those who are sent to it! How often have I desired to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you were not willing!' A little later, when in sight now of the city, Jesus pauses again. This time, Luke tells us, Jesus wept over the city, saying, 'If you, even you, had only recognised on this day the things that make for peace!... Indeed the days will come upon you when your enemies will set up ramparts around you and surround you and hem you in on every side. They will crush you to the ground, you and your children within you, and they will not leave you with one stone upon another.'

This is Jesus' lament for the city. He is speaking of Jerusalem, of course, but we can claim it also for Christchurch today. 'Your enemies will crush you to the ground, you and your children within you.' Where do we belong in this story of lament? We want to stand with Jesus of course, joining in his lament for the city, shedding our own tears, longing for the city that it might be comforted, and that it might find a path to peace. It is right that we should stand with Jesus offering our lament. But we are also those who are lamented over. 'How often have I desired to gather your children together', Jesus says, 'as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you were not willing!' We are among those lamented over, and we must confess our resistance sometimes, to Jesus' way of love. For all that we do in seeking to follow Jesus, we could do more.

We, I'm afraid, take time off now and again, let our own prejudices show, tire of the work of compassion, and harbour intolerant thoughts. We belong also with those for whom Jesus laments: 'How often have I desired to gather your children together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you were not willing!' We have work of confession to do. In a third place of belonging in this story, we may hear a lament for the Muslim community. They will crush you to the ground, you and your children within you...' Not only children, but brothers, sisters, mothers, fathers, grandmothers and grandfathers have been crushed by the gunman in Christchurch. We can claim Jesus'

lament for them, and for us wherever we stand in solidarity with them.

We have also read this morning from Psalm 58. It is a Psalm of bitter anguish cried out to God in the face of atrocity. It is not a Psalm we read often in church, for in crying out for vengeance, the psalmist expresses sentiments that don't seem to fit very well with the way of Christ. Jesus calls us to love our enemies. We are enjoined to respond to evil with love. Can a Psalm like this, crying out as it does for vengeance, have any place in Christian worship? I want to suggest to you this morning that it does have a place. Psalm 58 is a Psalm of outrage, and outrage is exactly what we should feel in the face of what went on in Christchurch on Friday.

Approval is unconscionable and indifference is also a failure. In the face of such terrible evil, we should feel outrage alongside our sorrow. What is more, this is precisely the place where that outrage should be expressed — before God, in worship and lament. But it is important for us to recognise what we are doing in bringing our outrage here. The psalmist pleads that God will bring vengeance upon his enemies, and in doing so, in placing the outrage before God, the Psalmist waives the right to seek vengeance himself. To place our outrage in the hands of God is to offer it up for God to deal with. 'O God break the teeth of the wicked in their mouths', cries the Psalmist, 'tear out the fangs of the young lions, O Lord!' The Psalmist has witnessed terrible atrocity and he brings his outrage to God. Outrage is the appropriate thing to feel, but having prayed a prayer like that, the Psalmist must leave his bitterness and anger in the hands of God. And then he must wait upon God's answer to his prayer.

That brings us back to Jesus and his journey toward Jerusalem. Jesus goes to Jerusalem precisely to face the suffering and the evil of our world. Despite the warning of the Pharisees, he does not turn away. He faces the evil by bearing it himself. "Vengeance is mine says, the Lord, I will repay." In Jesus we find that the Lord repays evil by taking its consequences upon himself. How are we to respond to the atrocity that has taken place in our midst? Outrage is an appropriate response, but we must bring it here and place it in the hands of God. And then we must seek to be faithful to the God we discover in Jesus who does not return evil for evil, but responds to evil with love. It is our Muslim brothers and sisters who need our

love most of all just now. We must be diligent in offering our love and our support.

But there is another job for us as well. When we see the evil of racial intolerance appearing among us, or among our friends and acquaintances, when we see the evil of hatred and prejudice manifesting itself in casual remarks among our peers, or in attitudes embedded in our communities, we followers of Christ must call it out and answer it with Jesus' way of compassion, and kindness, and love. I sympathise with the thousands of people who have posted on social media and protested before television cameras that the evil unleashed in Christchurch is not our way. But we cannot take that for granted. Compassion cannot be taken for granted. The overcoming of racial prejudice cannot be taken for granted. The removal of religious suspicion and intolerance cannot be taken for granted. We have to work at it, and in that work, we desperately need God's help. Let us pray. Lord we are deeply saddened by what has taken place in our midst. We acknowledge our feelings of anger that an evil man has wrought such destruction among us and brought us all so low. We come before you with our anger, with our sorrow, and also with our confession that we have work to do ourselves to overcome those feelings of intolerance and suspicion and mistrust that we find at times within our own hearts and minds. We need your help, O Lord. We need your help. Do not delay. We pray in bringing your aid to all of us, and especially to the Muslim community with whom we mourn today. Amen.

PASTORAL CARE REPORT

In early March the Parish farewelled another faithful parishioner, Eldrid Reed. She had been in care for several years and unable to attend Worship. I officiated at her Funeral held at H. Morris on Thursday 07th. The following week at the Shoal Bay Villa Service an opportunity was provided for other residents to remember her.

I have made several visits by telephone and at home which included one Communion.

Ash Wednesday was observed on 06th March and the Wednesday 10.00 a.m. Service continues throughout Lent as Holy Communion. Palm Sunday is 14th April and in Holy Week there will be a Communion on each of Monday 15th and Tuesday 16th too. Stan will look after Maundy Thursday and Good Friday. Easter

Home Communions where requested I will do Wednesday 24th April.

For Easter I give you this thought –

Expectation

Acceptance

Suffering

Temptation

Endurance

Resurrection

To conclude on Sunday 24th March I served as Locum Priest. Thank you to everyone who helped when part way through the 8.00 a.m. Service I went dizzy and had to take a short break. A visit to the Doctor revealed it was mild vertigo triggered by blocked sinuses.

Vivienne Hill (The Reverend)

MEN'S SUPPER & BIBLE READING GROUP

Join us for two gatherings this month – on the Wednesday 10th April and Wednesday the 24th April. These are an evening of good banter, chatting, stories, good discussion over a Bible chapter, and a great supper which we all bring and share. Here are the details.

Wed. 10th April: We will meet at Mike Wilkin's home, 28 Northbridge Ave, Hillcrest. 7.30 – 9pm. Peter Mundell will chat about one of his favourite places. Always interesting, as we chat about things we discover or rediscover in a Bible chapter. At the moment it's Johns Gospel.

Wed. 24th April: We will meet at Peter White's home, but **please note the new address**, 2/2 Milton Rd, (off Richmond St.) Northcote Point. Again it's at 7.30 – 9pm. Mike Patterson will chat about some favourite place he's visited. And we'll read another Bible chapter and chat about that.

These are real "Blokes" evenings and a good time is always had by all.

If you haven't been before, you're most welcome. Just bring some supper to share.



In and around St John

Sunday Services: 8am, 9.30am, Eucharist.

Fourth-Sunday School: 4th Sunday of the month at 9.30am

Evening Women's Fellowship: 7.30pm 2nd Tuesday of the month

Men's Supper & Bible Group: 7.30-9pm twice a month on a Wednesday. Check the weekly service sheet for each venue.

Hall Users

Rowe Dance - ballet classes for 3-8 year olds on Monday 2.45-4.30pm, Wednesday 3.45-5.30pm and Thursday 3.30-4.30pm in term time.

Rowe Dance - dancing for adults, Friday 10-11am.

Rowe Dance - Personal tuition by arrangement.

Joy Russ Dance - Monday 8.30-9.30pm.

Positive Balance Yoga - Mon, Tues 6-8.30pm, Thurs 5.45-8.15pm in term time.

Weight Watchers - meet in St Jude's Room weekly, Tuesday 5.30-7.30pm.

Jumping Beans - Wednesday 9am-1pm in term time.

Scottish Country Dance - Wednesday 7.30pm - 10pm throughout the year.

Northcote Steps - meet in the St Jude's Room, Friday 7-10pm throughout the year.

Soccer for Tots - Sat 9am - 1pm during term time

Northern Performing Arts - Saturday 4-8pm.

English Folk Dance - 2nd Friday of each month, 7-10pm

Early English Dance - 4th Friday of each month, 7.30 - 10pm

Al Anon family support group - 3-5pm first Sun of each month.

The Korean Yaewon Church: Sunday 10am-5pm (hall), 1.40pm-3pm (St Jude's Room).

Plus occasional use by...

Northcote Residents Association

Northcote/Birkenhead Boat Owners Association

St Thomas, Syrian Church.

Readings for the month

April 7 Lent 5

Reading: Isaiah 43: 16-21

Epistle: Philippians 3: 4b-14

Gospel: John 12: 1-8

April 14 Lent 6

Liturgy of the Palms: Luke 19: 28-40

Liturgy of the Passion: Luke 22: 14-23: 56

April 18 Maundy Thursday

Reading: Exodus 12: 1-4, (5-10), 11-14

Epistle: 11: 23-26

Gospel: John 13: 1-17, 31b-35

April 19 Good Friday

Reading: Isaiah 52: 13-53: 12

Epistle: Hebrews: 10: 16-25

Gospel: John 18: 1-19: 42

April 21 Easter Day

Reading: Isaiah 65: 17-25

Epistle: Acts 10: 34-43

Gospel: John 20: 1-18

April 28 Easter 2

Reading: Acts 5: 27-32

Epistle: Revelation 1: 4-8

Gospel: John 20: 19-31

May 5 Easter 3

Reading: Acts 9: 1-20

Epistle: Revelation 5: 11-14

Gospel: John 21: 1-19

PALM CROSSES

We will be making palm crosses on Friday, 12 April starting at 10.am. Tea and/or coffee and hot cross buns will be served when we have finished. All helpers welcome to come and make the crosses.



THE EVENING WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP

We meet this coming Tuesday night (9th April) in the St Jude's room at 7.30 pm. We are having an 'at home' night of 'show and tell'. Please bring something precious to you or some craft, or things to share - if you would like to. This is always a fun night. See you there, Rosemary.

EASTER HUMOUR AND QUOTATIONS

How do angels greet each other at Easter? They say, 'Halo'.

Why did the angel lose her job?
She had harp failure

Maria came home from Sunday School on Palm Sunday and told her mother that she had learned a new song about a cross-eyed bear named Gladly. It took her mother a while before she realised that the hymn Maria had been singing was really: "Gladly The Cross I'd Bear."

Easter Peace: It does not mean to be in a place where there is no noise, trouble or hard work. It means to be in the midst of those things and still be calm in your heart. - Author unknown

Easter spells out beauty, the rare beauty of new life.
S.D. Gordon

Easter tells us that life is to be interpreted not simply in terms of things but in terms of ideals. Charles M. Crowe

REVERENDFUN.COM COPYRIGHT BIBLE GATEWAY



YOU'LL HAVE TO FORGIVE HIM ... HE'S
NEW TO THE FAITH AND THIS IS HIS
FIRST EASTER

FIND ST JOHN'S ON FACEBOOK!

Just go to www.facebook.com and search:
@AnglicanChurchNorthcotePoint

Contacts

Vicar:

Rev Stan Pilbrow 480 7568

Wardens

Vicar's Warden: Doug Dempster 418 1448

People's Warden: Karen Perrett 418 3715

Pastoral Care:

Rev Vivienne Hill 441-4325

Synod Representatives

Rosemary Saunders 489 5830

Louise Collenette 441 3055

Fourth Sunday School

Karen Perrett 418 3715

Hall Hire

Jansyl Andrews 027 217 2627

Recorder

Wendy McPherson 473 3448

Women's Fellowship

Rosemary Saunders 489 5830

Men's Supper and Bible reading group

Peter White 419 4380

Catering Committee

Barbara McIlroy 418 4117

Office Admin, Newsletter and Website

Natalie Roffey 0226074376

Your newsletter is prepared by Natalie. You can contact Natalie by emailing her at sjbanglican@gmail.com. The newsletter is published on the first Sunday of the month and the deadline for submissions is the previous Tuesday.

This Newsletter is sent to all email addresses as provided for the Parish Roll. If you do not wish to receive this communication by email, please write to sjbanglican@gmail.com.