

St John the Baptist Anglican Church

Newsletter March 2016

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Michael writes...

The cross has become a universal symbol of “being a disciple of Jesus” (though it can be reduced to only a piece of jewellery). Volumes have been written about the possible meaning and efficacy of Christ crucified and passionate debate has surrounded how his death “saves” humankind and redeems all of creation.

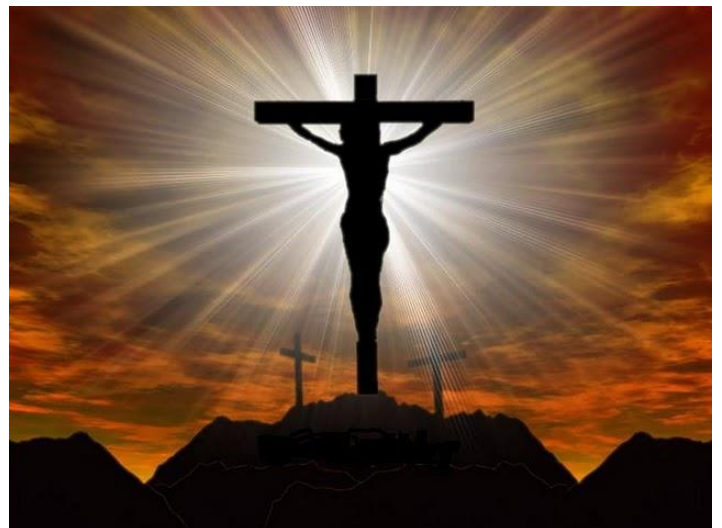
And now I presume to write a few lines in this letter!! Over the past centuries there have been distortions regarding what Jesus is working on the cross. In these distortions God is seen as passive, while Jesus works on the cross something that makes it then possible for God to forgive and accept us. In a crude way, Jesus changes God!

Many people have turned away from Christianity because they have thought of the cross in these crude terms. God is angry and needs a sacrifice to appease his anger and Jesus pays the price. at least that is what they think we understand about Jesus crucified. Sadly it is what has been and still is said by some. St Paul wrote, “in Christ, God was reconciling the world to himself” (2 Corth. 5:19) It is God who is working our salvation through Jesus and whatever the mystery of the cross might mean it is not about Jesus doing something that turns a Shylock type god demanding his pound of flesh into a more forgiving and loving Father.

Jesus is not changing God, but expressing God, as he gives himself away in self-giving sacrificial love.

We might easily misunderstand the words of the much loved hymn, when it has us sing; “There was no other good enough to pay the price of sin:” There have been those who think Jesus pays a price to God who is then satisfied and lets us off the hook, or even those who say the price was paid to the devil! Rather, Jesus pays a “high price” a costly self-giving in order to reveal the love of God, and draw all people to God. Much as we say of a soldier who dies to save his/her people – “they paid the ultimate price”.

While our understanding of God as Trinity is beyond description, the unity of Father, Son and Holy Spirit, ensures that what is happening on the cross is not one part of God acting to effect a change in another part of God. Without this grasp of truth, all sorts of distortions will surround and influence (usually for worse) our thinking about Jesus crucified. I have put a picture on the notice board of the artist Masaccio’s “Trinity” (1425) depicting the Father upholding the Son on the cross with the dove of the Spirit around the Father’s neck... God the Father is working through the Son in the power of Holy Spirit to work our salvation. On the cross, we see the nature of God... we see the glory of the Father... self-giving love... the reaching out to draw all people and all things into the influence and power of God who is Love. BUT, not love as an emotion only, more love full of moral content. We need many words of ethical content to help us grasp the height and depth of the Love that is God’s nature. Justice, compassion, power to forgive, giving away our own “life” that others might live and much more. Only this quality of love has the power to save, make whole the human person and also restore harmony to all creation. “Love so amazing, so Divine demands my soul, my life, my all.”



In and around St Johns

Sunday Services: 8am, 9.30am, Eucharist
5pm (study/discussion group). All welcome, come as and when able.

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

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

Men's Breakfast & Bible Group: 7.15-8.15am fortnightly on a Wednesday.

Craft Group: Meets 1st and 3rd Wednesday 1.30pm in the St Jude's Room

Next Garage Sale: Saturday 30th April

Hall Users

Positive Balance Yoga - Mon, Tues, Thurs evenings, 5.45pm – 7pm or 7pm – 8.15pm in term time.

Rowe Dance - ballet classes for 3-8 year olds on Monday morning, Wednesday and Thursday afternoons in term time.

Jumping Beans - Tues 9am – 12pm in term time

Scottish Country Dance - Wed 7.30pm – 10pm in term time.

Place for children minded by **Barnados** care givers – Thurs morning, fortnightly in term time

Alcoholics Anonymous support group – each Fri evening

English Folk Dance - 2nd Fri each month, 7.30 – 10pm

Early English Dance - last Fri each month, 7.30 – 10pm

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

AlAnon family support group – the afternoon of the first Sun of each month.

Shore Stitchers - 3rd Sun each month 11am – 3pm

Monthly public health clinic in the St Jude's Room to administer **BCG injections**

Readings for the month**March 6 4th Lent**

Reading: Joshua 5: 9-12

Gospel: Luke 15: 1-10

March 13 5th Lent

Reading: Isaiah 43: 16-21

Gospel: John 12: 1-8

March 20 Palm Sunday

Gospel: Luke 19: 28-48

March 27 Easter Day

Reading: Acts 10: 34-43

Gospel: John 20: 1-18

April 3 2nd After Easter

Reading: Acts 5: 27-32

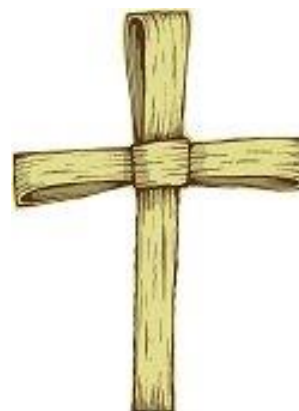
Gospel: John 20: 19-31

OUR NEW VICAR

The interviews have been completed and the nominators have made a recommendation to the Bishop. The process from now can take a while but an announcement will be made as soon as possible. Keep praying!!!

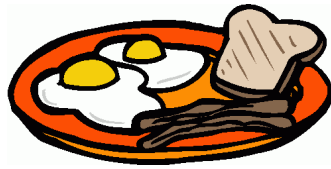
PALM CROSSES

On Friday 18th March, at 10am in the St Jude's Room, we will be making Palm Crosses. Please come along to help and bring your own scissors. We will have hot cross buns and coffee/tea when we have finished. A lot of fun and won't take long if we have a good number to help. Any queries, please phone Pru 489 1998.



MEN'S BREAKFAST

Next gathering is on **16th March** from 7.15 - 8.15am. 14 Vincent St Northcote Point.



Great continental and cooked breakfast. Great company and great discussions time.

Phone Richard Lewis 4199 026 or Peter White 419 4380

HALL CLEANING ROSTER

Week 1	Maureen Webley	444 8767
Week 2	John Saunders	489 5830
Week 3	Dick & Barbara Offwood	444 8531

A volunteer is needed for week 4, once a month. On Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday there is a need for someone to check the rubbish containers and restock paper towels and toilet rolls in the hall toilet block. Also to keep a lookout for rubbish left in the kitchen, and anything requiring attention in the hall complex. We need to keep it in good order for us to retain a rental income from the users.

If you are able to help please contact Maureen Webley.

**GARAGE SALE**

Yes it is going to happen but not until Saturday 30 April. Please keep gathering items for sale and there will be more news in next month's magazine.

WOMEN'S EVENING FELLOWSHIP

Women's Fellowship meet again in March, Tuesday 8th, in the St Jude's room at 7.30. The speaker this month is Ruth Cleaver, who is the president of the Interfaith Council in Auckland.

It promises to be a very interesting evening and all are welcome including people from the wider parish family. It would be great to have a good turnout for her. We had a lovely start to the year with a potluck dinner at Rosemary's and in April we will be having a film evening. All welcome – new members particularly welcome!

**NEW HOME FOR HELENA?**

Quiet, friendly, mature 18 year old female from Wellington looking for long term board in the Hillcrest area. Please contact Alison at dnaspurdle@slingshot.co.nz or Helena at helenaspurdle@gmail.com



Contacts**Priest-in-Charge:**

Archdeacon Michael Smart Home: 476 7452

Wardens

Vicar's Warden: Doug Dempster 418 1448

People's Warden: Pru Giles 489 1998

Pastoral Care: Karen Perrett 418-3715**Synod Representatives**

Rosemary Saunders 489 5830

Tristan Sullivan-Vaughan 480 8064

Hall Hire

Richard Lewis 419 9026

Recorder

Wendy McPherson 473 3448

Women's Fellowship

Rosemary Saunders 489 5830

Catering Committee

Barbara McIlroy 418 4117

Office Admin, Newsletter and Website

Natalie Mason 480 7568

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 25th of the previous month.

Solutions to last month's puzzle

For you have been my refuge, a strong tower against the foe. I long to dwell in your tent forever and take refuge in the shelter of your wings
Psalms 61:3-4 N.I.V.

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"I didn't say I was unfulfilled. I said I was hollow."

Cryptogram

Another Cryptogram for you. Remember that basically the trick is to start with common small words and progress up to bigger less common words.

I'd really appreciate getting any feedback on the puzzles I include in the newsletter each month. Do you give them a go? Would you prefer something different? I look forward to hearing from you - sjbanglican@gmail.com

BIBLE-CRYPTOVERSE (Scripture verse in code) No.13

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Letter used:

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