

St. Paul's Presbyterian Church

"Partners in God's Mission of Love"

NEWSLETTER - March, 2016

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AT THE MINISTER'S DESK - Art Deco Glimpses

I wonder how you respond to Art Deco weekend? It is a busy week for the parish as we prepare for and gather for the fete, baking, cutting, spreading, collecting, serving, chatting. I imagine that during the week some of us stay out of town while others relish the atmosphere, the shiny cars, the dress-ups - the creation of, as someone described it, a little bubble of magic.

People I talk to say how nice it is to see people happy – enjoying the music, the dancing, the planes performing overhead. They talk about the sight of different generations, different races, all out together sharing food, walking, riding in a wheelchair, a stroller, or a soapbox along marine parade, relatively free for a couple of days or a couple of hours from the pressures of our everyday worlds. A glimpse of the kingdom of heaven – where all are welcome and all are included.

The beautiful weather this year no doubt took us back to what we naively imagine was a simpler time, when the sun always shone, it was warm, and the sky was always blue. And maybe, in this little bubble of magic, it really is a simpler time. Picture this true story. On Sunday a gentleman parked his motorbike in the grounds of St Paul's, next to the donut robot. He left behind his helmet, his gloves and..... the keys in the ignition! Later in the afternoon (Fortunately before Steve, the donut man, left) a man came by and sat down on the wall, his head between his hands. Steve asked him what was the matter. 'I've been out all afternoon and have no idea where the keys to my motorbike have got to....' I wish I had been there to see the range of emotions when Steve told him that they were right there in the ignition. Another glimpse.

One of my jobs at the fete is to help on the lemonade stall. I really enjoy it! People arrive at the entrance to the fete hot, tired, sometimes wiping the sweat from their faces. At the offer of a drink of ice cold lemonade their faces light up and you can see them being restored and refreshed for the journey.

Maybe these little art deco glimpses can help us remember that the season of Lent leads us through anxiety to relief, through thirst to refreshment, through death to resurrection. I hope that you will be able to join us as the journey continues through the rest of Lent, through Holy Week through to the greatest glimpse of them all – the deep resurrection mystery of Easter morning.

Sally



WORLD DAY OF PRAYER. This year the service will be held in St Andrews, Westshore on Friday March 4th at 11.30. The Service will be followed by a light lunch. All Welcome.

BOARD OF MANAGERS

Security and personal safety was discussed at our recent meeting. As a Board we are aware that some parishioners and possibly some users of our premises feel unsettled, unsafe and maybe threatened by people who wander around the grounds, into the Church and interrupt activities and meetings. Most of these people attend the evening services and enjoy a shared supper at the conclusion. A number of these people are genuinely homeless with a variety of issues and live by standards we would not regard as the 'norm'. The meeting agreed that we do not have the skills and resources within the Church to initiate and manage a rehabilitative process for these individuals. The Rev Sally Carter is leading preparatory work acknowledging this is a transition phase to link people to the various professional agencies for help.

The Board recommends the following to ensure harmonious relationships and minimize misunderstandings.

- Requests for food or money are to be referred to the Church Office or by direct contact with Sally.
- No member of the Congregation is to feel obliged to do other than refer requests to the Church Office.
- For personal safety, keep doors locked if in the Church unless part of a group. Ensure security of handbags and possessions.
- Check all doors are locked with leaving the premises.
- Report any anti-social behavior or activity which may compromise personal safety or security or premises.
- Key holders – keep keys secure and in your possession.

Liz Willis, for the Board of Managers.

SOME EASTER HYMNS

Ella Haigh.

Were you there when they crucified my Lord? – a Spiritual. Spirituals are religious songs sung by the Black Americans who were brought from Africa as slaves to work in the plantations of America and West Indies. They learnt the Christian religion from their masters and followed it in a very fervent way of their own. They used to make up words and music for the songs, which they sang at their work or in their chapels. When the slaves were at last freed in the 19th Century they didn't forget their songs which became known and appreciated in many parts of the world.

“Were you there” is one of these spirituals. The tune, “Were you there” was arranged by Francis R Westbrook in the 20th Century. When Todd Duncan, a Black American baritone toured New Zealand in the early 1960s I heard him in a concert in Palmerston North. This was one of the songs in his programme and before he sang it he asked that there be no applause at the end. Each time he sang the line “Sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble, tremble” he sang it with such feeling that you could almost feel the tremble.

Todd Duncan was born in Kentucky in 1903 and died in Washington DC in 1998. He had a fifty year career as an opera and concert singer, and he taught voice at Howard University in Washington DC for over fifty years. He had a great love for spirituals which were a part of his being.

Lift High the Cross was first written by George W Kitchin in 1887. Born in 1827, he studied Classics and Mathematics at Oxford University and held various positions in education and the church. At Oxford his

friends included John Ruskin and Lewis Carroll. He was the first Chancellor of Durham University from 1908 until his death in 1912, and also Dean of Durham Cathedral from 1894 to 1912.

There are two adaptations of this hymn. The one in “With One Voice” is by Michael Newbolt. The one we usually sing is by Shirley Murray, found in “Aotearoa Alleluia” a collection of hymns and songs for all churches published by the New Zealand Hymnbook Trust in 1993.

Sydney Nicholson was an English Choir director, organist and composer, now chiefly remembered as the founder of the English School of Church Music in 1927. It is now known as the Royal School of Church Music. He was organist at several churches, and at Westminster Abbey from 1919-1928. He edited the “Hymns Ancient and Modern” supplement that was published in 1916. His concern at the sad state of choral music in parish churches was what led him to found the school. He wrote several hymn tunes, the most famous is “Crucifier” for the processional hymn “Lift High the Cross”. In 1938 he was knighted for his services to Church music. He died in 1947 and is buried in Westminster Abbey.

Christ is Alive. Words by Shirley Murray and Music by Jillian Bray. Shirley has had four collections of hymns published by the Hope Publishing Company in the USA. The music settings are by many different composers. Her hymns have been included in four collections produced by the NZ Hymnbook Trust as well as in more than 100 collections worldwide.

Gillian Bray lives in Tawa. It is usually primarily as a writer of hymn tunes that Jillian is known. She has about fifty published hymns, most of the texts by Shirley Murray and other New Zealand writers. She served eighteen years as music editor for the NZ Hymnbook Trust.

As a private piano teacher she has written a number of pieces for pupils. She has directed several community choirs and written choral works on commission. From time to time she responds to requests to write music for family and friends. The lively tune written for this song highlights the celebration of Easter Sunday.

THANKS FOR GIFTS

We’ve received a card from the staff at Swinburn House expressing appreciation for the generosity of the Parish in gifting books to the children there. Some of the parents and the children have also signed the card and expressed thanks.

WORLD VISION

A letter from World Vision Chigodi Area Manager expresses thanks for support given by members of this Parish (through the monthly retiring offering) which has helped improve the lives of the wider Chigodi community, the lives of the children and their families, food security, education, health and nutrition.

Chidogi is in Malawi where most people are farmers relying on maize as their staple food. Poor harvests, and unreliable rainfall mean that 72 percent of the people do not produce enough to last them till another harvest season.

With support from people like us and the 40 hour Famine, farmers were provided with a revolving loan program which included maize seed, soya beans and fertilizer. This has made a difference as now 46 percent of households have reported that harvests have improved on the previous year and have been able to replay back seeds etc for other farmers to use in the next growing season.

As a result of this additional food produced school attendances have improved, and 33 reading camps, established to promote literacy among children, saw 1536 children attending. It is wonderful to read of such good news, and know that our giving, even in a small way can assist in changing people’s lives. (ed)

TURAKINA MAORI GIRLS' COLLEGE

A letter (dated 26th Nov.) from Rev Dr Colin Marshall, Convener of the Council of Assembly writes with sad news about the school.

“.....after a series of consultations on the future of TMGC the Minister of Education has decided to close the school due to concerns regarding its falling roll and the financial position this places the school in.

“Consultations over the future of Turakina took place from August to November. I know that some of you made submissions in support of Turakina and will feel this upsetting news deeply.

“Our Church has long been a strong supporter of Turakina.In this time of loss I want to acknowledge the long and proud history of the school and the many outstanding Maori women leaders it has produced who have enriched our churches, communities and country.....Please be assured that our Church's commitment to education remains strong. We will continue to support Te Aka Puaho (Maori Synod) in the education of young women and will be guided by Te Aka Puaho as to what form this might take. We pray for wisdom as together we seek ways forward.”

EASTER SERVICES.

Lenten Services – March 2nd at Trinity Methodist. March 9th and Knox Ahuriri. March 16th at St Thomas More, Wycliffe Street.

Maundy Thursday at 7 pm in St Paul's – Communion and The Service of the Shadows.

Good Friday - Walk of Witness commencing at St Patrick's at 9.30am. At each of the Churches (Trinity, St Paul's) there will be a short reading, prayer and song as we carry the cross from place to place ending at the Cathedral. Meet at St Patrick's.

Easter Day – Worship at St Paul's at 9.15, 10.30 and 7pm.



ENVIRONMENTALLY SPEAKING

Recently I read the most interesting article, and felt it would be good to share it.

RUBBISH TO BURN

“Sweden recycles more than 95% of their glass, 85% of their newspapers, 70% of metals and 65% of plastic. They generate just 480 kilograms of waste per head a year – less than half that of New Zealanders. Around 1% of that goes into landfill. Of the rest, half is recycled while the other half is burnt to produce energy at 32 dedicated power plants providing 20% of Sweden's electricity for 250,000 homes.

Three tonnes of waste contains as much energy as one tonne of fuel oil. At present the combined electricity plants operate at about half their mandated emissions allowance. A fine balance between landfills and greenhouse gases.”

What should we be doing? Come on, N.Z. We could do better, by aspiring to match Sweden's efforts. Such a great role model for the world.

Isabel Morgan

CALLING ALL KNITTERS (Once again)

Last year your response was so tremendous that 'our' three decile 1 schools were well supplied. But I know that there are families in Napier where children do not have warm bedding. So how about this year's project being peggy squares to make some blankets?

40 stitches on (old) no. 8 needles. DK. If you wish to, you could make one long row – saves the sewing up afterwards! The usual size, 8 squares down, 5 across. And if you make a strip, it doesn't have to be all the one colour. You can even make stripes.

If you would like to be given wool, let me know please. As usual, we will be very grateful for any donations of cash to buy wool. Some folk do this each year, and for those who don't knit, it is a wonderful way to help.

Thank you everyone.

Isabel Morgan

ST. PAUL'S ART DECO FETE.

Thank you to all who helped in any way on a hot day – serving on the stalls, supplying goods to sell, greeting the visitors, making the music, preparing the site. The Fete is always colourful, noisy, and fun.

Funds raised by the various stalls were :- Devonshire Teas, \$774; Crafts, \$92; Collectables, \$510; Jewellery, \$514; Lemonade/Lucky Dip, \$113; Jams, \$856; Jars with sweets etc., \$41; Barbeque, \$159; Cakes, biscuits, produce, \$517 Total, \$3578.30

Well Done, everyone.

(ed.)