

FEBRUARY 2017

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

REFLECTION

2016, we are assured by experts, saw the world “hotting up” as Global Warming took its toll on melting polar ice, which in turn saw rising sea levels, with threats to our near neighbours in the Pacific Islands.

In 2017 the world is already “hotting up” in another way – with political, cultural and seemingly religious divisions apparent. In the United States of America, racial and populist division, absent since the Civil War, have reappeared. The gulf between the few rich and many poor is obvious (as it is worldwide). People have renewed fear of a nuclear war that would see destruction planet wide. The thinkers in New Zealand shake their heads in vexation and fear for the future.

We, in the mainstream New Zealand churches are out in the cold as the secularism of the last century worsens. Aging congregations, very few children (or none), politicians rarely seek the advice of church leaders, denominationalism replaced attempts to present a united Christian front, the National Council of Churches is dead, and Union Parishes are frozen in growth and are not added to. The media is rarely interested in anything but church scandals.

How can we “hot up” the Church to assure that its message reaches New Zealanders?

How can the worldwide Church unfreeze itself and save a world tethering on the brink of disaster?

The answer to both these questions is straightforward; we must reiterate over and over again that the very point of the Christian message is to follow the ‘Jesus Way’ – it has been thus since the time of Peter, Paul, and Mary Magdalene.

What is the Jesus Way?

- The Jesus Way is to offer Justice with Mercy to all. And this means the just sharing of the world’s resources by all (and for the rich merciful gifting of profits).
- The Jesus Way is Compassion in all its forms. To go the extra mile for people in need; may they be refugees, or the sick, or the lonely.
- The Jesus Way is Love. Not the Hollywood variety but a consistent, loyal, self-giving, love as Jesus gave – even from the cross.
- The Jesus Way is Perseverance. Sticking to our Lord’s way through thick and thin – reaction to secular pressures of new movements with destructive ends and/or temptations to put self first, will disappear if we have perseverance.

The Jesus Way is the Christian answer to the “hotting up” world.

Eusebius' 3rd century prayer says it all - [archaic use of "man" changed]

May I be no person's enemy, and may I be the friend of that which is eternal and abides.

May I never quarrel with those nearest me: and if I do, may I be reconciled quickly.

May I love, seek and attain only that which is good.

May I wish for all peoples' happiness and envy none.

May I never rejoice in the ill-fortune of one who has wronged me.

When I have done or said what is wrong, may I never wait for the rebuke of others, but always rebuke myself until I make amends.

May I win no victory that harms either me or my opponent.

May I reconcile friends who are angry with one another.

May I, to the extent of my power, give all needful help to my friends and all who are in want.

May I never fail a friend who is in danger.

When visiting those in grief may I be able by gentle and healing words to soften their pain.

May I respect myself.

May I always keep tame that which rages within me.

May I accustom myself to be gentle, and never be angry with people because of circumstances.

May I never discuss who is wicked and what wicked things this person has done, but know good people and follow in their footsteps.

Petra Barber

PEOPLE NEWS

BIRTHDAYS IN FEBRUARY: *Ernie Lamont, Helen Scott, Joy Reeves, Gordon Hair, Ben Hudson*

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 at 109 Ormond Rd during this break. Then returns to the lounge from Tuesday 14th February.

PASTORAL CARE - BRIEF REPORT

The Over-80's, Over 90's, monthly Birthday and Rest Home Church Service lists have been updated. Volunteers are needed to support those leading Rest Home Services. The really good news is that *Margaret Graham* has agreed to join the Team.

Planning for the annual Over 90's morning tea is well under way and invitations will be posted mid-February – 10.15-11.30am on Saturday, 18 March.

We are keen to try offering transport to every Church Service and with this in mind, invite anyone who has a spare seat in their car to add their name to the Volunteer Car Drivers' List. The Sunshine Service van could still be available. A request for information for those with special needs to be made ASAP so that support/visits/follow-up can be arranged and a reminder to contact the current Crisis Visitor.

Many, many thanks for your ongoing caring.

Val Hall.



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music[®]**

A fun music group for pre-schoolers

At St Andrews Community Centre

176 Cobden Street

9.45am every Wednesday of school term,

commencing 15th February

All welcome

Cost = \$3 per family

For further information contact

Trish 867-2789 or Office 868-5513

January Reflections

The questions have given an opportunity to reflect on the year just gone and what is to come and to contemplate on what we are thankful for:

“During the past year I am thankful to God for”

the people who with God’s help have done so much to

-
- make our worship happen through our own talent and selection of others who have come to preach
 - nourish our spiritual selves through study groups and workshops,
 - provide uplifting music and song for our services
 - raise funds to support our functions e.g. carboot sale, garage sale, plants, sales table etc
 - reach out to the community through supply of a regular foodbasket to Family Works, supporting community Christmas dinner and appeals
 - share their faith through being part of so many other groups both within the church and the community
 - share our facilities by holding community concerts, hiring out rooms for offices and meetings
 - pray for others through prayer link or personal prayer
 - govern our parish safely through this past year and the work done by the committees we have
 - keep the administration and support functions going
 - be available to help when needed in so many ways practical and spiritually

Generally for all of you aren't we indeed blessed to have so much talent and such willingness to give.

We have been able to keep the parish going and seen people taking on tasks that they might not have considered previously. We might be an older group of people but we still have so much to offer our parish, the community, the wider church and beyond.

A couple of highlights for me this year that I would like to share, One was attending a hui on diversity led by our two moderators Andrew Norton and Wayne Te Kawaa, at Maungarongo Marae, Te Aka Puahu, Ohope. The setting of the church marae is wonderful, surrounded by bush, with birds singing and the sound of the sea which is literally across the road one gets the sense of "creation and spirituality" surrounding you. The purpose of the hui was to foster a greater appreciation for the diversity of views within our Church on matters of sexuality and marriage and how this impacts our life together. The meeting house provided a safe place for people to talk, discuss, share and try and work through a way forward that was acceptable to all. Although this was not achieved there was a sense of a greater understanding and empathy for the hurt and pain being felt by many. To see people stand and articulate their feelings, share their pain and their love of Christ was very moving. God's presence was certainly amongst us and it was clear that we are indeed a diverse church that needs to keep working on how we live with diversity knowing God loves us all. It was good to meet the people present enjoy meals together and listen to the gentle and not so gentle human noises as we spent the night

in the wharenui.

The second occasion was the Advent Service held at St Andrew's, wow. The sound of those voices singing praise from the back of the Church as the choir entered was a very emotionally moving experience. The talent we have in our community the wonder of the human voice lifting us up along with the wonderful magnificence of the music was an occasion to be remembered. We were indeed blessed through the service of praise. In conclusion I am thankful to God for being with us over the past year, the support provided through our interim moderators Sally Carter and Adrian Skelton and the coming together at the Ministry Settlement Board of GPP and St David's to discuss the possibilities of a future together.

“In this new year I look for the Presence of God in...”

- Our decision making
- Our approach to change
- The support we can give each other to move forward into the sometimes unknown

An extract from a recent Prayers of the people written by Gwenda Crawshaw identifies the need to be courageous in moving forward.

“As we reflect on what has been and what will be no more in our family at Gisborne Presbyterian Parish, we ask for your courage to move forward into a church family that could be different and quite scary. Give us the discernment to put aside what isn't needed any more in our life here, and move forward in faith. We pray for guidance, love and support”.

We start the New Year knowing that we are going to be working with St David's to look at how we will call a minister who will share the two parishes.

We will be looking for prayer and support to make wise decisions.

This little prayer from Joy Cowley seemed apt

Loving God

We pray for the courage to make wise decisions.

In the security of your love,

may we step past the ignorance and fear

which make us self-protective,

and in a multitude of choices

may we always lean towards the greater good.

Change can be uncomfortable but with faith and hope we can embrace it knowing we will not be alone and we can all have a part of making any change “our” change.

An extract from a book I have been reading “How to be a Bad Christian”

and a good person, talks about **not** having to look for God in some special place such as a church but it still remains satisfying to be part of a community of people who week by week choose to gather together and put themselves in a place where they are exposed to the distinct possibility that they will bump into God.

That sounds good to me and how that might be done maybe something we do have to grapple with in the future

I look forward to this coming year with hope that together we will move forward in a positive way and reach the goals we set ourselves with God's help and that we will have a new ministry in Gisborne.

Jan Ewart

And from St. David's:

“During the past year of 2016 we are thankful to God.....

- Keeping us going at St David's Church, even in the light of diminishing numbers, through deaths and sickness.
- Our congregation is committed to our church and enjoy fellowship with God's people.
- Two Parish Council Elders were commissioned by Presbytery to officiate at Holy Communion, which is held on the first Sunday of each month.
- Parish Council meetings held once a month
- Establishing a Ministry Settlement Board.
- Having regular combined services with other churches.
- Establishing a roster for visiting speakers for 'Pulpit Supply'
- One of our missions for the last year as outlined in our church profile, was to become "Fishers of men". And to expand the wings of St David.
- And we are very thankful to have had, The Rev Shirley Barker-Kirby, as our minister over the last 3 years, with the death of the Rev Uili Aukuso in 2013.
- We are also very grateful to the Rev Shirley, for all her hard work and commitment to our church, and wish her all the best for her future endeavours.

Revelation 3v8. "I know thy works, behold I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it. For thou hast a little strength, and hast kept my word and hast not denied my name".

In this new year of 2017. We look for the Presence of God in.....

- Providing us with a minister. Continuing with combined services with other churches.
- Combining with GPP to establish a joint Ministry Settlement Board.

- To continue with Prayer & Praise nights every fortnight Wednesdays, commencing again in the middle of February. Combined with all Churches coming together as one in Christ.
- In order to edify and build up the body of Christ.....
- With a view to reaching into the heart of the Kaiti Community, with the gospel and inviting families to our church & kids to Sunday School.
- Continuing with 'Holy Communion' on the first Sunday of each month.
- Parish Council meetings once a month.
- Looking and praying to God, for the way ahead and future of our church.

Jeremiah 29v11: " I know the plans I have for you, plans for good and not for evil, to give you a hope and a future. That if ye shall search for me with all your heart, ye shall find me and I will harken unto you".
 May God bless us all in this brand new year of 2017, the year of the favour of Our Lord. Amen.

Richard Rangihuna

Mark your calendar for this upcoming event
Saturday 27 May 2017

Joy Cowley the well-known author of both novels, children's, and devotional books will spend a day in Gisborne hosted by the Presbyterian Parish. Numbers will be limited, so mark your diary now.



Our Identity

While an historical distance of about two thousand years separates Jesus from ourselves, it is not a static space, but one filled with centuries of human cultural achievements, geographical discovery, space exploration and scientific breakthroughs. All these have enlarged and deepened our understanding of what it means to be human. More usually, we identify ourselves by stressing our distinctness from others rather than our sameness with them:

Anne Primavesi

THE JESUS MAN

Geza Vermes

A widely respected academic – one of the world's leading authorities on the Dead Sea Scrolls and the Jewishness of Jesus, the late Geza spent his adult life immersed in Christianity and Judaism.

The first professor of Jewish studies at Oxford, where he had an emeritus post, was also the director of the Forum for Qumran Research at the Oxford Centre for Hebrew and Jewish studies. His work was emblematic of his life. Baptised at the age of six, in 1931, by his assimilated Hungarian-Jewish parents, who converted to Christianity at the same time, he was ordained as a Catholic priest before the end of the Second World War, but returned to his Jewish roots in the late 1950's.

The priesthood saved his life – in May, 1944, while he remained free to practise his adopted faith, his father, Ernest Vermes, a journalist, was arrested and deported to a concentration camp; his mother was deported soon afterwards. Both perished.

Victims: In the introduction to his book, *The Changing Face of Jesus*, he remembers his parents 'with love...innocent victims of the evil and madness called antisemitism'. This work follows his groundbreaking trilogy: *Jesus the Jew*, *Jesus and the World of Judaism* and *The Religion of Jesus the Jew*.

And as if that wasn't enough Vermes also published an edition of the Dead Sea Scrolls in the form of a selection of original manuscripts, translated and edited for the general reader.

In an interview he was asked whether any scholar who is either a Jew or a Christian, or in his case, who is close to both religions, can write a truly objective, historical account of Jesus.

'It can be a problem', he acknowledged. 'If the author is a traditional Jew, he will have inherited a great deal of secret animosity to Jesus without even knowing it. If he comes from a traditional Christian background, he will have inherited 2,000 years of Christian understanding of the New Testament and doctrinal development, which takes him pretty far away from that man who walked on the dust in parts of rural Galilee 2,000 years ago.'

A providential accident: It was Verme's study of the Dead Sea Scrolls – which 'by providential accident,' as he put it, were discovered 'at the moment in 1947 when he was looking for a subject for his doctoral dissertation – that led him to research early Jewish history, culture and religion. The period was 200 BCE – pre-Christianity – to 100 CE and the growth of the Jewish Messianic movement, which ultimately evolved into a separate religion.

He concluded that 'both the traditional Jewish and the traditional Christian pictures of Jesus were distorted' and decided to publish his findings, propelled as much as anything by the notion of 'having a little fun' with the conventional wisdom. 'It was a truly British approach: I wanted to set the record straight,' he said, aware of the irony apparent in his marked Hungarian accent, albeit coloured with a touch of Oxford English. He insisted that his portrayal of Jesus as a charismatic leader of a Jewish sect was not influenced by his own experience as a former Catholic priest and later as a Jew. 'They may say I've got an axe to grind. This is not so', he stated emphasising that his research was based on textual study, not personal convictions

Jesus the Jew 'Quite frankly, the question of whether Jesus existed is no longer on the agenda. Very few people now doubt that there was somebody, a man by the name of Yoshua, Yehoshua or Yeshu who lived in Galilee in the first century and who died during the governorship of Pontius Pilate, on a Roman cross around 30 CE,'. These issues are no longer under debate.' Furthermore, Jesus 'was famous as a wise man and as a performer of astonishing deeds.'

He refers to the gospel of John in which, he points out, 'any Jew who follows Jesus ceases to be represented as a Jew. The Jew is only someone who is opposing him.' Add 1,900 years of New Testament commentary to that version of events 'and that resulted in all sorts of things, some of them pretty catastrophic.'

But Vermes himself firmly believed that St. Paul never intended Christianity to be other than an extension of Judaism.

'Paul doesn't preach a separate religion. It was just a different Jewish sect,' he stressed. 'he hoped both Jew and gentile would welcome the Second Coming. It was a dream. It never happened.'

It was only after the Holocaust, he continued, 'when decent Christians realised there was something wrong with Christianity,' that the question of antisemitism and anti-Jewish interpretations of the gospels was seriously examined.

Back to his roots: Vermes did not leave the Church and the celibacy of his priesthood until 1957, when he met his wife-to-be, Pam (who died in 1993). His return to Judaism happened very gradually. It was a kind of imperceptible development. At one stage, I turned my back on Christianity and went out into the wilderness, like Moses and his followers' – 'bit by bit, I came to the realisation about who I was, and that moved me. I have never forgotten it. I am back to my roots.

Of his family's conversion to Christianity, he now believes that his parents

probably hoped ‘that the little fellow that I was would have a better chance.’ On the other hand, the conversion occurred before Hitler came to power and his mother had become a practising Christian. ‘It didn’t make any difference to my father. There was enormous assimilation among Hungarian Jewry.’

‘I’ll never forget the day the Germans moved in, on March 19, 1944. Then, everything was suddenly changed. My father was arrested in May. The ghettoisation of provincial Hungarian Jewry began in early June.’

He was asked whether he had ever traced his parents’ final destination. He replied. ‘Quite frankly, once I realised they weren’t coming back, what difference does it make to me where they were turned into ashes? Although I’ve visited Poland a number of times, I never went to Auschwitz.’ At this point, there is for the first time, a pause in the eloquently flowing dialogue.

A complex journey: Vermes personal journey has been long and complex. One constant factor, however, in recent times, has been his 30-year membership of the Liberal Jewish Synagogue, in St. John’s Wood, London. He said: “I am certainly a believer in God, I wouldn’t say I was a practising Jew. I read the prayers more often at home than in the synagogue. But I do enjoy them.”

And thinking of the ancient Hebrew tests that have been uttered by his ancestors for thousands of years, his bright eyes twinkled and he added, with warm emphasis: “I enjoy them very much.”

Helen Jacobus (A Jewish Writer – published in the Journal of the New Zealand Council of Christians and Jews – 2004.
WWW.CHRISTIANSUPPLIES.CO.NZ

FINANCIAL SUMMARY

1/12/2016-
31/12/2016

\$

Month

Dec-16

Income

Giving & Donations	4156
Other Income	5054
	<hr/>
	9210

Less Expenses 22720

Expenses include Insurance

Payment of \$17213

Cash Deficit for month -13510

Year to date

July 2016 to December 2016

Income

Giving & Donations	30861
Other Income	29849
	<hr/>
	60710

Less Expenses 58448

Cash Surplus Year to date 2262

PLEROMA BOOK STORE IN OTANE ARE HAVING A CALENDAR AND
DIARY SALE.
CHECK OUT THEIR WEBSITE

www.christiansupplies.co.nz

DATES TO REMEMBER FEBRUARY, 2017

Friday	3	1.00	Choir Practise
SUNDAY	5	9.00	Holy Communion at Matawhero
		10.00	Holy Communion at St Andrew's
<i>Rev Sheryl McGrory</i>			
MONDAY	6		WAITANGI DAY
	6	9.00	Walking Group
Tuesday	7	10.00	Open Door 109 Ormond R
Wednesday	8	3.15pm	Te Wiremu Service- all welcome
		4.30pm	Works & Property Meeting
Friday	10	1.00	Choir Practise
Saturday	11	9.00	CARBOOT SALE
SUNDAY	12	9.00	Faith book Family Service
		10.00	St Andrew's Service –
<i>Phil King Global Mission PCANZ</i>			
No Service at Matawhero			
Monday	13	9.00	Walking Group
Tuesday	14	10.00	Open Door - lounge
	14	1.30	Ryman service –all welcome
Wednesday	15	9.45	mainly music
Thursday	16	3.30pm	Dunblane Service
		7.00pm	GPP Parish Council Mtg.
Friday	17	1.00	Choir Practice
		7.00pm	Interfaith Meeting
Saturday	18	10 am – 3.00pm	Malcolm Gordon Worship Seminar, Mangapapa Church Auditorium \$15 registration. www.mup.org.nz/events/seminar.asp
SUNDAY	19	10am	St Andrew's & St David's combined
<i>Rev Malcom Gordon</i>			
No Service at Matawhero			
		3.00pm	Sea of Faith (lounge)

Monday	20	9.00	Walking Group
Tuesday	21	10.00	Open Door
		4.30pm	GPP Finance meeting
Wednesday	22	9.45am	mainly music
Thursday	23	2.00pm	Leighton House
Friday	24	1.30	Choir practice
Saturday	25	9.00	CARBOOT SALE
SUNDAY	26	10.00	St Andrew's Service

Rev Bruce White

No Service at Matawhero

Monday	27	9.00	Walking Group
Tuesday	28	10.00	Open Door
Wednesday 1 March	7pm		Matawhero Church Ash Wednesday (TBC)

A story of compassion

Homeless man Miller Patane speaks about newlyweds' act of kindness



Miller Patane felt nervous as the newlywed couple walked towards him on the grounds of The Community of Saint Luke Church in Remuera one Saturday.

The 56-year-old has lived, mostly, on the streets for 31 years and thought he knew what they would say - *go away*. It had been said so many times before but he was wrong.

'Not very many people are kind to me' Miller said.

The couple, Parnell chiropractor Bronia Tindall and her Italian husband, Fabrizio Clementi, didn't come in anger. They came in love.

Their words were tender and their gift a slice of wedding cake.

A photo of the couple sharing a slice of their wedding cake with Miller Patane, who is homeless, touched hearts around the country.

He did not want to live on the streets, he said.

"I don't like being this way. It's a life I wouldn't wish on anyone."

It was hard to hold onto money on the streets and he was often hungry, Miller said.

When a door was left open during Tindall and Clementi's wedding, he had been tempted to sneak some wedding food while guests were distracted, he said. But he decided against it.

One of eight children born to Otara parents, Miller Patane was raised in the Mormon church and said he wanted to be honest.

His parents are dead and he has little contact with his siblings, he said.

Life was a struggle, but there were still moments of joy and wonder.

"Don't judge people - because every man has a story." Miller said.

Two days later, Miller's long lost sister, Moana from the United States, was overwhelmed with joy at finding her beloved brother after 35 years. A relative living in New Zealand sent Moana a link to the newspaper story and she recognised her long lost brother.

A brother who had attended University and served in the US Marines before his life took a dark turn in the 1980's.

Their mother had often spoken of her desire to return to New Zealand to find her son, Miller, but was too sick to travel. She died in April last year.

Miller's sister, Moana wants to fulfil this wish for her mother and has applied for a passport to travel to New Zealand to see her brother and offer Miller a home with her. As she says "Just hold on, I'm coming."

A simple gesture from a compassionate couple had a ripple on effect and changed a man's life forever.

God shows us miracles every day if we look.....

(Article condensed from The Herald)



 One Voice

'MALCOLM GORDON WORSHIP SEMINAR'

For all Church Worship Leaders, Musicians, Creative Artists, and anyone with a desire to learn and experience more in worship

Saturday 18 February, 10am to 3pm

@ Mangapapa Church Auditorium

\$15 registration (Lunch inclusive) @ Mangapapa Church, 71 Atkinson St.

Please Register Online here so we know numbers...



<http://www.mup.org.nz/Events/seminar.asp>

Malcolm Gordon is an increasingly influential voice in New Zealand church worship. He works within the Presbyterian Church of Aotearoa NZ, and lectures at Knox and Carey Theological Colleges, on creativity and artistic expression in worship. Malcolm's songs, and creative writing can be found at his website: www.onevoice.org.nz Malcolm is married to Vanessa and together they have two children Sam and Lucy. [Check out his Song on YouTube, 'Beneath The Southern Cross'](#)

*A Sponsored Event By;



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