

Parish and Community Activities

Newcomers are cordially invited to join any of these friendly groups

CHURCH OP-SHOP (behind the Church building, on Owen Street)

Phone 867 1104 **Open 9–12:30 Wednesday to Saturday.**

COMMUNITY MEALS in the Church hall from 5-6pm every Monday. Providing free, hot, nutritious meals and friendship. Volunteers & donations welcome.

Enquiries to Val 027 252 4453 or phone the Church on Mondays 867 1102

CHRISTIAN WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP All welcome. 2nd Wednesday of every month 1:30pm. For programme/venue details: Beryl Wharton 866 3739 or Ann Harsant 866 4740

FAMILY COUNSELLING Anyone who needs advice or family counselling is encouraged to contact Nicole 866 5119

LADIES BIBLE STUDY Wednesday 10am Please ring Julie for details: 984 9140

MESSY CHURCH An exciting Sunday experience for all the family, including food! For info & session dates, please contact Robin Twemlow (869 5054) or Val Ransome (027 252 4453)

P.R.O.P. People Relying on People. Supporting families battling mental health and substance abuse issues. For confidential support, freephone 0800 127 359.

TE KOROWAI GRAB GROUP meets Thursdays, 11:30, at St Andrew's hall. For more information ring Judith Godwin 07 808 0033

UPRIGHT & ACTIVE Friendly exercise sessions for seniors, held in the Church hall Mondays at 9:30am Leader Carol Melrose 867 1097 Tuesdays at 10:00am Leader Greta Fox 866 4382

WORSHIP AT CONTINUING CARE A Combined Churches event providing devotions every Wednesday at 11am in the residents' lounge. Supporters are welcome on any Wednesday. St Andrew's leads on the first and fifth Wednesday of the month.

MERCURY BAY CO-OPERATING PARISH -St Andrew's By the Sea Community Church

Corner Albert and Owen Streets, Whitianga / PO Box 368, WHITIANGA

Church website: www.standrewsbythesea.org.nz

Parish secretary: Dorothy Preece 869 5452 dorothy.preece@worldnz.net.nz

Church office & hall bookings: 867 1102 or standrewswhitianga@gmail.com

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MERCURY BAY CO-OPERATING PARISH

St Andrew's By the Sea Community Church

Newsletter August / September 2016

*Our mission in this parish is to share
the love of God with all people*

Telling our stories: Nicole Whale

by Dorothy Preece



On Sunday 26th June we held our Volunteers Service at St Andrew's. The congregation included people from 34 different volunteer groups. Several people told us about their community work, but the one who made the greatest impression was Nicole, who said, "My name is Nicole Whale and I knitted this jumper for Operation Cover Up".

Nicole, now 27, is challenged every day of her life by the twin conditions of Down's Syndrome and autism, and the completed jumper represents a year of intense effort on her part. She is well-known in Whitianga, loved and watched-over by many people who help to make Nicole's life as productive and confident as it can be. Nicole helps out at several op-shops and at the library, and she attends classes to make mosaics and ceramic art. Every day there is a new learning for this determined and inspirational young lady.

That inspiration is kept alive by her equally determined family.

Bill and Brenda Duncan are the grandparents of Nicole, Richard, Juliet and Teresa. They are the children of daughter Wendy and her husband Leighton Whale. The family lived in Raetahi until at age 35, Wendy died

from cancer. Five months later, Leighton died suddenly from a coronary, and the children were orphaned. Nine years ago Bill and Brenda, 'Nana and Pop' brought the children home to Whitianga to live. Nicole, the eldest, was 11. "They were used to spending time in Whitianga, but they had been through such trauma, at first the children were very clingy, afraid to let us out of their sight," Brenda recalls.

Richard, Juliet and Teresa have all done well at school and are now on their way to their chosen careers. Brenda is appointed as legal guardian for Nicole, for whom every day presents a new challenge, which also translates into a challenge for Brenda and Bill. "Down's children do not have a natural learning ability, or a natural reaction to pain or bodily needs," Brenda says. "We have to devise different ways to help her understanding. "To teach Nicole about appropriate quantities of food to eat, I filled a balloon with water until it exploded – and now Nicole is able to recognise when 'her balloon is full'. Most of her learning is visual or by example, and once Nicole has learned to do something, she will never change the method. If I try to explain a different way, Nicole will roll her eyes in exasperation and declare, 'Now what?!' Life is never dull with Nicole in the house. She is Pop's girl. She asked to try the waterblaster, so he taught her, and paid her \$100 to 'do a proper job on the fence'.

"It's not what Nicole can't do, it's all about what she CAN do, and we are determined to give her every opportunity to stretch those abilities." Brenda too, has had her share of medical trauma. She has come through a life-threatening illness, and has severe allergies which can result in her being 'carted off to hospital' on occasions.

"Nicole is the only one who keeps her cool in panic situations. She shows no emotion whatsoever, so we sometimes have to ask careful questions to discover how she is feeling." All of this makes for high-

Worship Opportunities

Services at St Andrew's

Families with children are always welcome at St Andrew's. A child-friendly area is set aside at the back of the church where children and parents can sit together, with Bible related activities and quiet toys provided.

Aug	7	Communion—John Twemlow
	14	Robyn Twemlow
	21	Parish Council team
Sept	28	Dorothy Preece
	4	Communion—Peter and Dorothy Chaffin
	11	Stephen May
	18	Ross Millar
	25	John Twemlow

Combined Churches prayers for the community: everyone is welcome to come and pray. Hosted by the Churches, first Wednesday each month at 10am, beginning with morning tea.

Wed 3 August at St Patrick's Catholic Church

Wed 7 September at St Andrew's (Spring festival)

Also: **Combined Churches evening service** starts with light meal at 5:30, service starts at 6. Next at St Peter's, **30 Oct.**

Worship at Continuing Care

A short service of songs and prayer is held every Wednesday at CCU, led by the Churches in turn. St Andrew's leads on the first Wednesday of the month. **Supporters and helpers are warmly invited.**

COMMUNITY MEALS - happening every Monday with a large team of volunteers helping in all sorts of ways. The many very vulnerable people who come for a meal or have one delivered are very grateful for this practical support.



Thanks very much to all those who help with donations of money or food or their time in this vital ministry in our community.

IF YOU NEED PRAYER, FOR YOURSELF OR OTHERS, there are people ready to pray with you at the front of the Church every Sunday after the morning service. We also have a **prayer chain** - a group of people who are willing to pray for anyone, without necessarily knowing the name, but being aware of the situation to be prayed for. Contact the church office, 867 1102 or standrewswhitianga@gmail.com, if you want to share a need for prayer

Tech notes

by Julie St George

Last month I wrote about the addition of new technology to enhance our time of worship. Our one month free trial of Zionworx software came to an end and we were delighted to take up Damon and Charlotte's kind offer of purchasing a licence to use.

June and July have seen weeks spent loading songs and experimenting with some of the features that the software offers.

The programme does much of the hard work of setting up a specific playlist for a service. We must either 'paste' or type in songs; the programme adjusts the font size and automatically word-wraps the text across the slides. It then saves them for use at a later date.

An incorporated BibleGateway website allows easy use of a big selection of different bible translations that are available via the internet. Specific passages can then be selected and added to the playlist.

Another clever feature allows us to play a soundtrack as the words appear on the screen. This is a great feature if our organist is unavailable or if we wish to introduce a new song.

We haven't yet experimented with including videos or PowerPoint slide shows. (Thank-you for being a supportive congregation when bungles occur!)

This equipment can now be used from the back of the church which allows one operator to take care of sound desk as well as the data projector. (Thanks once again to Damon.)

Preachers are encouraged to think up ways that this equipment can be utilized. Please give me a few day's notice of the hymns and Bible passages that you wish to use and whether you want to add, for example, illustrations or diagrams to your sermon. Videos and Power Points are also potentially possible. Let's experiment!

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level watchfulness on the part of Brenda and Bill. While Nicole is keeping busy volunteering around town, doing all the things that make her feel happy and useful, Brenda and Bill have to make sure that the routine is not disturbed, and that Nicole is safe. "Wherever she goes, we make sure that Nicole is in the care of people who understand her needs and her vulnerability. They all know to call us if anything untoward happens to upset Nicole." This impressive young lady will tackle just about anything she puts her mind to, and then it is Nana and Pop's turn to make it possible. Nicole loves to travel and has an incredible memory. She writes and spells very well, but she has to work hard to get her spoken words in order. The day that she spoke in front of the congregation at St Andrew's was a real triumph, and took a lot of courage!

Brenda is a member of the Catholic Church but due to some of Nicole's autistic obsessional behaviours, Brenda watches the Hour of Power for her spiritual recharge. "People ask me whether all of the family traumas have affected my faith, and the answer is No. My faith is unchanged. We're all mortal, why should I blame God? I am not angry, and Bill and I are certainly not bored, as other retirees might be. Every day we just feel blessed to be part of Nicole's life, to be learning with her and helping her to achieve. It is tiring, and challenging, but God gives us the strength and energy to keep going."

This year, Nicole has been chosen to go to the Gold Coast with *Re-Create NZ*, an organisation dedicated to helping people challenged by disabilities. But she's had enough of knitting jumpers. In future Nicole says she will stick to knitting strips for blankets.

It has been a great privilege for me to write this inspiring story, and I thank Brenda for her honesty in sharing it with us - Dorothy.

Parish Register

Funerals at St. Andrew's

June 9th—John Noel Mabey
June 23rd—Geneva Violet Wilson
June 29th—Patrick James O'Connor



Our sympathies are with the families

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Parish Council News

A meeting with our Superintending Moderator, Jacqui Cavit

On July 3rd Jacqui conducted our worship and afterwards met with 17 people who stayed for the discussion about our future direction. Jacqui gave instances of possible solutions for similar small, remote congregations who cannot afford to pay a stipend. In particular, Jacqui spoke about Putaruru congregation, which has decided to form a Ministry Team, and appointed volunteer persons from the congregation to the responsibilities of worship, pastoral, outreach, and administration. At present, our whole team is sharing these responsibilities, but we are seriously short of people. Jacqui warned us about overloading, and called us to consider where our real skills and energies lie, and to concentrate on those.

The informal discussion centred around our hopes, wishes and vision for the future of St Andrew's Church and its congregation. Where are the 'gaps' that we can help with? Various concerns were raised: youth ministry, men's ministry, pastoral care, care of the elderly. We felt that St Andrews could initiate church-oriented midweek groups, taking advantage of the hall/ kitchen facilities with men's breakfasts, cooking classes, health talks, live-alones etc. We recognised the need for earnest, intercessory prayer, and *Parish Council encourages everyone to please pray for the leading of the Spirit.*

Missions/Outreach



You may remember from our April issue that Robyn Twemlow and the AIM Christian Women's group were raising funds to build a cowshed for an orphanage in Myanmar. That fundraising effort ended in May, and now Robyn is involved in another cause and we **need your help!**

Above is a photo of the Little Flower Children's Home in Pedong, India. Picturesque as it is, it's desperately in need of new flooring, bedding and bathrooms.

If you can help, even just a little, head to the **Give a Little** website and make a donation (<http://givealittle.co.nz/cause/littleflowerchildrenshome/>)

Z Whitianga 'Good in the Hood'

Throughout July, *Z Whitianga* customers have been voting for their favourite local charity. St Andrew's Community Meals was one of three charities represented and on Tuesday 26 July, meals co-ordinator Val Ranson was presented with a cheque for **\$1402.00!** The amount came close to that collected for St John - this is a stunning result.

Val and the team are delighted with yet another confirmation of the support the meals programme continues to enjoy from the people of Mercury Bay. **Thank you Z! And thank you, our community.**

If you feel you would like to be part of the meals team for preparation, delivery or by donation, please see Val at the Church on any Monday.