

## PARISH AND COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES

*Newcomers are cordially invited to join any of these friendly groups*

**St Andrew's by the Sea - Services 9:30 every Sunday**  
**St Peter the Fisherman (Anglican) Service – 11:00 every Sunday.**

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

**Open 9–12:30 Wednesday to Saturday. VOLUNTEERS NEEDED**

If you can help, please phone 866 0169 or 867 1104 for the shop.

**COMMUNITY MEALS** in the Church hall from 5-6pm every Monday.

Free, hot, nutritious meals and friendship. Volunteers & donations welcome. Enquiries - phone the Church on Mondays 867 1102

**CHRISTIAN WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP All welcome.**

2<sup>nd</sup> 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

**PARKINSONS' SUPPORT GROUP** For all those affected by Parkinson's, with their carers and families. Held approx once a month, with various activities. For details/ dates contact Raewyn Thorburn 866 2609.

**P.R.O.P. People Relying on People.** Supporting families battling mental health and substance abuse issues.

For confidential support, freephone 0800 127 359.

**UPRIGHT & ACTIVE** Friendly exercise sessions for seniors.

**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. Devotions every **Wednesday at 11 am 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, Whitianga*

**Newsletter - Easter 2017**

***Our Mission in this Parish is  
To share the Love of God with all people.***

### **Our Faith Stories: Welcoming Nathan**

*Submitted by Charlotte Christensen*

Our son Nathan was born on the 8<sup>th</sup> of March - the first day of the terrible storm and flooding that hit the Peninsula and southern Auckland. Our rather dramatic trip through the bad weather and subsequent rescue helicopter trip was well publicised: we made page 3 of the NZ Herald and the front page of the Waikato Times! But there was a spiritual side to the story that the mainstream media didn't cover.



When I had our daughter Emily via caesarean section in 2014 it was made clear to me that for any future babies I must be at Waikato Hospital, just in case of any complications. As we approached Nathan's expected due date we made repeated trips to Hamilton so the obstetricians could assess our risk factors, and while the travel was tiresome it was also very reassuring to be told repeatedly that they saw no need to intervene: everything was on track for an entirely natural and uneventful birth.

During my pregnancy I had done a lot of thinking about the three hour drive that would be needed to get to Hamilton. I suffer from travel sickness even when I'm not pregnant, and the idea of being in the car for that long when also in labour was more than a little daunting.

**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](http://www.standrewsbythesea.org.nz)

Parish Secretary and Hall bookings:

Dorothy Preece 869 5452 [dorothy.preece@worldnz.net.nz](mailto:dorothy.preece@worldnz.net.nz)

Church office ; 867 1102 or [standrewswhitianga@gmail.com](mailto:standrewswhitianga@gmail.com)

In some ways it would have been easier to opt for an elective caesarean. But instead I decided to leave it all in God's hands. I regularly prayed not for a particular outcome, but for God to give me patience and the strength to follow his will in however it turned out.

In the early morning of Wednesday the 8<sup>th</sup> of March, Emily was scared by the storm and came in to cuddle up to me at 2:30am. Half an hour later, listening to the rain and wind, I felt the contractions start, and yet I was very calm. I stayed there for an hour, cuddling up to Emily, watching the clock, and humming hymns under my breath, feeling like there was no rush whatsoever. My waters actually broke as I was humming 'Let the river flow'. I woke Damon and told him we would have to travel, but I felt there was time for him to wake up properly and get some breakfast first.

The car was mostly packed in advance, as it had been for over a week, so there was no panic in getting organised. We checked a few websites to see if the roads were clear and didn't get any information to indicate major problems yet, so we got in the car and headed off.

Even when we came across cars washed into the ditch at Wade Road due to the flooding I didn't really feel worried, though I'm sure Damon was starting to. As we drove north, time after time we came to places that were low lying and should have been flooded out but which were clear for us. There were rocks and trees and waterfalls across the road, but they were never enough to stop us.

It took us two whole hours to get to Thames, and as we approached I felt strongly that I wanted to stop at the Birthing Unit to be assessed. I had no way of knowing at the time that we were actually trapped in Thames and that the road just south of Thames was already totally flooded out, I simply felt that it was right.

So many little things happened in our favour that day. Initially there were no midwives at Thames, all of them trapped by the weather, and yet within an hour one got through to us. The weather cleared enough for the helicopter to get through to collect me. The Thames road opened to traffic for a short while just in time to let Damon and Emily follow by car without much delay.

## ***Come and Worship!***

***Services at St Andrew's: 9:30 every Sunday***

***Families are warmly invited. We have a child-friendly space where the family can sit together, with quiet toys for the little ones, and Bible activities for children of reading age.***



### ***Easter Services and Events***

**Good Friday – April 14<sup>th</sup>**

**10:15 am:**

**St Andrew's and St Peter's fellowships will combine for a Good Friday Service of reflection.**

**11:45 am:**

**Christian Walk of Witness to meet at Taylor's Mistake.**

**The walk will start at 12 noon, and we encourage all Christians**

**to take part, as witness that Easter is of dynamic significance to the world.**

**Easter Sunday – April 16<sup>th</sup>**

**St Andrew's 9:30 worship and communion**

**Led by Dorothy Preece and John Twemlow**

**- St Peter's at St Andrew's 11:00**

**Worship at Continuing Care**

A short service of songs and prayer is held at 11am every Wednesday at CCU, led by the Churches in turn. St Andrew's leads on the first and fifth Wednesdays.

**Supporters and helpers are warmly invited. If anyone would like to take a turn at leading this friendly time, please contact Dorothy.**



## Parish Register

### Wedding:

Saturday 1<sup>st</sup> April

**Nicola Laird to Paul Shadgett**

Gillian Reid officiating.



### In Memorium:

*It is with deep regret that we note the passing of Terry Cooke, at his home in Matarangi, on 24<sup>th</sup> February after a seven-year illness. Lynnor and the family held a private cremation ceremony. Terry served on St Andrew's Parish Council and as treasurer for the Church Op-shop.*

### Funerals at St Andrew's:

John Twemlow officiating.

Margaret Moses - March 7<sup>th</sup>.

Derek Preece - April 4<sup>th</sup>.

*Dorothy and Lesley wish to sincerely thank all their friends for their many expressions of love and prayers, and those who helped with the funeral arrangements. Thank you all.*

**Please uphold all these families in your prayers.**

### A Prayer of Saint Francis (from Lynnor)

Lord, help me to live this day,  
quietly, easily.  
To lean upon your great strength,  
trustfully, restfully  
To wait for the unfolding of your will,  
patiently, serenely  
To meet others,  
peacefully, joyously  
To face tomorrow,  
Confidently, courageously.



Amen.

My preferred obstetrician happened to be on duty when I got there, which was a reassurance for me without any other familiar faces around, and although they were very worried about Nathan after the helicopter ride he came out too quickly for them to intervene in any way. He was very blue in the face when he was born and they handed him straight to the waiting paediatrician, but before that doctor could do anything he took a deep breath and was fine.

As I sit here now reflecting on it all, what really stands out to me is how safe and secure I felt, and how certain I was that everything would turn out okay. My midwife puts that calm down to the labour hormones, but I have a different interpretation: I had put my faith in the Lord to lead me through this, and when the time came I knew I was not alone.

***Fear not, for I am with you; be not dismayed, for I am your God; I will strengthen you, I will help you, I will uphold you with my righteous right hand. -- Isaiah 41:10***

Mercury Bay Day Camp is happening again after Easter, at the wonderful Morcom farm venue at Cooks Beach.



Day Camp is a tremendous Christian initiative which started at St Andrew's and now involves all the churches, community groups and the whole town!

This year we have a new, younger, enthusiastic team planning the logistics of everything from transporting 300 children across the ferry and on buses, to organizing multi-choice elective activities for each and every one of them!

Please pray for them all, that God's love, joy and peace will fill every heart, and that the event may be full of adventure but free of accidents.

## **Take up your cross, and follow me... An Easter reflection**

*When Jesus spoke these words to His friends, He knew that He would die on the cross, and that some of them would indeed be called to die the same violent death, just because they chose to follow Him. For many Christian martyrs over the centuries, their faith in Jesus led them to their deaths.*

*But still in our own time, Jesus speaks these words to all of us, every day, each in our own situation and the crosses we are called to carry in His name are many and varied. In His invitation to follow Him, Jesus calls us to the same love and compassion, prayer and action that Jesus himself showed to all who came to Him for help. In responding to His call we take upon ourselves the burdens that others need help to carry, for those to whom Jesus leads us in our daily lives.*

*Often our own personal crosses are made up of those things that irk us, the habits that we can't kick, the people that we just can't love – everything that we know comes between us and the God we love. (Remember it was an unbelieving crowd that put Jesus on the cross). We often carry crosses that involve stress about finance, or relationships, or health problems. We worry for those we love, for our children, for neighbours in trouble, for the world itself.*

*And yet, as the old hymn says, 'Burdens are lifted at Calvary'. That tells us that the same Saviour who calls us to carry our crosses, is the One who helps us with them, if only we trust Him.*

*"What a friend we have in Jesus, all our sins and griefs to bear,  
What a privilege to carry **everything** to God in prayer.  
Jesus KNOWS our every weakness....."*

*To take Jesus at His word, to give ALL of our problems and worries over to Him, and to trust Him to get us through, is to learn the real meaning of peace in the midst of turmoil – the same peace that Charlotte found when the baby was on the way!*

**May you all have a happy and peaceful Easter.**



## **Welcome to our fellowship - Tania Iti and family.**

*(Picture kindly supplied by The Informer)*

During the Sunday service on March 19<sup>th</sup> we presented our love gift to Val Ranson, and bid her a fond 'Farewell, Thank you, and God go with you'. At the same time we were able to introduce the new Community Meals Co-ordinator, and say 'Hello and welcome!' to Tania Iti and her family.



Tania was one of several very well qualified people interviewed for the position, but unknown to us, Val had been praying for the job to go to Tania, the reason being that for some time Tania, with her husband Thomas, their five children and a son-in-law had all been helping with the meals on Mondays.

With five grown children, home cooking and catering for a crowd comes naturally to Tania! She has taken to the task with a will, and a competence that is enviable.

First there is daughter Constance, 26 and her husband Colin. Then comes Tirei, age 25, Bernadine 18, Raiti 16, and Te Rangi 14 (pictured above). With the greatest of pleasure we welcome them to St Andrew's.

We pray that they will all be mightily blessed in this work.

See Tania on any Monday if you could see yourself chopping veges, laying tables or delivering meals. Volunteers are always welcome, and of course, we always need fresh veges, cash donations, and prayers... We ask you to pray, not only for Tania and the team, but for the people who find themselves on the receiving end of this important work... those who cannot afford to feed their families, those who have no work, or not enough hours of work to make ends meet.