

## Parish and Community Information

- Monday **Upright & Active** 9am weekly exercise for active seniors  
Contact Carol 867 1097  
**Community meals** takeaway only, every Monday 3:30-5pm  
Contact Maureen 027 246 6164
- Tuesday **Stitch n' Chat** fortnightly 1:30-4pm in the Hamilton Room  
Contact Julie 021 169 1637  
**Enliven** (Presbyterian Support for the Elderly) weekly  
Contact Jenny 021 071 9539
- Wednesday **Ladies' Bible Study** 10am weekly  
Contact Julie 021 169 1637  
**Inter-Church Women's Fellowship** Monthly.  
Contact Annie 866 3711  
**Scrapbags quilting group** 10am weekly.  
Contact Robin 866 5029  
**Parkinsons Support** 6-weekly.  
For dates and times contact Keith 027 459 8683
- Thursday **Enliven** (Presbyterian Support for the Elderly) weekly  
Contact Jenny 021 071 9539
- Friday **Cancer Support Coffee Morning** First Friday of each month.  
Contact Ruth 021 363 840  
**AA Driver Licensing** Second Friday of each month and now  
also fourth Friday of every second month.  
(14 April, 28 April, 12 May)  
No bookings allowed.

### **MERCURY BAY CO-OPERATING PARISH**

#### **St Andrew's By the Sea Community Church**

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

[www.standrewsbythesea.org.nz](http://www.standrewsbythesea.org.nz) | [standrewswhitianga@gmail.com](mailto:standrewswhitianga@gmail.com)

**Facebook:** St Andrews Community Church Mercury Bay NZ

**Parish Council Chairman:** Kevin Pringle

**Parish Secretary:** Dorothy Preece 022 132 2061

**Newsletter Editor:** Charlotte Christensen

### **MERCURY BAY CO-OPERATING PARISH**

#### **St Andrew's Community Church Newsletter**

**April-May 2023**

*Our Mission in this Parish is to bring the saving love of Christ to all whom we meet, and by our example to encourage them to follow Him.*

#### ***Easter is all about forgiveness***

God's forgiveness - offered freely to every person who comes to Him, in this wayward and troubled world.

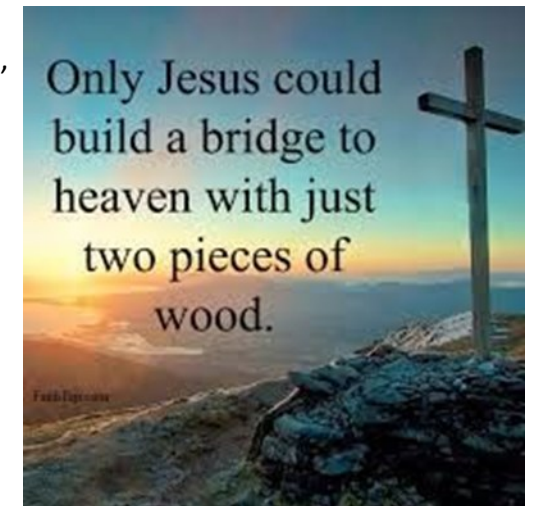
Jesus told His disciples, (Matt 5) "But I tell you, **love your enemies**, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, and pray for those who ill-treat you.... Do for others just what you want them to do for you."

Jesus suffered cruelly at the hands of His enemies, but with his dying breath He found the strength to say, "**Father, forgive them, they don't know what they are doing.**"

Isaiah 53 prophesied: **He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities, and by His stripes we are healed.**"

In Hebrews 7 St Paul explains that by His death, Jesus made the final, complete and fitting sacrifice for the forgiveness of all our sins, and that Jesus lives to intercede for us with Father.

It is our prayer that you might find the strength this Easter, to forgive "those who trespass against us," to let go of old hurts and to accept the forgiveness that Jesus offers freely when we turn to Him.



## 125 Years Young!



Our Anniversary weekend on February 17-20 proved a real blessing to many people. It was great to see that so many in the community still feel that strong connection with 'The Community Church' through family baptisms, weddings and

funerals, and through attending Sunday School. We heard many stories from the most unexpected sources.

One stand-out story came from our long-time friend Lola McClung. At the History Tea, Lola told us about her great-grandmother, Mary Ballantyne, who came to Whitianga in 1893. When that lady attended the first public worship service in the 'Whitianga Undenominational Church' in February 1898, she was astounded to find that the Presbyterian Minister who had the honour of preaching that day was none other than James Brown Marshall, who had been Mary's minister in Edinburgh! Rev Marshall is featured on a marble plaque in the church. "I often go and look at it when I'm in church", Lola said. "It's a family connection."

The oldest wedding photo on display was Constance Hamilton to Richard Hunter, married in the church in April 1915.

Dorothy Pooley (nee Lee) was married in the church in 1964. She sent her wedding gown all the way from Australia! The Lee family features large in the history of our church. We had several precious family Bibles on display, one of them being the Bible that was presented to William and Sarah Lee in England in 1852. They arrived in New Zealand 10 years later, with their four children. Their son, William Lee Jr. was apparently responsible for just about everything in the church, from preaching and Sunday School teaching, to trimming the oil lamps and mending the gate! After the Centennial celebrations in 1998, the current William Lee (known to us as Bill) signed off the document that transferred ownership of the church from the Undenominational Church Trust to the Presbyterian Church, and we

## Worship @ St Andrew's, 9:30 every Sunday

*Children are welcome in our Fellowship. There are quiet toys in church for the young ones, and Bible-based activities for the older ones.*

Apr	2nd	Dorothy Preece ( <b>Communion</b> )
<b>EASTER SERVICES:</b>		
	7th	<b>Good Friday service, 9:30am - Rev Viv Coleman</b>
	9th	<b>Easter Day service - Rev Viv Coleman</b>
	16th	Bill Woodward
	23rd	Bill Woodward
	30th	Dorothy Preece
May	7th	Rev Shirley Barker-Kirby ( <b>Communion</b> )
	14th	Rev Shirley Barker-Kirby
	21st	Ross Millar
	28th	Bible Group Ladies

***We are ever grateful to our visiting ministers and lay persons who open the Word to us. If you have any possible contacts for preachers, please let Dorothy know.***

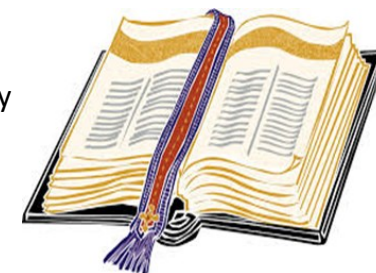
## From the Pulpit

Recently we read the story of Jesus healing the blind man in **John 9**.

We looked at each of the characters in the story and their reactions to the miracle – the disciples, the blind man, his neighbours, the religious authorities and the man's parents. Later, discussing the sermon over morning tea, one listener remarked, "Not one of those people was prepared to celebrate the miracle (that only the blind man attested to).

That man insisted that Jesus had healed him, but all of the others, including his parents, were too scared to say the Name of Jesus."

This set me thinking – with so much negativity, and so much opposition to everything these days, are we becoming afraid to stand up and be counted as Christians? Are we afraid to declare publicly, with the blind man, "I AM that man!" (or woman)? I AM the one whose life has been changed - and Jesus is my Saviour!



## Our Back Page

It's the same in every Newsletter - all those community groups that regularly use the church lounge - but do YOU know what is happening each day? Have a look this time, and see whether anyone you know could benefit from the health and welfare groups - Cancer patients, Parkinson's, Enliven, etc. - and by the way, there are **MORE DRIVER LICENSING DAYS** this year. As well as the usual second Friday of each month, we now have extra days on April 28<sup>th</sup>, June 23<sup>rd</sup> and August 25<sup>th</sup>.

This is by way of a trial to assess the need for the extra days, which most of us agree are definitely needed. Also, we need to acknowledge the work that Lorraine has done in the past few years, acting as 'crowd control' for the AA on licensing days. Lorraine has now passed the job on to Maureen Kerr.

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### **Friendship Coffee – bring your friends!**

**Madeleine invites everyone to come to  
ESPY CAFÉ @ 10:30**

**ON THE FIRST Thursday of every month  
Thursday April 6<sup>th</sup>  
Thursday May 4<sup>th</sup>**

**To share smiles and stories**



### **A Crafty Idea**

At Parish Council we are looking for ways to bring the community into our lovely church, and to encourage them to give thanks and praise.

One idea is to hold a '**Made By Hand**' exhibition. This would involve reaching out to the community, young and old and inviting everyone to display their work. Annie has undertaken to co-ordinate this, if the congregation decides it's a good idea. She would need our help in spreading the word to friends and neighbours.

Please let us have your ideas.

**Annie 07 866 3711 or 027 3223332**

became 'St Andrew's by the Sea'. A small history pamphlet was printed for the Anniversary, and these are available at church.

The History Tea featured fine china and lace tablecloths. Sadly, cyclones Hale and Gabrielle prevented many invited guests from attending, including former ministers and representatives of the Methodist and Presbyterian Churches. Therefore our speakers on the day were 'home grown'.

We heard some lively stories from Jeff Riddle, who built the new church lounge in 2002 – including the day he carried the cross on his back and up a ladder, to erect it over the new foyer. Jeff attracted a large audience that day! Jeff Riddle and Dorothy Preece cut the celebration cake.

To top off the cake (made by Muriel Pedersen) Damon Christensen made a model of the original church. He will now extend this model to represent the present day, and it will be kept in the church.

Rev Mary Petersen conducted the Thanksgiving Service on Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> when we gave thanks for all the saints who have gone before. Several of our Fellowship spoke about their faith and their ties

to the church. At the service, the winner of the children's colouring competition 'Design a Stained Glass Window' was announced. A replica stained glass picture (above) was made of Brax Monrad's art work and it will stay in the church.

Elizabeth Cosgrave and Madeleine Saunders arranged the competition. It was a very uplifting end to a great weekend. Also '*The Informer*' did us proud, having a reporter in attendance for most of the weekend and giving us almost three pages of coverage, including front page.



***Sincere thanks to all who helped make the event such a success.***

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### **Parish Register**

**March 22<sup>nd</sup> - Funeral for David Leslie Clark.**

Dorothy Preece officiating.

Our sincere love and sympathy goes out to Linda, Garry and the family.



## Please continue to pray for Hawkes Bay

Methodist Minister Rev Jan Tarrant recorded her personal experience of the effects of the cyclone in Hawkes Bay, and her letter was sent to the churches. Here is an abridged version. Jan writes:

“I was evacuated with four minutes’ notice when the stop banks ‘blew’, but my home was not flooded. My nephew and family in Puketapu were badly affected. He and his wife and two teenagers were 15 days with no power or water. I had no power for eight days, but I had running water throughout. I will never take that for granted again! A friend in Gisborne has had two quick showers in a month. One 65-yr-old widow lost five horses and two Labradors. She climbed a tree for six-and-a-half hours and held on until rescued. We are still coming out of shock and there is a fair bit of despondency and PTSD around. There are so many homeless people, businesses looking for space and farmland washed away.

I don’t know how everyone is going to find a space to call their own. Tempers are flaring. The feeling of hopelessness and ‘where to begin’ are just too large for some people. We’ve had one or two violent thunderstorms since. Children and animals are very frightened in the storms. My brother-in-law went to school to pick up his children in the midst of a storm. He found the entire class of 8-10 year olds crying, screaming, shaking and clinging to their teachers, much more like pre-schoolers. It had triggered some bad memories in them all, and panic spreads. The adults too, are much more reactive and no-one is sleeping very well.

“After water and power, the next amenity to be restored was rubbish collection. We were so relieved. We all lost the contents of our freezers and after a few very hot days the wheelie bins were high!

It’s been a very intense month. Just feeding people and getting a few things washed has been a mammoth task. Those who have lost their homes, their businesses or – worse still – their loved ones (including pets) have the hardest load to bear. I simply can’t believe we only sustained eight human deaths in the area. I thought it would be hundreds.”

**Church and Parish Donations:** Mercury Bay Co-operating Parish  
BNZ Whitianga: **02 0496 0062562 00**

**Monday Meals Donations:** Mercury Bay Community Support Trust  
Westpac Whitianga: **03 1578 0108901 00**

## It’s Day Camp time again!

Preparations for the 21<sup>st</sup> Mercury Bay Day Camp are at fever pitch as we go to print. On April 18, 19 and 20<sup>th</sup> up to 300 primary children from around the district will converge on Morcom’s farm, Cooks Beach. They come by ferry and chartered bus, for three days of fun activities and ‘Tent Time’ Christian input. As a member of the Mercury Bay Community Support Trust (‘the Church Trust’) it falls to our Newsletter Editor, Charlotte, to match up every one of those children with their choices of three activities on each of the three days of camp - that’s nine choices each - a mammoth task! Fortunately, Charlotte has a cataloguing brain - perfect for this task, but very taxing none the less. Activities include

everything from calm and quiet, to high adventure; from beadwork to climbing wall and everything in between. Over fifty adult volunteers and a crew of teenagers are on site to keep everyone safe. Costs are rising, for hire of transport, adventure equipment and portable changing spaces, but no-one on the local team is paid for their work or their time. The community owes a great debt of gratitude to everyone involved, especially to Graham and Sharyn Morcom, for allowing this annual invasion of their property. Please pray for the Spirit to work in the hearts of these children and their families, and for safe and happy outcomes for all.

If you wish to assist financially, you can donate at **Westpac 03-1578-0066529-02.**

Please include the word ‘donation’ so the Day Camp team don't think it's a registration payment or part payment for camper fees.

### Did You Know?

**In 2002 Rev Stan Stewart initiated the first Mercury Bay Day Camp. Day Camp has now become a community-wide institution. 50 community volunteers of all church denominations now host 300 children every year at Easter. St Andrew’s by the Sea – Giving thanks for 125 years of history.**