

MERCURY BAY CO-OPERATING PARISH

St Andrew's Community Church Newsletter

December 2021 - January 2022

Our Mission in this Parish is to demonstrate the Love of God to all people, and by our actions and words to encourage them towards a living faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Our people and their stories: Roshan and Urshita

Roshan Thomas and Urshita Jain moved to Whitianga in April this year and they are gradually getting to know the community. Their move was a stroke of good fortune for St Andrew's. This young couple had just taken on a new venture, *J.L. Connolly Painters, Whitianga*, and were able to furnish a quote and take on the job of exterior painting of the church.



Then came another plus - Roshan joined the church fellowship! Now very busy in the new business, they have very generously given up their precious Sunday afternoon time to tell us their story.

Roshan Thomas and Urshita Jain were both born in South India; Roshan in Kerala and Urshita in Chennai. Roshan went to high school in Kerala, while at age 11 Urshita went to high school in Malaysia, where she and her family lived for the next 10 years. In 2015 the family moved to New Zealand. At age 19 Urshita enrolled at the University of Otago to study Neuroscience. "I was interested in how the brain works, especially in neuro-degenerative diseases."

Roshan came directly from India to study at the Dunedin School of Architecture in 2013, having heard all about New Zealand from an aunt and uncle who always sang the benefits of becoming Kiwi. "As a kid I loved drawing and design, and at High School I did well in Engineering Graphics. I love Gothic architecture too. First Church Otago is really beautiful." The couple met in Dunedin and got together in 2016.

After doing research for a time at Dunedin Hospital, Urshita changed direction, looking for “something that really fits me.” She worked as Business Development Manager for *Education Perfect*, a commercial firm devising programmes for schools and principals. In the meantime, Roshan in the architectural field, worked for a while with *Eco Workshop* in Palmerston North before moving back to Dunedin where he took a job with Architects *Baker Garden*. Roshan had gained some experience and developed an interest in colour consultancy and the science of paint.

Putting their two skills together – business management and knowledge of architecture and paint – they decided to look for a business enterprise that they could share. When *J.L. Connolly* came up for sale, they took the huge step of going into business together. Their franchise covers the Coromandel from the northern tip to Tairua - and it's busy! Currently they employ seven on the painting gang, and they need more people. “We are booked out with work, but fully qualified and experienced people are hard to find, because there is no accommodation in the area,” Roshan says. “When we came to Whitianga we were lucky to find a unit at Aqua Soleil. We would like to take on more people, and we are looking to train a foreman. We both appreciate the importance of learning new skills and finding your potential. We are happy to give people a chance to see what they can achieve, and hopefully give them a hand up in life. Urshita does all the administration from home, and she manages me very well too,” Roshan says. “We make sure we both visit every site, every day and quite often we both have to get on the tools as well, to see a job completed on time.”

In India Roshan was raised Catholic, and Urshita is of the Jain religion. Her surname ‘Jain’ reflects that. It is the original religion from which Buddhism branched off. Reverence for all of nature, ‘do no harm and no harm will come to you’ and a vegetarian diet, are at the core of the religion. The festival of *Pajushan* dictates that followers eat only food that grows above ground, so for eight days the diet is mostly fruit. Urshita sometimes comes to our services, and finds there are points of connection.

Roshan worships with us because he has found us to be “A very friendly church.” His family have been Christians for generations. At his grandparents’ house there were evening prayers every night. “Grandad was

very involved with the Catholic Church, and he got me involved. I was an altar boy,” Roshan says. “A couple of weeks ago, when Urshita came to St Andrew’s with me, there was a YouTube video of an Indian congregation singing, ‘Crown Him with many crowns’. We could tell from their dress that was filmed in South India, probably Kerala, and the men and women sat on opposite sides of the aisle. That’s how it is in church back home.” In Dunedin Roshan attended St Patrick’s Catholic Church.

Both Urshita and Roshan are “on the phone a lot”, to people back in India and family members in New Zealand. “Our university friends are all scattered now, and Covid has prevented us from visiting anyone we know. We are waiting for the day when we can get together with friends and family, here and overseas. We don’t yet know many people here.”

They still feel very close to the traditions of their native India. Urshita cooks Indian dishes as best she can, but she has to make do with what’s available in the shops, and we don’t have an Asian supermarket on the Coromandel. “The Indian restaurants in Whitianga and in the rest of New Zealand are generally pretty good, but of necessity, they do all lack authenticity.”

After they met, the couple did a lot of travelling together whenever their work allowed, and their future plans include a lot more travel. At some time in the future Roshan aims to go for his Master’s Degree in Architectural Studies, but for now they are concentrating on consolidating the business and building a life together. They are stacked up with work, and “so far” they are enjoying being business owners.

Welcome to Whitianga, Roshan and Urshita, and thank you for sharing your stories, and God bless your future!

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Advice for Caregivers:

‘Savour those moments when you see the effect of your caregiving on another’s life. There will be other times when you won’t know the impact you’ve had. Always trust that what you do is part of God’s bigger picture, and that everything is exactly as it needs to be.’

Important Decision - Vaccination Passes

The Methodist Church of New Zealand has advised that, with the Traffic Light system coming into force, everyone coming onto church property in whatever capacity, should be asked to show a Vaccination Pass.

In light of this advice, on Sunday 28th November, Parish Council Chairman Kevin Pringle asked the congregation for a show of hands:

“All those **in favour** of requiring the Vaccination Pass to be shown?”

“All those **against** requiring Vaccination Passes to be shown?”

The result was 24 – 3 in favour of requiring passes.

This decision was ratified at the Parish Council meeting which followed.

Therefore all Church members, Op-shop staff and customers, and all community groups using the premises will be asked to comply.

For those who do not yet have the Vaccination Pass, it was agreed that the ‘vaccination record card’ will be accepted until December 31st.

We recognise that this is a difficult requirement for some people, and the decision was not taken lightly. If you have concerns, please talk to any member of the Parish team. Also, if you would like someone to accompany you to obtain a Vaccination Pass, let us know and we will come with you, either to Stephenson’s Pharmacy or to the Library.

Parish Register

Please remember these families in your thoughts and prayers -



Funerals:

18th November - **Ronald Creed** Rev Mary Petersen officiating

26th November - **John Stock** Dorothy Preece officiating.

In Memoriam:

With sadness we record the passing of our friend and organist **Sue Donovan**. Sue passed away on December 1st, at a hospice in Auckland.

Report of the Annual Congregational Meeting

(Full copies of the Reports are available from church)

The Annual Meeting was held after service on Sunday November 14, after a month of Covid delay. 25 people attended. Parish Council Chairman Kevin Pringle advised that next year the meeting will be held in September, in line with reporting requirements for Charities Commission and the parent churches.

Points of note from the Annual Meeting:

St Andrew's is **the sole congregation of the Mercury Bay Parish** and must support itself and all upkeep of the church, op-shop and manse.

The Fellowship is growing steadily and is in good heart. During Covid lockdown the parent churches (Presbyterian and Methodist) sent out worship and prayers, and the parish telephone list was divided between the leaders, to make sure no-one was forgotten.

Painting of the church exterior (built 1898) has just been completed, at a cost of almost \$27,000. We managed to meet that cost from our funds. Painting brought to light a small area of rot below one of the roof valleys, which will also be expensive to fix, but first we must get a builder!

The church lounge is in constant use from church and community groups, mostly programmes for the elderly, including Presbyterian *Enliven*.

Counsellor Nicole Smale, of our fellowship, is now meeting her clients in the church office. This is seen as a perfect fit for the church.

General Discussion Ideas from the Meeting:

- Form a property sub-committee to assist Parish Council in the areas of maintenance, health & safety, etc.
- The need for a mens' group for socialising and outreach to men.
- Form a mixed Bible Study group for couples and all comers.
- More active outreach to the community.

Parish Council will follow up these ideas, and we are asking for 'hands-up' if you can help on any front.

Christine and David Christie have already offered their home to begin a 'mixed and couples' home group, which will start in the New Year.

If you would like to join this group, ring **866 0107**

Thank you, David and Christine.

Christian World Service Annual Appeal

The envelopes for this year's CWS Appeal will be distributed at church over the coming weeks. The Christmas Day offering also goes to CWS.

This year the emphasis is on **Justice** :

Isaiah 1:17

“Seek justice, rescue the oppressed, defend the orphan, plead for the widow.”

‘Thousands of people know poverty and discrimination first-hand. Hundreds of millions face hardship and hunger for most of the year.

Living as we do in the world that God loves, Isaiah’s words call us to be different. God’s justice does not rest on the court system. His measure of justice is the efforts we take to rescue the oppressed, and care for the orphan and widow.’ www.cws.org.nz



Our Op-shop is overloaded with donations. Even with the on-going **EVERYTHING ONE DOLLAR SALE**, we need to find other outlets. If anyone has links to bona fide charitable groups who could use good, used clothing, please contact **Madeleine 866 0169**. She would love to hear from you! We are now having to get the skip bin emptied every week, and this service costs \$300 per month – money that should be going back into the community. So anything we can do to alleviate the overload problem will be a help.

For donations to the Church and Parish:

Mercury Bay Co-operating Parish

BNZ Whitianga

02 0496 0062562 00

For donations to the Monday Meals:

Mercury Bay Community Support Trust

Westpac Whitianga

03 1578 0108901 00

Thank you for your support!



Christmas/New Years worship at St Andrew's

9:30 every Sunday

Worship Schedule:

Dec	5th	Rev Stewart Hanna - Communion
	12th	Service of 9 lessons and carols - Elizabeth & Jan
	19th	Ross Millar
	25th	Christmas Day Family Service Dorothy Preece
	26th	No service this Sunday
Jan	2nd	Rev Viv Coleman - New Year communion
	9th	Bill Woodward
	16th	Bill Woodward
	23rd	Dorothy Preece
	30th	Rev Shirley Barker-Kirby
Feb	6th	Rev Shirley Barker-Kirby - Communion



Isaiah Chapter 9, verses 6 - 7

Unto us a child is born.

*Unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon His shoulder:
and his name shall be called*

***Wonderful,
Counsellor,
the Mighty God,
the Everlasting Father,
the Prince of Peace.***

*Of the increase of His government and
peace there shall be no end, upon the
throne of David and upon His kingdom, to
order it and to establish it with judgement and with justice, from
henceforth, even for ever.*

The zeal of the Lord of Hosts will perform this.



Parish and Community Information

All persons using St Andrew's facilities must now show vaccination passes. (See inside pages for details). This includes all of our mid-week groups. The only exemption to this rule will be AA Driver Licensing.

- 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 **Sit and be Fit** 10am weekly for the less active
 Contact Viv 869 5295
Stitch n' Chat fortnightly 1:30-4pm in the Hamilton Room
 Contact Julie 021 169 1637
- 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 866 0556
- Friday **Cancer Support Coffee Morning** First Friday of each month.
 Contact Ruth 021 363 840
AA Driver Licensing Second Friday of each month.
 (10 December, 14 January) No bookings allowed.

THE CHURCH OP SHOP is open Tuesday-Saturday, 9am-1pm

Manager: Madeleine Saunders 866 0169

The Op Shop supports local churches and many non-profit groups

We invite such groups to apply in writing, for donations towards their projects

MERCURY BAY CO-OPERATING PARISH

St Andrew's By the Sea Community Church

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