

# MERCURY BAY CO-OPERATING PARISH

St Andrew's By the Sea Community Church

**Newsletter April/May 2018**

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

## ***An Easter letter from Rev. Jan Fogg***

We cannot be simply spectators to the Easter event – the only way to begin to have some comprehension of this fundamental core of the Christian faith is to take a step in faith and become a participator. We don't have to believe before we participate.

On the first Good Friday two millennia ago, at the foot of the cross, or a bit further away, were people watching, people who had followed Jesus: James and John, who had found in Jesus a different kind of hope than just hoping for more fish to catch; Mary Magdalene, who'd been given a peaceful heart; Peter, who'd found a new kind of love in Jesus; and Mary, Jesus' mother – who had held the tiny baby in her arms and found a heart filled with joy. At the foot of the cross they felt the loss of all that glowed within them – the loss of hope, peace, love and joy. A birth, and now a death, too soon.

On Easter Sunday this year, an option for the gospel reading is from Mark. The messenger in white inside the tomb said, "He is not here; he is going ahead of you to Galilee; you will see him there." We the hearers of the gospel today know the Christian faith has grown from that moment. This gospel tells us that the women were terrified and said nothing to anyone. But, looking from our perspective back from the future, something changed with Easter morning; the women must have said *something* to someone, must in the process have experienced the living Christ with them – because we know the story didn't end with bleakness and fear. What are we missing in our understanding with this chosen ending from Mark's gospel, of the women leaving in uncertainty?

In Mark's gospel there's nothing of the post- Easter experiences of the other gospels, that record a return of peace, joy and wonder. At the tomb on Easter morn, the women came with their tears, their grief-filled hearts, and their spices to anoint the dead body of Jesus. What they saw was not a dead body, but a messenger, who, Mark's gospel tells us, directed them to go back to where it all started, back to Galilee. For a number of reasons, the women were terrified. Who wouldn't be? His precious body – not there. An instruction – go back – back to where it all began. Go through all this again?

But what we now know is, when they did go back to the beginning, it wasn't the same, it was a new beginning, a new life and the experience of that spirit of Jesus they'd known and loved in his body, present to them in a new kind of way. What they found was not a body in a tomb, but the love of God, brought to earth in Jesus, set free in the land of the living.

The ending in the written-down gospel directs us, the hearer, to go back to Galilee. So let's go! Go back and experience the story of Jesus' ministry again, throw yourself into the story, participate in it, and see what happens for you! This is surely the reality of our faith journeys- we don't understand it all at the beginning, so we go back and talk about it and listen to what others have to say, with an open mind... Mark's gospel is a picture for us of a faith journey, and the faith journey is different for different people – just as each gospel is different. The story of the cross on its own is like all deaths – loss, pain, an empty heart. Easter Sunday though, without the cross is like a celebration without a cause.

What is the meaning of the Easter story for us today, in our troubled, angry and suffering world? How can we say that love has been let lose in the world when we know there are millions of refugees hoping, yearning, for a home and a family to share love with? Where slavery still persists when the promise of Easter is love set free? Or the

presence of peace when a country such as Syria persists with violence and war? Mark's gospel deliberately leaves the ending open-ended. We're not just hearing a dramatic story. "Jesus is going ahead of you to Galilee- there you will see him." In this little sentence lies the Good News. We're included in the invitation to meet Jesus in our Galilee i.e. in our everyday lives, and to be brought from darkness to light by this experience!

Peace and hope to each one. *Shalom - Jan*



## Day Camp update

Day Camp is happening 18-20 April this year, and as in every year we are inundated with children who want to attend, followed by much slower teenagers who are enthusiastic but just struggle to get the paperwork done, and then the very much valued adult helpers many of whom have been coming year after year.

We're only three weeks out but we're still looking for Adult helpers, so if you can help (or know someone who can) even if it's just for one day, please get in touch with Margot at [m\\_de\\_zeeuw@yahoo.com](mailto:m_de_zeeuw@yahoo.com) or talk to Charlotte (07 867 1234) who will put you in touch with her.

Teen Leader numbers are also low so if you know any teens you can prod, the form and details are on the website: [www.daycamp.co.nz](http://www.daycamp.co.nz)

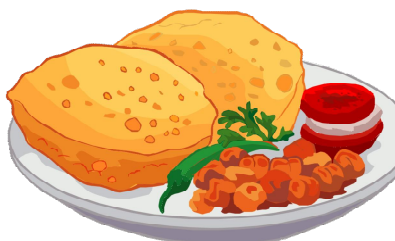
## Community meals update - Important News

The handover of financing for the Monday Meals to the Church Trust has now been accomplished. The Trust (Mercury Bay Community Support Trust) will now apply for funding, oversee administration and employ Tania to provide the meals.

The meals mission continues to enjoy strong support from the community, shown by very generous regular gifts of meat, large bags of spuds, carrots and onions, and armfuls of fresh veges from our friends at St Peter's garden and from the Community Gardens.

For those who regularly support us by financial donations, the account number has changed. Please make donations to the **new account**:

**MERCURY BAY COMMUNITY MEALS**  
**03 1578 0108901 00**



\$3,000 has been transferred from the St Andrew's Community Meals account to the new Trust account. The church account will remain open.

### **ABOUT THE TRUST**

Parish Council is extremely grateful to the Trust team (particularly Tina Bartlett and Maureen Kerr) for taking on this extra work. We are confident that with the Trust, the Christian commitment to the meals will never diminish. For Dorothy and Angela, this represents a significant load removed from their shoulders.

The Trust started in the 1980's when Rev Stan Stewart and his wife, Rev Pauline, were in part-time ministry with Mercury Bay Parish. This community-minded couple began the Day Camp. The Trust was set up to give funding support to Day Camp and other community outreach work. Today, Day Camp is still the 'big project' for the Trust, costing \$30,000 each year to deliver safe, supervised outdoor activities to more than 300 children, and Christian education in the daily 'Tent Times'. The Meals will be another large programme for the Trust to administer. If you are a community-minded Christian and would like to serve on the Trust Board, or to know more about it, please contact John Twemlow (details on back page).

## Parish Register

*Funerals at St Andrew's*

March 1st - Rev. Jan Fisher (Former Anglican Priest)

Conducted by Rev. Gillian Reid

March 13th - Adele Cholmondeley Birkbeck

Conducted by Rev. John Twemlow



*Our thoughts and sympathies are with the families*

## Easter thoughts

For Easter this year, let us consider these three questions:

**Have we died with Christ?**

**Were we buried with Christ?**

**Are we raised with Christ?**

The simple answer to each of those questions is a clear and confident **YES!!**

The apostle Paul in his letter to the Christians in Rome used the events of Easter as an analogy to encourage believers to walk their life with the same attitude as Christ. In Chapter 6:1-14, he reminds us that the old life we lived need not control us now we live in faith.

*“Now that you follow Jesus, that old life has been **crucified**.  
In fact it was **buried**. Now you walk a **risen life IN CHRIST!!**”*

We are not under **LAW**, trying to follow a set of rules, but under **GRACE**, resting in the finished work of Christ.

May this Easter be a liberating and joyful time for us all.

*John Twemlow*

## Reasons for Rejoicing!

✦ This month **Diana and Gordon** managed a trip down to the South Island, to a friend's 80<sup>th</sup> birthday ('someone I almost married', says Diana). Her next course of Chemo was delayed so that they could make the trip, and now they are safely home again, with Diana still on a 'high' after reconnecting with many old friends. Diana is determined the next 80<sup>th</sup> birthday party will be her own. She is an inspiration to us all. Diana's daughter, Fiona Jean also has cancer, and Diana has spent a lot of time at Fiona Jean's bedside in Waikato. Recently Fiona Jean was pleased to be home to look at the sea, even for a few days, while she awaited test results. - and -

✦ **Rev Shirley Barker-Kirby** is a South Island girl. When she visited Diana after conducting our service recently, they discussed South Island places. Names were dropped, and to their astonishment Diana and Shirley found themselves related! Diana was able to produce old family photos which Shirley had never seen. "This was an amazing gift from God," Shirley said. She was still 'buzzing' when she drove back to Auckland. We can't wait for the next instalment of this wonderful story!

✦ **Our friends at St Peter's** are rejoicing because their church is now repaired, and they have been able to return. We rejoice with them, but we will miss the lively combined morning teas that we have shared while they were at St Andrew's. Their lovely piano will also return to its home, and we will miss that too – not to mention the real coffee! Some coffee addicts might rejoice because Parish Council has agreed to buy a filter coffee pot.

✦ **St Andrew's Op-shop** continues to open five mornings a week and we now **have EFTPOS**. Everyone has coped well with the transition, and the gizmo is functioning beautifully. We hope this will help to boost takings. The winter stock is now coming onto the racks, with the remaining summer stock going out at **\$1 per item**. There is now a separate rack for '**designer labels**', and another for '**tropical holiday cruises**'. We are deeply indebted to all of our Op-shop volunteers. **Thank you all!**

# ***Come and worship!***

***Sunday Worship 9:30am***

***Families are welcome. The family-friendly area in the church has quiet toys, books and Bible-based activities.***



***Apr 1st - Easter Day Communion - John Twemlow***

***8th - Rev Jan Fogg (Parish Council Meeting)***

***15th - Robin Twemlow***

***22th - Ross Millar***

***29th - Dorothy Preece***

***Also Combined Churches evening service at Whitianga Baptist  
light tea at 5:30, service starts at 6pm***

***May 6th - Communion - Alistair Rogers***

***13th - Rev Shirley Barker-Kirby (Mothers' Day)***

***20th - Peter Chaffin***

***27th - Bible Group - Praise Service***

## ***What is a Praise Service?***

On Sunday March 18th John Twemlow led a Praise and Worship service, with Elizabeth Nicholls at the piano. It was a slightly different format from our usual Sunday service. We began with 15-20 minutes of singing – not hymns from the usual books, but shorter choruses and worship songs from a variety of sources, including 'Scripture in Song', 'Hillsong' and others that we don't often use. Elizabeth's playing was beautiful, and it was a worship-filled experience. John's brief message picked out the original Bible passages that were reflected in the songs. The Ladies' Bible Group will arrange a similar service on May 27th.

The St Andrew's family is an eclectic group of Christians from many different backgrounds, and it is good to recognise that 'worship' means something different for each of us. 'We are one in the bond of Love' and we bless one another with our varied experiences.

# Parish and Community Activities

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

**Service 9:30 every Sunday**

**AA DRIVER LICENSING** - all day 2nd Friday of each month. See notice board for dates

**CHURCH OP-SHOP** opens Tuesday-Saturday 8:30-12:30, now with EFTPOS!  
**Volunteers welcome!** Enquiries, ring Madeleine 866 0169

**COMMUNITY MEALS** served in the Church hall from 5-6pm every Monday.  
Meals phone (attended Mondays only): 021 0294 2234

**CHRISTIAN WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP All welcome.** 2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday of every month @1:30pm. For venue: Ann Harsant 866 4740

**ENLIVEN (Presbyterian Social Services for seniors)** every Thursday, by arrangement only. For more information, ring Jenny 866 0556

**LADIES BIBLE STUDY** Wednesday 10am. For details: Julie 984 9140

**SCRAP BAGS (Quilting)** every Wednesday from 11am in the Hall.

**STITCH N' CHAT** every second Tuesday in the Hall. To join this friendly group, ring Julie 984 9140

**UPRIGHT & ACTIVE** Friendly exercise sessions for seniors, held in the Church hall

Mondays, 9:30am - exercise for more active seniors.

Tuesdays, 10am - exercise for the less active.

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

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

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

Office phone (unattended): 867 1102

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

**Resource Minister:** Rev Jan Fogg (Thames)

**Local Ministry Team:** Rev John Twemlow 021 0222 1394

**Parish secretary:** Dorothy Preece 869 5452

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