



Anglican Parish of St John

NEWSLETTER - OCTOBER 2026

MESSAGE FROM REV'D SAM

When I was about 10 years old my Nana and Poppa moved from Cambridge, where we lived, over to Papamoa. They built a house right at the end of Papamoa Beach Road and was one house off the beach, but with a walkway that would take us down to the sea. All throughout my teenage years we would head over there in the Summer, often taking our friends with us and staying the weekend. There are a few significant memories I have of that house and that part of the beach, however one memory stays very close to me when I think of the power of the ocean. Papamoa Beach is known for having reasonably dumpy waves and having rips all the way down the beach. So, every time we went down to the beach from my Grandparents house we would always look out for how the waves were crashing, and we got very good at figuring out where the rips were. However, early on in our years of going there Dad took us kids down to the beach for a swim. Now, I am the oldest of three kids, with the youngest being about 5 years younger than me. We had been in the water for a little while, enjoying the crashing of the waves, but Dad soon realized we were being drawn further and further out from shore. Once he realized he quickly reached out for my sister and my brother and with one under each arm he dragged them back in while yelling at me to swim as hard as I can to get back in to shore. Luckily, Dad had noticed in time and we all got to shore safely, but I still remember the power of the water dragging us out to sea and the fear in Dad's voice as he quickly got us to safety. The ocean is beautiful and can often be serene on a still summer day, but it is also powerful and terrifying beyond most other aspects of creation.

It is hard to imagine that we are in close relationship with a God who is more powerful than even the ocean. In Job (37:14 – 24) though, the writer paints this beautiful and powerful picture of a God who is able to balance the clouds, who can like a table cloth spread out the skies. These are over-powering images of a God who is so far above and beyond this world, that it would be almost silly or comical for God to respond to our lowly wonderings as Job has expected of God through his conversations. This God with so much power is pictured as being unable to violate his own justice and righteousness, "How could God ever do anything wrong?" And yet, for us who are reading the book, we might want to suggest that the mere fact that God would offer Job up as a test dummy is a violation of righteousness. However, this is not the focus for us this morning. The youngest of the three friends of Job finally chooses to speak up after the other two have failed to get anywhere with Job. Elihu opens with this remark, "Stop, and consider the wondrous works of God." It is an invitation for Job to stop focusing on himself and his own troubles and remind himself of how totally other this God is who Job has been moaning too. This is made even more clear when he finishes by calling Job out as being "wise in his own heart." He says, "Therefore mortals fear him [God]; he does not regard any who are wise in their own conceit." Conceit here actually means "of heart" or in their own minds. For Elihu, then the power and righteousness of God makes God unattainable, unreachable, unchallengeable, in the same way we cannot challenge the wind, or the sun, or the lightning and thunder in the clouds. But this is not the case. God is reachable, God is challengeable, God is attainable because he has made himself so.

Matthew 8:23–27 reminds us of the power of God, that even when God becomes human, he still has authority over the wind and the sea. And yet, this is not a passage in isolation. This Gospel passage is situated within a book that describes a very real, physical, human Jesus who experiences life as we do. We see a God who comes near, who is human as we are human. What should stand out for us in our Gospel reading, then, is Jesus' surety, his complete confidence in the Spirit who calmed the wind and the sea. When the winds were at their worst, Jesus was asleep in the boat, confident in the power and authority of God. Confident, because he can act in the power of the Spirit.

I think we **can** and **should** be confident that we can act in the power of the Spirit.

We can be confident firstly, because we know that we have been given the same Spirit as Jesus. This Spirit dwell within us, guiding, inspiring and empowering us to participate in the life of God. But I also think we can be confident because we know **how** to act in the power of the Spirit. *We know God's desires and goals for creation. We know that God has placed humanity within creation in order to flourish with creation. That as we care for (steward) creation, we care for ourselves. We know that God became human, not to whisk us away from this physical world, but to enable us to join with God in restoring the whole of creation.*

After the experience I had with the rip at Papamoa Beach I learned many things about how to respond to the ocean. I learned that fighting against a rip is usually the worst option. The two options you have are to swim to the side to get out of the current, or let yourself be taken by the rip and wait till the current stops and make your way back in, to the side, afterward. This knowledge gave me the confidence to swim at the beach without having to be afraid. We know a God who is over and above all things, and yet chooses to journey with us and experience all the things that life can throw at us. I wonder, then, how we can participate in caring for creation, enabling it to flourish - how might we confidently engage with creation in our own lives? And may our confidence in *knowing God, enable us to act, even when our actions may look like a dingy in a storm.*

SERVICES FOR OCTOBER

4 October 8.00am Old St John's (1662) 9.00am St Paul's (Eucharist) 9.30am St Saviours (Morning Prayer) 10.30am St John's (Eucharist) 4.00pm Old St John's (Taizé)	11 October 8.00am Old St John's (Eucharist) 9.30am St Saviours + Baptism (Eucharist) 9.30am Christ Church (Morning Prayer) 10.30am St John's (Eucharist)
18 October 8.00am Old St John's (Morning Prayer) 10.30am St John's (Morning Prayer) Note: No other services to be held this Sunday due to the Diocesan Synod meeting this weekend.	25 October 8.00am Old St John's (Eucharist) 9.30am Christ Church (Eucharist) 9.30am St Saviours (Eucharist) 10.30am St John's (Morning Prayer) 4.00pm Rangiaowhia Service

PARISH OF ST JOHN
SPECIAL GENERAL MEETING
In ST JOHN'S CHURCH
11 OCTOBER 2026 12 NOON

Since we re-merged with Christ Church at Synod in 2025 the Trust Board, along with the Vestry have been evaluating what maintenance work needs to be done on both the Hall and the Church itself. We have decided that there are three main works that need to be completed:

- An accessibility ramp needs to be installed between the end of the Hall and the driveway;
- The weatherboards on the Church need to be repaired and replaced where rotten;
- The Church needs an exterior paint in order to seal the repaired and replaced weatherboards.

The cost of this work is estimated to be around \$45,000. We are calling an SGM in order to get Parish approval to use funds to pay for this work which is outside of the original yearly budget. All welcome. *Rev'd Sam*

GARAGE SALE

CHRIST CHURCH

KIHIKIHI

9am until noon

31 OCTOBER 2026

If you have anything you would like to donate to the sale please contact the office nearer the time.