



HOME CHURCH GROUPS

Rev'd Julie Guest

SOCIAL JUSTICE ISSUES

Rev'd Stephanie Owen - 871-3400

PASTORAL CARE

Bev Anso - 871-6273

ST SAVIOUR BIBLE STUDY

NICK & ROS Empson— 871 9586

PRAYER CHAIN

Steve Anso - 871-6273

MUSIC TEAM CONTACT

Laurel Smith - 870-3326

MAGAZINE

Office - stjohs.awa@xtra.co.nz

OP SHOP

Office—stjohs.awa@xtra.co.nz

MONDAY MEAL

Sam Pullenger - contact office

INTEREST GROUPS

ST JOHN'S CHRISTIAN WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP

Bev Anso - 871-6273

CURSILLO

Annette Rea - 871-8032

KNIT & NATTER

Office - 871-5568

GARDEN GROUP

Els Brown - 027 279-8044

PIRONGIA CHURCH CRAFT GROUP

Barbara Preece - 027 871-9494

YOUTH

MAINLY MUSIC - ST JOHN'S

Contact Office - 871-5568

FRIDAY CLUB

Contact Office - 871-5568

(during school term for children 5-13yrs)

HOLIDAY PROGRAMME

Sam Pullenger - sampsjc3@gmail.com

DIOCESAN WEBSITE - WITH LINK TO OUR SITE

www.waikato.anglican.org.nz

PARISH TEAM

VESTRY

Christine Bryant (*Synods Person*) Helen

Stubbs (*Synods Person*) Murray Gardiner,

Coral Loomb, Els Brown, Paul Bryant,

Jocelyn Taylor, Sam Pullenger. Warren Tims,

Ros Empson, Lesley Egglestone

VICAR'S WARDEN

Christine Bryant

PEOPLE'S WARDEN

Coral Loomb

LICENSED LAY MINISTERS

Annette Rea, Helen Stubbs, Christine Bryant,

VICAR Rev'd Julie Guest - 027 420-5375

In office Tues-Fri

ASSISTANT PRIESTS

Rev'd Steph Owen 871-3400

Rev'd Michele Willis

MINISTER IN FORMATION

Rev'd Sam Pullenger - sampsjc3@gmail.com

PARISH OFFICE HOURS: Monday: 10am - 1pm, Tuesday-Friday: 9am - 1pm

ADMINISTRATOR: Maggie Crossan **PHONE:** 871 5568

EMAIL: stjohs.awa@xtra.co.nz **WEBSITE:** stjohs.parishteawamutu.com

FACEBOOK: Parish of St John, Te Awamutu—@stjohs.awa@xtra.co.nz

St John's Today

Justice & Reconciliation



WINTER 2025

Quarterly magazine for the
Anglican Parish of St John
Old St John's Church, Te Awamutu
St John's Church, Te Awamutu
St Paul's Church, Rangiaowhia
St Saviours Church, Pirongia

If undelivered return to:
162 Arawata St, Te Awamutu 3800
or let the office know
if you no longer wish to receive
this magazine - Ph. 871-5568



HOME CHURCH GROUPS

Rev'd Julie Guest

SOCIAL JUSTICE ISSUES

Rev'd Stephanie Owen - 871-3400

PASTORAL CARE

Bev Anso - 871-6273

ST SAVIOUR BIBLE STUDY

NICK & ROS Empson— 871 9586

PRAYER CHAIN

Steve Anso - 871-6273

MUSIC TEAM CONTACT

Laurel Smith - 870-3326

MAGAZINE

Office - stjohs.awa@xtra.co.nz

OP SHOP

Office—stjohs.awa@xtra.co.nz

MONDAY MEAL

Sam Pullenger - contact office

INTEREST GROUPS

ST JOHN'S CHRISTIAN WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP

Bev Anso - 871-6273

CURSILLO

Annette Rea - 871-8032

KNIT & NATTER

Office - 871-5568

GARDEN GROUP

Els Brown - 027 279-8044

PIRONGIA CHURCH CRAFT GROUP

Barbara Preece - 027 871-9494

YOUTH

MAINLY MUSIC - ST JOHN'S

Contact Office - 871-5568

FRIDAY CLUB

Contact Office - 871-5568

(during school term for children 5-13yrs)

HOLIDAY PROGRAMME

Sam Pullenger - sampsjc3@gmail.com

DIOCESAN WEBSITE - WITH LINK TO OUR SITE

www.waikato.anglican.org.nz

PARISH TEAM

VESTRY

Christine Bryant (*Synods Person*) Helen

Stubbs (*Synods Person*) Murray Gardiner,

Coral Loomb, Els Brown, Paul Bryant,

Jocelyn Taylor, Sam Pullenger. Warren Tims,

Ros Empson, Lesley Egglestone

VICAR'S WARDEN

Christine Bryant

PEOPLE'S WARDEN

Coral Loomb

LICENSED LAY MINISTERS

Annette Rea, Helen Stubbs, Christine Bryant,

VICAR Rev'd Julie Guest - 027 420-5375

In office Tues-Fri

ASSISTANT PRIESTS

Rev'd Steph Owen 871-3400

Rev'd Michele Willis

MINISTER IN FORMATION

Rev'd Sam Pullenger - sampsjc3@gmail.com

PARISH OFFICE HOURS: Monday: 10am - 1pm, Tuesday-Friday: 9am - 1pm

ADMINISTRATOR: Maggie Crossan **PHONE:** 871 5568

EMAIL: stjohs.awa@xtra.co.nz **WEBSITE:** stjohs.parishteawamutu.com

FACEBOOK: Parish of St John, Te Awamutu—@stjohs.awa@xtra.co.nz

St John's Today

Justice & Reconciliation



WINTER 2025

Quarterly magazine for the
Anglican Parish of St John
Old St John's Church, Te Awamutu
St John's Church, Te Awamutu
St Paul's Church, Rangiaowhia
St Saviours Church, Pirongia

If undelivered return to:
162 Arawata St, Te Awamutu 3800
or let the office know
if you no longer wish to receive
this magazine - Ph. 871-5568

Justice & Reconciliation

In the June 2024 issue of this magazine I outlined our plan to use the Five Marks of Mission as the themes for each issue. Just to refresh your memory, these are Five Marks of Mission:

- * To proclaim the Good News of the Kingdom. *Tell*
- * To teach, baptise and nurture new believers. *Teach*
- * To respond to human need by loving service. *Tend*
- * To seek to transform unjust structures of society,
to challenge violence of every kind and to pursue
peace and reconciliation. *Transform*
- * To strive to safeguard the integrity of creation
and sustain and re-new the life of the earth. *Treasure*

Nearly a year later the theme for this magazine is : *To transform unjust structures of society, to challenge violence of every kind and pursue peace and reconciliation.*

It seems to me that this is a theme for the times. Everywhere I look structures that were built to support justice and challenge violence are being torn down or ignored. Without pointing fingers overseas, which could take the rest of the magazine to explore, a couple of recent New Zealand examples are the gutting of the Equal Pay Act and the reinstalling of prescription fees. Both of those measures were in place to help create equity in New Zealand. Their removal moves us to a less just society.

You will be calling to mind other examples you've seen recently. These are examples might be called, "large" and "distant." They may not affect your personal circumstances, it's hard to see how we could challenge these decisions effectively, especially as individuals . But did you know that our Anglican Church in Aotearoa, New Zealand and Polynesia has a dedicated Social Justice Unit that focuses on addressing systemic injustices?

This unit emphasises:

Standing with the vulnerable: Inspired by the teachings of Jesus,

What's on in the Parish

<u>Sunday</u>	8.00 am	Service (Old St John's)
	9.00 am	Service (<i>1st & 3rd Sundays</i>) (St Paul's)
	9:15 am	Service (<i>1st, 2nd & 4th</i>) (St Saviours)
	10.30 am	Service (St John's)
<u>Monday</u>	9.30 am	Knit and Natter (Lounge)
	10 -2 pm	Pirongia Craft Group (St Saviours)
	5.00 pm	Outreach Meal (Lounge)
<u>Friday</u>	9:30-11 am	Mainly Music (Hall)*
	5.00 -7 pm	Friday Club (Hall)*

1st & 3rd Monday of the Month Cursillo, 2pm, Lounge

1st Thursday of the Month Film Night, 7pm, Lounge.

2nd Tuesday of the Month Women's Fellowship, 1.30pm, Lounge.

2nd & 4th Thursday of the Month Bible Study, 12 noon, Lounge

2nd Saturday of the Month Gardening Group at St John's, 9am.

3rd Tuesday of the Month Death Café, 11am, Lounge.

4th Saturday of the Month Crop Swap, 9am, Lounge.

4th Sunday of the Month Evensong at Te Paariha o Rangiaowhia, 4pm.

5th Sunday of the Month Combined Parish Service, 9.30am

(Check pew sheet closer to date to see if this will go ahead).

5th Sunday of the Month Evensong, Old St John's, 4.30 pm followed by Social Parish Meal at Te Awamutu RSA at 5.30 pm

Justice & Reconciliation

In the June 2024 issue of this magazine I outlined our plan to use the Five Marks of Mission as the themes for each issue. Just to refresh your memory , these are Five Marks of Mission:

- * To proclaim the Good News of the Kingdom. *Tell*
- * To teach, baptise and nurture new believers. *Teach*
- * To respond to human need by loving service. *Tend*
- * To seek to transform unjust structures of society, to challenge violence of every kind and to pursue peace and reconciliation. *Transform*
- * To strive to safeguard the integrity of creation and sustain and re-new the life of the earth. *Treasure*

Nearly a year later the theme for this magazine is : *To transform unjust structures of society, to challenge violence of every kind and pursue peace and reconciliation.*

It seems to me that this is a theme for the times. Everywhere I look structures that were built to support justice and challenge violence are being torn down or ignored. Without pointing fingers overseas, which could take the rest of the magazine to explore, a couple of recent New Zealand examples are the gutting of the Equal Pay Act and the reinstalling of prescription fees. Both of those measures were in place to help create equity in New Zealand. Their removal moves us to a less just society.

You will be calling to mind other examples you've seen recently. These are examples might be called, "large" and "distant." They may not affect your personal circumstances, it's hard to see how we could challenge these decisions effectively, especially as individuals . But did you know that our Anglican Church in Aotearoa, New Zealand and Polynesia has a dedicated Social Justice Unit that focuses on addressing systemic injustices?

This unit emphasises:

Standing with the vulnerable: Inspired by the teachings of Jesus,

What's on in the Parish

<u>Sunday</u>	8.00 am	Service (Old St John's)
	9.00 am	Service (<i>1st & 3rd Sundays</i>) (St Paul's)
	9:15 am	Service (<i>1st, 2nd & 4th</i>) (St Saviours)
	10.30 am	Service (St John's)
<u>Monday</u>	9.30 am	Knit and Natter (Lounge)
	10 -2 pm	Pirongia Craft Group (St Saviours)
	5.00 pm	Outreach Meal (Lounge)
<u>Friday</u>	9:30-11 am	Mainly Music (Hall)*
	5.00 -7 pm	Friday Club (Hall)*

1st & 3rd Monday of the Month Cursillo, 2pm, Lounge

1st Thursday of the Month Film Night, 7pm, Lounge.

2nd Tuesday of the Month Women's Fellowship. 1.30pm. Lounge.

2nd & 4th Thursday of the Month Bible Study, 12 noon, Lounge

2nd Saturday of the Month Gardening Group at St John's. 9am.

3rd Tuesday of the Month Death Café, 11am, Lounge.

4th Saturday of the Month Crop Swap. 9am. Lounge.

4th Sunday of the Month Evensong at Te Paariha o Rangiaowhia, 4pm.

5th Sunday of the Month Combined Parish Service, 9.30am

(Check pew sheet closer to date to see if this will go ahead).

5th Sunday of the Month Evensong, Old St John's, 4.30 pm followed by Social Parish Meal at Te Awamutu RSA at 5.30 pm

DAILY MORAL INVENTORY

Liabilities <i>Watch for ---</i>	Assets <i>Strive ---</i>
Self-pity Self-Justification Self-Importance Self-Condemnation Dishonesty Impatience Hate Resentment False Pride Jealousy Envy Laziness Procrastination Insincerity Negative Thinking Vulgar, Immoral, Trashy Thinking Criticising	Self-Forgetfulness Humility Modesty Self-Valuation Honesty Patience LOVE Forgiveness Simplicity Trust Generosity Activity Promptness Straightforwardness Positive Thinking CLEAN Thinking Look for the GOOD
Eliminate the Negative	Accentuate the Positive

Grumpy & Married

An older couple were lying in bed one night. The husband was falling asleep but the wife was in a romantic mood and wanted to talk. She said: “You used to hold my hand when we were courting.” Wearily he reached across, held her hand for a second, and tried to get back to sleep. A few moments later she said: “Then you used to kiss me.” Mildly irritated, he reached across, gave her a peck on the cheek, and settled down to sleep. Thirty seconds later she said: Then you used to bite my neck”

Angrily, he threw back the bedclothes and got out of bed. “Where are you going?” she asked. “To get my teeth!”



especially the Sermon on the Mount, the Church advocates for the poor, marginalized, and oppressed.

Three Tikanga Approach: The Church operates under a unique structure that honours Māori, Pākehā, and Pasefika cultural streams, ensuring that justice efforts are inclusive and culturally grounded.

Educational Resources: They provide tools and resources to help Anglicans engage in justice work in our own communities.

- In our Diocese of Waikato and Taranaki, Anglican Action enacts our commitment to justice through service. Their work includes:
- * Policy Advocacy: Submissions on legislation such as the Conversion Practices Prohibition Bill and support for Māori Wards.
 - * Youth Justice: Critiquing punitive approaches and advocating for restorative, context-aware interventions for rangatahi (youth).
 - * Community Development: Supporting community houses and addressing food insecurity in Kirikiriroa (Hamilton) and surrounding areas.
 - * Public Health and Employment: Advocating for extended sick leave and better protections for frontline workers.

Injustice and violence do not just exist on a large and distant scale though. They are all around us, and I want to encourage all of you to pray for eyes to see. Where do your life, your circles, come close to injustice or violence ? If there are issues you see, but do not know what to do about, bring them to prayer. I assure you that if you pray about the issue, and ask for guidance about how you personally can respond, you will find an answer!

Let me briefly share an example.

I knew that a young Mum with a new baby had moved into a house near us. From glimpses I could tell she was on her own almost all day, and didn't go out much. I was concerned at her isolation and could hear a lot of crying from both mum and baby. I didn't get a response to my knock on

DAILY MORAL INVENTORY

Liabilities <i>Watch for ---</i>	Assets <i>Strive ---</i>
Self-pity Self-Justification Self-Importance Self-Condemnation Dishonesty Impatience Hate Resentment False Pride Jealousy Envy Laziness Procrastination Insincerity Negative Thinking Vulgar, Immoral, Trashy Thinking Criticising	Self-Forgetfulness Humility Modesty Self-Valuation Honesty Patience LOVE Forgiveness Simplicity Trust Generosity Activity Promptness Straightforwardness Positive Thinking CLEAN Thinking Look for the GOOD
Eliminate the Negative	Accentuate the Positive

Grumpy & Married

An older couple were lying in bed one night. The husband was falling asleep but the wife was in a romantic mood and wanted to talk. She said: “You used to hold my hand when we were courting.” Wearily he reached across, held her hand for a second, and tried to get back to sleep. A few moments later she said: “Then you used to kiss me.” Mildly irritated, he reached across, gave her a peck on the cheek, and settled down to sleep. Thirty seconds later she said: Then you used to bite my neck”

Angrily, he threw back the bedclothes and got out of bed. “Where are you going?” she asked. “To get my teeth!”



especially the Sermon on the Mount, the Church advocates for the poor, marginalized, and oppressed.

Three Tikanga Approach: The Church operates under a unique structure that honours Māori, Pākehā, and Pasefika cultural streams, ensuring that justice efforts are inclusive and culturally grounded.

Educational Resources: They provide tools and resources to help Anglicans engage in justice work in our own communities.

- In our Diocese of Waikato and Taranaki, Anglican Action enacts our commitment to justice through service. Their work includes:
- * Policy Advocacy: Submissions on legislation such as the Conversion Practices Prohibition Bill and support for Māori Wards.
 - * Youth Justice: Critiquing punitive approaches and advocating for restorative, context-aware interventions for rangatahi (youth).
 - * Community Development: Supporting community houses and addressing food insecurity in Kirikiriroa (Hamilton) and surrounding areas.
 - * Public Health and Employment: Advocating for extended sick leave and better protections for frontline workers.

Injustice and violence do not just exist on a large and distant scale though. They are all around us, and I want to encourage all of you to pray for eyes to see. Where do your life, your circles, come close to injustice or violence ? If there are issues you see, but do not know what to do about, bring them to prayer. I assure you that if you pray about the issue, and ask for guidance about how you personally can respond, you will find an answer!

Let me briefly share an example.

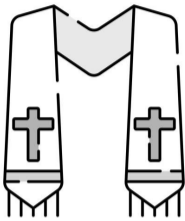
I knew that a young Mum with a new baby had moved into a house near us. From glimpses I could tell she was on her own almost all day, and didn't go out much. I was concerned at her isolation and could hear a lot of crying from both mum and baby. I didn't get a response to my knock on

the door, so I prayed , “How can I help?” At the time, I was leading a monthly LLL meeting for breastfeeding mums at my home, and was involved in running a playgroup at church. I though the answer lay in making a connection between this mum and one of the groups. But God had different ideas. Driving home one day Saturday, I noticed someone waiting for a bus that I knew didn’t run on a Saturday. I felt prompted to stop and offer that person a lift. Turns out, she had been visiting the mum I’d been praying about! We turned around and she took me to meet the new mum. We had broken the ice! Our neighbour knew there were keen baby sitters nearby, and I knew someone to discreetly call on when I was worried for her.

So..where is God calling you in the quest for justice and peace??

Rev'd Julie Quest

Do you remember waiting for Christmas morning when you were a kid? It seemed to take forever to arrive. But when it finally did, Oh the excitement, fun and delight!



We have been waiting with the same kind of anticipation to hear if Sam has been discerned as having a call to the Diaconate. We have known for some time that the team of the bishop’s senior staff were working with Sam to prepare him for this step. He has been sent out of this parish to experience a wider lens of the Anglican church at work in Wai-kato, and has had specific preparation in pastoral skills, Anglicanism and theology.

The time has come! Bishop Philip has announced that Sam will be ordained Deacon on Sunday 15th June at 3pm in the Cooperating Parish of St Francis, Hillcrest. As a parish we celebrate with Sam and want to be sure that as many of us as possible are there to share the moment with him and his family.

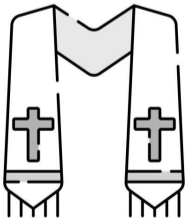
We will be surrounding Sam and Josie with our prayer both in the coming days and the weeks to follow. Please contact the parish office if you need transport.

the door, so I prayed , “How can I help?” At the time, I was leading a monthly LLL meeting for breastfeeding mums at my home, and was involved in running a playgroup at church. I though the answer lay in making a connection between this mum and one of the groups. But God had different ideas. Driving home one day Saturday, I noticed someone waiting for a bus that I knew didn’t run on a Saturday. I felt prompted to stop and offer that person a lift. Turns out, she had been visiting the mum I’d been praying about! We turned around and she took me to meet the new mum. We had broken the ice! Our neighbour knew there were keen baby sitters nearby, and I knew someone to discreetly call on when I was worried for her.

So..where is God calling you in the quest for justice and peace??

Rev'd Julie Quest

Do you remember waiting for Christmas morning when you were a kid? It seemed to take forever to arrive. But when it finally did, Oh the excitement, fun and delight!



We have been waiting with the same kind of anticipation to hear if Sam has been discerned as having a call to the Diaconate. We have known for some time that the team of the bishop’s senior staff were working with Sam to prepare him for this step. He has been sent out of this parish to experience a wider lens of the Anglican church at work in Wai-kato, and has had specific preparation in pastoral skills, Anglicanism and theology.

The time has come! Bishop Philip has announced that Sam will be ordained Deacon on Sunday 15th June at 3pm in the Cooperating Parish of St Francis, Hillcrest. As a parish we celebrate with Sam and want to be sure that as many of us as possible are there to share the moment with him and his family.

We will be surrounding Sam and Josie with our prayer both in the coming days and the weeks to follow. Please contact the parish office if you need transport.

A letter from Nathan

Apr 30, 2025

Dear St. John's Anglican Church,

I hope this letter finds you well. My name is Nathan. I am twenty-five years old.

I visited New Zealand in August and had a wonderful time. It is a beautiful country. Cambridge such a nice area. I also enjoyed Auckland, Hobbiton, the Pukaki, and Aoraki/Mount Cook National Park.

I am writing to let you know that I would like to be a pen pal who lives in or around Cambridge or Te Anau. I enjoy meeting people and writing letters, am interested in connecting with a male Christian around my age. If you have someone in mind, perhaps from St. John's Anglican Church, please feel free to let me know.

My email is enathanguel@gmail.com. My Instagram username is enathanguel. I also use Facebook and LinkedIn.

Sincerely,
Nathan Guel

If you would like to contact Nathan by post his address is:
Nathan Guel
1818 S. 7th St
Apt. 12C
Waco, TX 76706
United States of America

A letter from Nathan

Apr 30, 2025

Dear St. John's Anglican Church,

I hope this letter finds you well. My name is Nathan. I am twenty-five years old.

I visited New Zealand in August and had a wonderful time. It is a beautiful country. Cambridge such a nice area. I also enjoyed Auckland, Hobbiton, the Pukaki, and Aoraki/Mount Cook National Park.

I am writing to let you know that I would like to be a pen pal who lives in or around Cambridge or Te Anau. I enjoy meeting people and writing letters, am interested in connecting with a male Christian around my age. If you have someone in mind, perhaps from St. John's Anglican Church, please feel free to let me know.

My email is enathanguel@gmail.com. My Instagram username is enathanguel. I also use Facebook and LinkedIn.

Sincerely,
Nathan Guel

If you would like to contact Nathan by post his address is:
Nathan Guel
1818 S. 7th St
Apt. 12C
Waco, TX 76706
United States of America

The Gallery

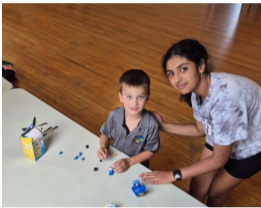


Alan Empson’s commemoration plaque blessing



Baptism of Isla Sun, Vini Pant, Joshi Hermant and Sia Joshi on 23 March

Holiday Programme



172 Reasons

Recently I have been once again absolutely amazed how God can work in mysterious ways. For many years my late husband Brian and I supported a charity in Uganda called “Make My Name Count” which was started by Temuka residents Lindsay and Dalaine Walker who have been Christian friends of ours for many years. This charity supports four projects which include Kakuuto Bakehouse employing eight staff, and in Kabale the Orphanage of Hope and Hope Education Centre, and a small interest free loan division.

The Orphanage of Hope and school support 172 orphans who have absolutely no family and the Uganadan Government has ruled they must be also educated and kept in the orphanage until they are 22 years old. When Brian passed away the school of seven classrooms had just been completed with the bricks purchased by donation of \$5 per brick. Some of you may remember me selling these bricks.

When this project was completed Lindsay announced that the next part of the education centre was to build a training block to teach the orphans knitting, sewing and fabric skills, and wood and metal work skills to prepare them for life after they left the orphanage. It was to be named the Brian Sloan Memorial Training Centre to honour Brian.

Two years ago Lindsay managed to get the charity recognized for NZ citizens to obtain a tax rebate for their contributions even though the charity is overseas. I have continued with my financial support for the orphanage and when I received my receipt three weeks ago it showed donations were about one third of the actual amount. I was not impressed and I sent a Lindsay message straight away and was told it would be “looked into”. I did not hear back straight away and stewed and stewed until I had become very disgruntled and wrote and told Lindsay of my displeasure and that I

The Gallery

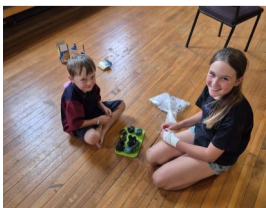


Alan Empson’s commemoration plaque blessing



Baptism of Isla Sun, Vini Pant, Joshi Hermant and Sia Joshi on 23 March

Holiday Programme



172 Reasons

Recently I have been once again absolutely amazed how God can work in mysterious ways. For many years my late husband Brian and I supported a charity in Uganda called “Make My Name Count” which was started by Temuka residents Lindsay and Dalaine Walker who have been Christian friends of ours for many years. This charity supports four projects which include Kakuuto Bakehouse employing eight staff, and in Kabale the Orphanage of Hope and Hope Education Centre, and a small interest free loan division.

The Orphanage of Hope and school support 172 orphans who have absolutely no family and the Uganadan Government has ruled they must be also educated and kept in the orphanage until they are 22 years old. When Brian passed away the school of seven classrooms had just been completed with the bricks purchased by donation of \$5 per brick. Some of you may remember me selling these bricks.

When this project was completed Lindsay announced that the next part of the education centre was to build a training block to teach the orphans knitting, sewing and fabric skills, and wood and metal work skills to prepare them for life after they left the orphanage. It was to be named the Brian Sloan Memorial Training Centre to honour Brian.

Two years ago Lindsay managed to get the charity recognized for NZ citizens to obtain a tax rebate for their contributions even though the charity is overseas. I have continued with my financial support for the orphanage and when I received my receipt three weeks ago it showed donations were about one third of the actual amount. I was not impressed and I sent a Lindsay message straight away and was told it would be “looked into”. I did not hear back straight away and stewed and stewed until I had become very disgruntled and wrote and told Lindsay of my displeasure and that I

would find another charity whose accounting procedures were more accurate, and secondly, whatever happened about the Brian Sloan Memorial Training Centre as this had not come to fruition. A very terse e-mail came back in response – which was to be expected – but it also said an apology e-mail with a corrected receipt had been sent the very next day after my initial enquiry. This e-mail never arrived and must be still in cyberspace.

Now this was a very unchristian attitude for me to take and after a few days of reflection and prayer I sent Lindsay an e-mail asking for forgiveness and stated I had not received the apology message. I quickly received a very forgiving and loving message back containing a copy of the original apology and an explanation of why the Training Centre was postponed because of COVID and lack of funding. There are three significant points here. Lindsay also included he checked all 58 donation receipts and mine was the only mistake, secondly, 100% of all donations reach the orphanage, and thirdly, if I had not reacted we would never have known of the training centres’ demise. This is where we both feel God had a hand in the outcome which is that John realized the urgency to train these orphans before they depart with basic skills to prepare them for life because the first of the 172 are set to leave in about two years time. So, John has promised funds to build the Brian Sloan Memorial Training Centre. Praise God!!



I hear the Spirit whispering that many of you reading this have felt an urging to connect with specific elderly saints, but busyness has crowded out these divine appointments. Don't delay any longer. Someone is waiting for you to notice the treasure they still are. For when we honor these living treasures among us, we bow before the Ancient of Days Himself, who has carried them through every season and now offers their wisdom as a priceless gift to those with ears to hear.

Let us pray: *Father, open our eyes to see the treasures in wrinkled hands that You've placed in our midst. Forgive us for valuing flash over faithfulness and novelty over the tested nobility of those who've walked with You for decades. Teach us to honor these saints, to learn from them while we can, and to support them in their continued ministry of prayer and presence. And for our elderly saints, renew their strength like the eagles, comfort their hearts, and help them finish their race with joy, knowing their reward is great in glory. Amen.*

Supplied by Nick Empson



TE AWAMUTU

WELCOME TO

CROP SWAP

Bringing backyard gardeners together for swapping home grown produce and food items on a regular basis.

Every 4th Saturday

Every month

9am to 10.30ish

St John's Church Lounge

Te Awamutu

No money changes hands

Bring your home grown produce of food and see what you might like to swap it for.

would find another charity whose accounting procedures were more accurate, and secondly, whatever happened about the Brian Sloan Memorial Training Centre as this had not come to fruition. A very terse e-mail came back in response – which was to be expected – but it also said an apology e-mail with a corrected receipt had been sent the very next day after my initial enquiry. This e-mail never arrived and must be still in cyberspace.

Now this was a very unchristian attitude for me to take and after a few days of reflection and prayer I sent Lindsay an e-mail asking for forgiveness and stated I had not received the apology message. I quickly received a very forgiving and loving message back containing a copy of the original apology and an explanation of why the Training Centre was postponed because of COVID and lack of funding. There are three significant points here. Lindsay also included he checked all 58 donation receipts and mine was the only mistake, secondly, 100% of all donations reach the orphanage, and thirdly, if I had not reacted we would never have known of the training centres’ demise. This is where we both feel God had a hand in the outcome which is that John realized the urgency to train these orphans before they depart with basic skills to prepare them for life because the first of the 172 are set to leave in about two years time. So, John has promised funds to build the Brian Sloan Memorial Training Centre. Praise God!!



I hear the Spirit whispering that many of you reading this have felt an urging to connect with specific elderly saints, but busyness has crowded out these divine appointments. Don't delay any longer. Someone is waiting for you to notice the treasure they still are. For when we honor these living treasures among us, we bow before the Ancient of Days Himself, who has carried them through every season and now offers their wisdom as a priceless gift to those with ears to hear.

Let us pray: *Father, open our eyes to see the treasures in wrinkled hands that You've placed in our midst. Forgive us for valuing flash over faithfulness and novelty over the tested nobility of those who've walked with You for decades. Teach us to honor these saints, to learn from them while we can, and to support them in their continued ministry of prayer and presence. And for our elderly saints, renew their strength like the eagles, comfort their hearts, and help them finish their race with joy, knowing their reward is great in glory. Amen.*

Supplied by Nick Empson



TE AWAMUTU

WELCOME TO

CROP SWAP

Bringing backyard gardeners together for swapping home grown produce and food items on a regular basis.

Every 4th Saturday

Every month

9am to 10.30ish

St John's Church Lounge

Te Awamutu

No money changes hands

Bring your home grown produce of food and see what you might like to swap it for.

The inheritance they offer can't be purchased or downloaded; it must be received heart-to-heart, soul-to-soul.

Revealing Facets of God's Faithfulness

Have you ever noticed how our older saints often circle back to the same stories? Their memories may seem worn with retelling, but listen with fresh ears each time. Every repetition reveals new facets of God's faithfulness. Behind their storytelling lives, a deeper yearning to know someone still values what they've lived and learned.

Your attentive presence becomes a crown of honour placed upon their heads, restoring dignity where our youth-obsessed culture has often stripped it away. Scripture promises that divine blessing flows through our lives in extraordinary ways when we honour what God honours.

The Father's heart beats with special tenderness when He sees generations linking arms in an authentic community. He delights when young disciples honor the road-worn pilgrims and when seasoned saints pour oil of blessing upon eager hearts just beginning their journey.

Responding to the Heavenly Invitation

Will you respond to this heavenly invitation? Could you set aside an afternoon this week to sit with someone whose decades with Jesus have crafted a masterpiece of faithful living? As they share, the tears that spring to your eyes may be the holiest water that touches your face—sacred droplets that baptize you into a deeper understanding of enduring love.

Capture these sacred moments while you can. Record their testimonies. Journal their insights. One day, these treasures will become your most precious legacy to pass forward. As your own hair silvers with time, you'll understand with stunning clarity the gift your presence was to them.

Wardens’ Report

Recently we have had the ‘Annual Review Conversations’ with Vicar Julie, Sam, Maggie and Shirley. Whatever their role, all of them are clear that, in serving St John’s, they are serving God. We want to thank them all for the dedication they bring to their work and for taking the time to review their year with us. Without betraying any confidences, we think it is helpful to highlight one or two points in each conversation.

Shirley is especially happy with the new Admin area because it gives her easy access to all her cleaning gear and hot water. Much less carrying! She is finding the new toilet area much easier to clean than the old one.

After 18 months in her role as Parish Administrator, **Maggie** feels familiar with all aspects of her work. She is delighted to have a new work computer which is faster and has more features than the old one. She enjoys the interactions with parishioners and others who come to the office.

Sam is really pleased that he is through the ordination process. He enjoyed working with Andrew Evans at All Saints, Matamata, and learning different ways of doing parish work. At the moment he is finding the CPE course on Pastoral Care is teaching him a lot as he puts it into practice each week.

Julie is relieved that the rebuilding of the Admin area and the re-roofing are both complete with just a couple of minor issues to sign off. The vandalism through November-December was very trying. (The only reason that we didn’t suffer more vandalism was that Julie and Andrew spent many nights sleeping in the church and keeping watch.) Settling into a new office is still a work in progress – some more shelving is needed for all her books!

The higher numbers attending both Christmas and Easter services, 13 baptisms, 3 confirmations and an upcoming ordination are reasons for rejoicing. Perhaps this shows that we are emerging from the period around Covid.

The inheritance they offer can't be purchased or downloaded; it must be received heart-to-heart, soul-to-soul.

Revealing Facets of God's Faithfulness

Have you ever noticed how our older saints often circle back to the same stories? Their memories may seem worn with retelling, but listen with fresh ears each time. Every repetition reveals new facets of God's faithfulness. Behind their storytelling lives, a deeper yearning to know someone still values what they've lived and learned.

Your attentive presence becomes a crown of honour placed upon their heads, restoring dignity where our youth-obsessed culture has often stripped it away. Scripture promises that divine blessing flows through our lives in extraordinary ways when we honour what God honours.

The Father's heart beats with special tenderness when He sees generations linking arms in an authentic community. He delights when young disciples honor the road-worn pilgrims and when seasoned saints pour oil of blessing upon eager hearts just beginning their journey.

Responding to the Heavenly Invitation

Will you respond to this heavenly invitation? Could you set aside an afternoon this week to sit with someone whose decades with Jesus have crafted a masterpiece of faithful living? As they share, the tears that spring to your eyes may be the holiest water that touches your face—sacred droplets that baptize you into a deeper understanding of enduring love.

Capture these sacred moments while you can. Record their testimonies. Journal their insights. One day, these treasures will become your most precious legacy to pass forward. As your own hair silvers with time, you'll understand with stunning clarity the gift your presence was to them.

Wardens’ Report

Recently we have had the ‘Annual Review Conversations’ with Vicar Julie, Sam, Maggie and Shirley. Whatever their role, all of them are clear that, in serving St John’s, they are serving God. We want to thank them all for the dedication they bring to their work and for taking the time to review their year with us. Without betraying any confidences, we think it is helpful to highlight one or two points in each conversation.

Shirley is especially happy with the new Admin area because it gives her easy access to all her cleaning gear and hot water. Much less carrying! She is finding the new toilet area much easier to clean than the old one.

After 18 months in her role as Parish Administrator, **Maggie** feels familiar with all aspects of her work. She is delighted to have a new work computer which is faster and has more features than the old one. She enjoys the interactions with parishioners and others who come to the office.

Sam is really pleased that he is through the ordination process. He enjoyed working with Andrew Evans at All Saints, Matamata, and learning different ways of doing parish work. At the moment he is finding the CPE course on Pastoral Care is teaching him a lot as he puts it into practice each week.

Julie is relieved that the rebuilding of the Admin area and the re-roofing are both complete with just a couple of minor issues to sign off. The vandalism through November-December was very trying. (The only reason that we didn’t suffer more vandalism was that Julie and Andrew spent many nights sleeping in the church and keeping watch.) Settling into a new office is still a work in progress – some more shelving is needed for all her books!

The higher numbers attending both Christmas and Easter services, 13 baptisms, 3 confirmations and an upcoming ordination are reasons for rejoicing. Perhaps this shows that we are emerging from the period around Covid.

We want to give heartfelt thanks to all those who have worked on build-ings over the last few months, for your very high standards of work and for your consideration and respect while working in a church space. It would be nice to continue to support them, so if you need a tradesman, ask Maggie for a contact. We are also grateful for the gift of office furniture which was arranged by one of our Mainly Music families. It has scrubbed up well!

Lastly, it is with great pleasure that we announce a date for your diaries:
Sam’s ordination as Deacon June 15 at 3pm
Venue: St Francis, Hillcrest.

We rejoice with Sam and Josie, Silas and Eden, as they look forward to this next step in their Christian walk.
Blessings to all of you,

Christine Bryant & Coral Loomb

Tikanga Pakeha Conference (TPC)

Last week I spent two days in Wellington at a TPC meeting. TPC is the gathering of the Pakeha members of General Synod in the alternate years when there is no General Synod. Each diocese has a mix of clergy and lay representatives plus their bishop, chancellor and general manager. For this meeting we were divided into groups of five. My group had the new Bishop of Dunedin, Rev. Claire Barrie (Mt Albert), Tony Hill (Chancellor, Wellington) and Byron Behm (youth worker, Christchurch). Four worship times and four sessions for discussion were set down for the two days.

One of the most important discussions was around the state of the Anglican Church in Aotearoa-New Zealand, based on the research and presentation of Professor Peter Lineham and Rev. Peter Bargh. 35 pages of

diminishing of your usefulness in man's eyes is a ripening in God's sight. Your prayers still shake the heavens. Your worship still brings joy to the Father's heart. The fruit of your long obedience continues to multiply in ways you cannot see from earth's vantage point.

You are not benched. You are positioned on the front lines of spiritual battle, for your prayers carry the weight of decades of faith and testing. The enemy trembles more at the whispered prayers of a faithful ninety-year-old saint than at many a loud declaration from those still untested by time.
"With the ancient is wisdom; and in length of days understand-ing." (Job 12:12 KJV)

These are the silver-crowned saints whose journey with Jesus began in a different era—souls who carry wisdom that can't be found in books or Bible college classes.

Recovering the Sacred Bond Between Generations
Have you noticed them? They sit quietly in church pews, rock gently on forgotten porches, and gaze out windows in nursing homes. Many rush past these living libraries, eyes fixed on screens and busy schedules, not realizing what they're missing.

When you pause your hurried life to kneel beside an elderly Believer, Heaven takes notice. These precious ones have traversed valleys so deep many wouldn't have survived and scaled mountains of adversity that seemed impossible to climb. They've emerged with a quiet radiance that only comes from decades of walking hand-in-hand with the sweet Master.

I sense the Lord calling many to recover the sacred bond between generations that once formed the backbone of a godly heritage. When you sit side by side with an aged saint, something supernatural happens. Their weathered voice may quaver, but their words carry the weight of tested truth. Those trembling fingers that struggle to turn Bible pages have lifted countless burdens in prayer. The lines mapping their faces aren't merely signs of aging but sacred geography, marking journeys of surrender and triumph.

We want to give heartfelt thanks to all those who have worked on build-ings over the last few months, for your very high standards of work and for your consideration and respect while working in a church space. It would be nice to continue to support them, so if you need a tradesman, ask Maggie for a contact. We are also grateful for the gift of office furniture which was arranged by one of our Mainly Music families. It has scrubbed up well!

Lastly, it is with great pleasure that we announce a date for your diaries:
Sam’s ordination as Deacon June 15 at 3pm
Venue: St Francis, Hillcrest.

We rejoice with Sam and Josie, Silas and Eden, as they look forward to this next step in their Christian walk.
Blessings to all of you,

Christine Bryant & Coral Loomb

Tikanga Pakeha Conference (TPC)

Last week I spent two days in Wellington at a TPC meeting. TPC is the gathering of the Pakeha members of General Synod in the alternate years when there is no General Synod. Each diocese has a mix of clergy and lay representatives plus their bishop, chancellor and general manager. For this meeting we were divided into groups of five. My group had the new Bishop of Dunedin, Rev. Claire Barrie (Mt Albert), Tony Hill (Chancellor, Wellington) and Byron Behm (youth worker, Christchurch). Four worship times and four sessions for discussion were set down for the two days.

One of the most important discussions was around the state of the Anglican Church in Aotearoa-New Zealand, based on the research and presentation of Professor Peter Lineham and Rev. Peter Bargh. 35 pages of

diminishing of your usefulness in man's eyes is a ripening in God's sight. Your prayers still shake the heavens. Your worship still brings joy to the Father's heart. The fruit of your long obedience continues to multiply in ways you cannot see from earth's vantage point.

You are not benched. You are positioned on the front lines of spiritual battle, for your prayers carry the weight of decades of faith and testing. The enemy trembles more at the whispered prayers of a faithful ninety-year-old saint than at many a loud declaration from those still untested by time.
"With the ancient is wisdom; and in length of days understand-ing." (Job 12:12 KJV)

These are the silver-crowned saints whose journey with Jesus began in a different era—souls who carry wisdom that can't be found in books or Bible college classes.

Recovering the Sacred Bond Between Generations
Have you noticed them? They sit quietly in church pews, rock gently on forgotten porches, and gaze out windows in nursing homes. Many rush past these living libraries, eyes fixed on screens and busy schedules, not realizing what they're missing.

When you pause your hurried life to kneel beside an elderly Believer, Heaven takes notice. These precious ones have traversed valleys so deep many wouldn't have survived and scaled mountains of adversity that seemed impossible to climb. They've emerged with a quiet radiance that only comes from decades of walking hand-in-hand with the sweet Master.

I sense the Lord calling many to recover the sacred bond between generations that once formed the backbone of a godly heritage. When you sit side by side with an aged saint, something supernatural happens. Their weathered voice may quaver, but their words carry the weight of tested truth. Those trembling fingers that struggle to turn Bible pages have lifted countless burdens in prayer. The lines mapping their faces aren't merely signs of aging but sacred geography, marking journeys of surrender and triumph.

across generations and carry a weight of glory that cannot be gained through books or Bible college.

Are You Rushing Past These Treasures?

Many younger Believers rush past these treasures, not recognizing the spiritual giants in their midst. They fail to sit at the feet of those whose walk with God has spanned decades. What wisdom remains untapped, what stories of divine intervention go unheard, and what prayers go unoffered because we haven't valued these precious vessels?

What about the elderly saint living in the nursing home who can barely speak anymore? Her spirit communes with God in ways that theological scholars would envy. Or how about that widower who slowly makes his way to the back pew each Sunday? Angels stand at attention when he prays, for he's learned to partner with Heaven through years of intimate communion.

Look at their hands... wrinkled, spotted with age, and perhaps twisted with arthritis. These are hands that have been lifted in surrender thousands of times—hands that have wiped away the tears of the broken, turned countless Bible pages worn thin with use, and remained steadfast when holding onto faith was all they could do.

Heaven sees. Heaven knows. Heaven celebrates what many on earth overlook. When a twenty-five-year-old evangelist preaches a fiery sermon, people applaud. But when eighty-five-year-old sister Martha whispers "Jesus is faithful" after burying her husband of sixty years, Heaven itself falls silent in reverence at such profound faith.

The Lord is speaking to many about honouring these treasures in your midst. Call them, visit them, sit at their feet, and ask about their journey with Jesus. Record their stories. Glean from their wisdom. Serve them with joy, knowing you're serving Christ Himself.

You Are Not Forgotten

For those elderly saints reading this, beloved, you are not forgotten. Your Father sees your continued faithfulness. What seems like a

across generations and carry a weight of glory that cannot be gained through books or Bible college.

Are You Rushing Past These Treasures?

Many younger Believers rush past these treasures, not recognizing the spiritual giants in their midst. They fail to sit at the feet of those whose walk with God has spanned decades. What wisdom remains untapped, what stories of divine intervention go unheard, and what prayers go unoffered because we haven't valued these precious vessels?

What about the elderly saint living in the nursing home who can barely speak anymore? Her spirit communes with God in ways that theological scholars would envy. Or how about that widower who slowly makes his way to the back pew each Sunday? Angels stand at attention when he prays, for he's learned to partner with Heaven through years of intimate communion.

Look at their hands... wrinkled, spotted with age, and perhaps twisted with arthritis. These are hands that have been lifted in surrender thousands of times—hands that have wiped away the tears of the broken, turned countless Bible pages worn thin with use, and remained steadfast when holding onto faith was all they could do.

Heaven sees. Heaven knows. Heaven celebrates what many on earth overlook. When a twenty-five-year-old evangelist preaches a fiery sermon, people applaud. But when eighty-five-year-old sister Martha whispers "Jesus is faithful" after burying her husband of sixty years, Heaven itself falls silent in reverence at such profound faith.

The Lord is speaking to many about honouring these treasures in your midst. Call them, visit them, sit at their feet, and ask about their journey with Jesus. Record their stories. Glean from their wisdom. Serve them with joy, knowing you're serving Christ Himself.

You Are Not Forgotten

For those elderly saints reading this, beloved, you are not forgotten. Your Father sees your continued faithfulness. What seems like a

graphs showing the ways in which the Anglican church, along with all other churches, has declined do not lie. The most dramatic decade was the 1970s. All of us who are now in our 70s grew up with Sunday School leading to Confirmation. Then, as young adults, products of post-war peace and prosperity, most of our contemporaries turned their back on God and the church. Much of this decline we discussed at the Diocesan Conversations last year, so none of this is news.

Apart from the empty pews, the most tangible evidence is the financial crisis which faces some dioceses and many parishes, not just in NZ, but also in the UK and the US. We all regret the absence of young people and young families in our worship. Byron's comment was that the young people he works with often feel "aged out" of parish life. After going to church with their families, they get to 15 or 16 and want something different. Or, in rural areas, the young people are simply not there – most have gone off to university or polytech in the city. One comment was that we tend to attract our peers, so that makes it difficult for the Anglican Church with an average age of around 65 to attract young people.

However, two points to finish with:

- ◆ We should not be disheartened, but clear-eyed and realistic and intentional about how we serve our communities;
- ◆ There are signs that church attendance is beginning a resurgence – both The Times and The Guardian have reported an increase in the number of 18–24-year-olds attending church in the UK and the US.

We are not called to be a people of despair and ignorance, but a people of hope. We need to pray for all those who have been baptised and confirmed this year that they will continue to grow in faith. We need to continue to pray the prayer for church growth – and invite our families or neighbours to come and worship with us.

Christine Bryant

Synod Rep for Waikato – Taranaki

graphs showing the ways in which the Anglican church, along with all other churches, has declined do not lie. The most dramatic decade was the 1970s. All of us who are now in our 70s grew up with Sunday School leading to Confirmation. Then, as young adults, products of post-war peace and prosperity, most of our contemporaries turned their back on God and the church. Much of this decline we discussed at the Diocesan Conversations last year, so none of this is news.

Apart from the empty pews, the most tangible evidence is the financial crisis which faces some dioceses and many parishes, not just in NZ, but also in the UK and the US. We all regret the absence of young people and young families in our worship. Byron's comment was that the young people he works with often feel "aged out" of parish life. After going to church with their families, they get to 15 or 16 and want something different. Or, in rural areas, the young people are simply not there – most have gone off to university or polytech in the city. One comment was that we tend to attract our peers, so that makes it difficult for the Anglican Church with an average age of around 65 to attract young people.

However, two points to finish with:

- ◆ We should not be disheartened, but clear-eyed and realistic and intentional about how we serve our communities;
- ◆ There are signs that church attendance is beginning a resurgence – both The Times and The Guardian have reported an increase in the number of 18–24-year-olds attending church in the UK and the US.

We are not called to be a people of despair and ignorance, but a people of hope. We need to pray for all those who have been baptised and confirmed this year that they will continue to grow in faith. We need to continue to pray the prayer for church growth – and invite our families or neighbours to come and worship with us.

Christine Bryant

Synod Rep for Waikato – Taranaki

Action or Word: Are We Missing Something?

In a recent conversation, a group of people were discussing the role of the Word of God in pastoral conversation. For many of us, we had grown up and had it drilled into us that in any pastoral conversation, one of the goals should be to *explicitly share the love of God. Better than all else, in every conversation we have, is the use of a Biblical reference or a time of prayer. I can recall times in my life when I have been in a pastoral conversation (caring for me) and Biblical reference or prayer has had a profound impact on me. Or when a discussion of a Biblical text has given me great insight into the way in which God might be at work in my life or in the world around me. These “theological” conversations are an important part of many believer’s lives, they often go on to shape or re-shape the way we view ourselves or our mission in the world. In response, though, the question is often asked, “Do we need to include a Bible verse or a verbal prayer in pastoral conversations?” This question continues to be a point of debate when we think about local food banks set up by Churches, or Operation Christmas Child, where a shoebox is filled with gifts for a family who cannot afford to give their children gifts. Is it truly Christian, Christ focused, or evangelistic if we do not include a tract or a prayer with each delivery?*

I think the 5 Marks of Mission go a long way to helping us understand what it looks like to be truly evangelistic, especially as a Communion of Churches. The Fourth Mark of Mission - To transform unjust structures of society, to challenge violence of every kind and pursue peace and reconciliation - is the Mark of Mission, I think, many struggle with most. It is much easier to proclaim the Kingdom, baptise new believers and teach them, to respond to others in loving service, or even to sustain and renew the life of the earth. The Fourth Mark, though, is inherently political, it challenges the long held beliefs or ways of doing things in society. We are challenged to look at the ways in which our society has structured itself, to look at how those structures came to be, who they privilege and who they marginalise. While the third mark is about caring for those in need, the fourth mark asks, “Why are these people in need and how might we change things so they are not anymore?” Again, we are confronted

Action or Word: Are We Missing Something?

In a recent conversation, a group of people were discussing the role of the Word of God in pastoral conversation. For many of us, we had grown up and had it drilled into us that in any pastoral conversation, one of the goals should be to *explicitly share the love of God. Better than all else, in every conversation we have, is the use of a Biblical reference or a time of prayer. I can recall times in my life when I have been in a pastoral conversation (caring for me) and Biblical reference or prayer has had a profound impact on me. Or when a discussion of a Biblical text has given me great insight into the way in which God might be at work in my life or in the world around me. These “theological” conversations are an important part of many believer’s lives, they often go on to shape or re-shape the way we view ourselves or our mission in the world. In response, though, the question is often asked, “Do we need to include a Bible verse or a verbal prayer in pastoral conversations?” This question continues to be a point of debate when we think about local food banks set up by Churches, or Operation Christmas Child, where a shoebox is filled with gifts for a family who cannot afford to give their children gifts. Is it truly Christian, Christ focused, or evangelistic if we do not include a tract or a prayer with each delivery?*

I think the 5 Marks of Mission go a long way to helping us understand what it looks like to be truly evangelistic, especially as a Communion of Churches. The Fourth Mark of Mission - To transform unjust structures of society, to challenge violence of every kind and pursue peace and reconciliation - is the Mark of Mission, I think, many struggle with most. It is much easier to proclaim the Kingdom, baptise new believers and teach them, to respond to others in loving service, or even to sustain and renew the life of the earth. The Fourth Mark, though, is inherently political, it challenges the long held beliefs or ways of doing things in society. We are challenged to look at the ways in which our society has structured itself, to look at how those structures came to be, who they privilege and who they marginalise. While the third mark is about caring for those in need, the fourth mark asks, “Why are these people in need and how might we change things so they are not anymore?” Again, we are confronted

Treasures in Wrinkled Hands - The Hidden Glory of Elderly Saints

Steve Porter, Rochester, NY May 17, 2025

Heaven's Spotlight Is on the Silver-Haired Saints
"The righteous will flourish like a palm tree, they will grow like a cedar of Lebanon; planted in the house of the LORD, they will flourish in the courts of our God. They will still bear fruit in old age, they will stay fresh and green." (Psalm 92:12–14 NIV)

Precious friends, there's something extraordinary happening in the Kingdom of God that many are missing. While our culture chases after youth and novelty, Heaven's spotlight shines brilliantly on the silver-haired saints, who've walked with Jesus through decades of faithful devotion.

Imagine walking into the small Tuesday morning prayer meeting at First Church. Most hurry past the chapel door, unaware of the spiritual giants gathered within. Eight elderly Believers, their bodies bent with age but spirits soaring in heavenly places, have met every week for thirty years. Their prayers have sustained pastors, rescued prodigals, and upheld missionaries in faraway lands.

Dear sister Eleanor, now ninety-three, can hardly see the prayer list anymore, but she doesn't need to; she's memorized hundreds of names over the decades. With trembling hands that once built houses, brother Thomas now builds spiritual fortresses through intercession. They've outlived spouses, buried children, and weathered wars and depressions, yet their faith burns brighter than ever.

The Lord's heart is incredibly tender toward these weathered warriors of the faith. There is something uniquely precious to Him about those who have remained steadfast through long years of testing, trials, and triumph. They've seen God's faithfulness

Treasures in Wrinkled Hands - The Hidden Glory of Elderly Saints

Steve Porter, Rochester, NY May 17, 2025

Heaven's Spotlight Is on the Silver-Haired Saints
"The righteous will flourish like a palm tree, they will grow like a cedar of Lebanon; planted in the house of the LORD, they will flourish in the courts of our God. They will still bear fruit in old age, they will stay fresh and green." (Psalm 92:12–14 NIV)

Precious friends, there's something extraordinary happening in the Kingdom of God that many are missing. While our culture chases after youth and novelty, Heaven's spotlight shines brilliantly on the silver-haired saints, who've walked with Jesus through decades of faithful devotion.

Imagine walking into the small Tuesday morning prayer meeting at First Church. Most hurry past the chapel door, unaware of the spiritual giants gathered within. Eight elderly Believers, their bodies bent with age but spirits soaring in heavenly places, have met every week for thirty years. Their prayers have sustained pastors, rescued prodigals, and upheld missionaries in faraway lands.

Dear sister Eleanor, now ninety-three, can hardly see the prayer list anymore, but she doesn't need to; she's memorized hundreds of names over the decades. With trembling hands that once built houses, brother Thomas now builds spiritual fortresses through intercession. They've outlived spouses, buried children, and weathered wars and depressions, yet their faith burns brighter than ever.

The Lord's heart is incredibly tender toward these weathered warriors of the faith. There is something uniquely precious to Him about those who have remained steadfast through long years of testing, trials, and triumph. They've seen God's faithfulness

New Offices

Now that the staff are operating within the new office space there are a couple of changes to be noted.

We now have a reception window to which visitors are invited to report. The old office had a reception desk inside the office space, so people are used to entering into the office. Now, however, in accordance with current office practice, we ask that people come in the first instance, to the office window. You will be warmly greeted and directed where to go. Partly this is because the new office area is open, and there may be a meeting or gathering underway. Partly it is to ensure that the administrator, Maggie, can have some privacy and protection in this open office space. Although you, readers, are friendly visitors, not everyone is. At the vestry's recommendation, Maggie will be keeping the office door locked as a safety policy. Please do come in to see us though. We don't want you to stay away, just to establish a new practice.

Sam just looooves the new office.

Thank you everyone for giving us a lovely space to work in.



20

New Offices

Now that the staff are operating within the new office space there are a couple of changes to be noted.

We now have a reception window to which visitors are invited to report. The old office had a reception desk inside the office space, so people are used to entering into the office. Now, however, in accordance with current office practice, we ask that people come in the first instance, to the office window. You will be warmly greeted and directed where to go. Partly this is because the new office area is open, and there may be a meeting or gathering underway. Partly it is to ensure that the administrator, Maggie, can have some privacy and protection in this open office space. Although you, readers, are friendly visitors, not everyone is. At the vestry's recommendation, Maggie will be keeping the office door locked as a safety policy. Please do come in to see us though. We don't want you to stay away, just to establish a new practice.

Sam just looooves the new office.

Thank you everyone for giving us a lovely space to work in.



20

with the question, do I need to include a Bible verse when I proclaim the Kingdom of God? How would I feel if I helped someone without giving a verse of Scripture or a prayer?

Strangely, to help us with this question, it is easiest to turn to the Bible - to the life and ministry of Jesus. Jesus was born in a time of Roman oppression of the Jewish nation, so much oppression that a genocide of Jewish children took place when Jesus was around 2 years old. Due to a prior vision Jesus' parents fled Israel as refugees to live in Egypt until it was safe for them to return (Matt. 2). Jesus came from a place called Galilee, which even among his own people was regarded as worthless - "can anything good come from Nazareth?" (John 1:46). The structures put in place by the Romans and even within the cultural and socio-economic context of the Jewish people themselves marked Jesus as *marginalised*. *Throughout the Gospels we see Jesus stand up, both politically and religiously, against the unjust structures in society in order to transform them.*

In Luke's portrayal of the woman who had been bleeding for 12 years (Lk. 8:43) Jesus not only heals the woman, but more so seeks her out in front of the crowd, gives her a voice among those who would silence her and then through her public healing draws her back into the community. Jesus stands against the unjust structures of sexism. When Jesus enters the temple in Jerusalem and sees the money lenders and other vendors taking up space, denying people room to sacrifice to God he challenges the violence they have enacted against worshipers by kicking them out of the temple (Matt. 21:12). Jesus challenges and transforms the unjust structures setup in their worship services. Finally, Jesus brought the Kingdom of God in himself. When the Son became human in the person of Jesus humanity was enabled to see what it means to live as we are intended to live - empowered by the Holy Spirit to flourish in relationship with God, myself, other people and the rest of creation. The Kingdom of God welcomes and accepts all people, endeavouring for all to find dignity and worth in all areas of life.

11

with the question, do I need to include a Bible verse when I proclaim the Kingdom of God? How would I feel if I helped someone without giving a verse of Scripture or a prayer?

Strangely, to help us with this question, it is easiest to turn to the Bible - to the life and ministry of Jesus. Jesus was born in a time of Roman oppression of the Jewish nation, so much oppression that a genocide of Jewish children took place when Jesus was around 2 years old. Due to a prior vision Jesus' parents fled Israel as refugees to live in Egypt until it was safe for them to return (Matt. 2). Jesus came from a place called Galilee, which even among his own people was regarded as worthless - "can anything good come from Nazareth?" (John 1:46). The structures put in place by the Romans and even within the cultural and socio-economic context of the Jewish people themselves marked Jesus as *marginalised*. *Throughout the Gospels we see Jesus stand up, both politically and religiously, against the unjust structures in society in order to transform them.*

In Luke's portrayal of the woman who had been bleeding for 12 years (Lk. 8:43) Jesus not only heals the woman, but more so seeks her out in front of the crowd, gives her a voice among those who would silence her and then through her public healing draws her back into the community. Jesus stands against the unjust structures of sexism. When Jesus enters the temple in Jerusalem and sees the money lenders and other vendors taking up space, denying people room to sacrifice to God he challenges the violence they have enacted against worshipers by kicking them out of the temple (Matt. 21:12). Jesus challenges and transforms the unjust structures setup in their worship services. Finally, Jesus brought the Kingdom of God in himself. When the Son became human in the person of Jesus humanity was enabled to see what it means to live as we are intended to live - empowered by the Holy Spirit to flourish in relationship with God, myself, other people and the rest of creation. The Kingdom of God welcomes and accepts all people, endeavouring for all to find dignity and worth in all areas of life.

11

This dignity and worth is found, most fully, in the person of Jesus and given to us in the presence of the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit, though, is at work in all places and all people in the world, drawing us all to unity in Jesus. We as believers are called to participate in the ministry of reconciliation (2 Cor. 5:18). But if the Spirit is already at work in all people, then it is not our responsibility to bring the Spirit into a situation, it is not our responsibility to bring Jesus into a situation. Rather, it is our responsibility, as the Church, to look for what the Spirit is already doing and join in. This means firstly building relationships with a variety of people in our society. We cannot make assumptions about who is marginalised and who is not, instead, as we build relationships we find out what structures in society are unjust or violent towards people. We can then work with those people using the gifts we have to transform, pursue peace and find reconciliation.

So, we are brought back to our opening question, “Do we *need to include a Bible verse or a prayer out loud in our pastoral conversations or ministry?*” I believe we are called to recognise, to look for the Spirit at work. This means we need to be people **of** prayer, who are growing in our knowledge of the Bible, but this does not mean we need to pray **with** everyone we care for. What we are **all** called to is the ministry of reconciliation - standing with those who are oppressed and marginalised, and against those structures in society that oppress and marginalise. In this way we live out the Gospel call to proclaim the Good News of Jesus, and to make it Good News for all people.

Sam Pullenger



This dignity and worth is found, most fully, in the person of Jesus and given to us in the presence of the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit, though, is at work in all places and all people in the world, drawing us all to unity in Jesus. We as believers are called to participate in the ministry of reconciliation (2 Cor. 5:18). But if the Spirit is already at work in all people, then it is not our responsibility to bring the Spirit into a situation, it is not our responsibility to bring Jesus into a situation. Rather, it is our responsibility, as the Church, to look for what the Spirit is already doing and join in. This means firstly building relationships with a variety of people in our society. We cannot make assumptions about who is marginalised and who is not, instead, as we build relationships we find out what structures in society are unjust or violent towards people. We can then work with those people using the gifts we have to transform, pursue peace and find reconciliation.

So, we are brought back to our opening question, “Do we *need to include a Bible verse or a prayer out loud in our pastoral conversations or ministry?*” I believe we are called to recognise, to look for the Spirit at work. This means we need to be people **of** prayer, who are growing in our knowledge of the Bible, but this does not mean we need to pray **with** everyone we care for. What we are **all** called to is the ministry of reconciliation - standing with those who are oppressed and marginalised, and against those structures in society that oppress and marginalise. In this way we live out the Gospel call to proclaim the Good News of Jesus, and to make it Good News for all people.

Sam Pullenger



What it means to be a Deacon

The office of Deacon is one that has existed since the formation of the Church. The Deacon is one who has been recognised by the community of faith/Church as having a specific mission or vocation to represent Christ and the community of faith in wider society. Deacons, therefore, sit at the threshold of the Church doors as it were ushering those who are on the outside in, and guiding those who are inside out. To be a representative of Christ is something all Christians are called to; Paul calls all believers “ambassadors for Christ, since God is making his appeal through us” to be reconciled to God. Every Jesus follower is given the gift and call to represent Jesus throughout their daily life. This gift and call is then empowered by the work of the Holy Spirit in each one of us, enabling us to fulfill this work. The call of a Deacon is not just individual though, it is a recognition by the community of faith that that person is called to be a representative of Christ in the wider community, called to represent the community of faith. More than this, the one called to the office of Deacon recognizes their own call; firstly to a life of deep faith and practice; secondly to propel the worshipping community to join in that life; and thirdly to practice that life in the wider community, drawing others to faith in Jesus. This, for me, is at the heart of being made Deacon.



Sam Pullenger

What it means to be a Deacon

The office of Deacon is one that has existed since the formation of the Church. The Deacon is one who has been recognised by the community of faith/Church as having a specific mission or vocation to represent Christ and the community of faith in wider society. Deacons, therefore, sit at the threshold of the Church doors as it were ushering those who are on the outside in, and guiding those who are inside out. To be a representative of Christ is something all Christians are called to; Paul calls all believers “ambassadors for Christ, since God is making his appeal through us” to be reconciled to God. Every Jesus follower is given the gift and call to represent Jesus throughout their daily life. This gift and call is then empowered by the work of the Holy Spirit in each one of us, enabling us to fulfill this work. The call of a Deacon is not just individual though, it is a recognition by the community of faith that that person is called to be a representative of Christ in the wider community, called to represent the community of faith. More than this, the one called to the office of Deacon recognizes their own call; firstly to a life of deep faith and practice; secondly to propel the worshipping community to join in that life; and thirdly to practice that life in the wider community, drawing others to faith in Jesus. This, for me, is at the heart of being made Deacon.



Sam Pullenger

churches provide to NZ, and we don't hear too many stories about the lives that are changed as a result.

Our research is hoping to change that, and I can share that we recently found religious charities – the vast majority of which are churches and/or Christian organisations – contribute an enormous \$6.1 billion to New Zealand in 2018 alone.

That's worth more to GDP than entire industries such as commercial fishing and forestry combined – and this excludes numerous indirect benefits and flow-on effects across health and wellbeing, life-expectancy, employment, finances, education, social cohesion and pro-social behaviours. Here are just a few examples of how churches provide practical help, which we are in the process of quantifying:

Food security and accommodation: Many churches feed the homeless, hungry and isolated and help provide emergency accommodation.

Professional services: Many churches offer free legal advice, financial literacy training, workforce preparation, and addiction health and wellbeing services.

Pastoral Care: Church volunteers provide companionship, transportation, and practical support to the isolated, poor and elderly, for example taking them shopping, to medical appointments or covering funeral expenses.

An Opportunity to Acknowledge and Empower Churches

Despite this immense social impact, churches continue to face public scrutiny and now potential tax reform threats. I urge policymakers to carefully consider that any changes don't hinder the good work of churches and make life more difficult for the vulnerable in our communities. It's worth noting that churches already pay taxes such as PAYE on salaries, and in some cases GST.

You know it's dire when atheists are sticking up for churches. But if it were up to me, I would establish a taskforce examining how churches can be better empowered to help people in need. I'm confident it would find churches should pay even *less* tax and receive *more* government assistance.

churches provide to NZ, and we don't hear too many stories about the lives that are changed as a result.

Our research is hoping to change that, and I can share that we recently found religious charities – the vast majority of which are churches and/or Christian organisations – contribute an enormous \$6.1 billion to New Zealand in 2018 alone.

That's worth more to GDP than entire industries such as commercial fishing and forestry combined – and this excludes numerous indirect benefits and flow-on effects across health and wellbeing, life-expectancy, employment, finances, education, social cohesion and pro-social behaviours. Here are just a few examples of how churches provide practical help, which we are in the process of quantifying:

Food security and accommodation: Many churches feed the homeless, hungry and isolated and help provide emergency accommodation.

Professional services: Many churches offer free legal advice, financial literacy training, workforce preparation, and addiction health and wellbeing services.

Pastoral Care: Church volunteers provide companionship, transportation, and practical support to the isolated, poor and elderly, for example taking them shopping, to medical appointments or covering funeral expenses.

An Opportunity to Acknowledge and Empower Churches

Despite this immense social impact, churches continue to face public scrutiny and now potential tax reform threats. I urge policymakers to carefully consider that any changes don't hinder the good work of churches and make life more difficult for the vulnerable in our communities. It's worth noting that churches already pay taxes such as PAYE on salaries, and in some cases GST.

You know it's dire when atheists are sticking up for churches. But if it were up to me, I would establish a taskforce examining how churches can be better empowered to help people in need. I'm confident it would find churches should pay even *less* tax and receive *more* government assistance.

Tour-bus Christians

By Lee Strobel



'Tour-bus Christians' drive comfortably through life as they gaze out of the window at other who are elbow-deep in the daily adventure of service God and working among spiritually needy people.

Tour-bus Christians are insulated from the re-world activity and excitement of God's work. They may avoid some of the pain that's involved, and they may protect themselves from the difficulties and struggles, but there's no real adventure on a tour bus. They miss out of the excitement of living at the edge of expectation. They don't experience the tremendous counter-cultural truth that the more a Christian pours himself serving others in God's name, the more God will fill him to overflowing. The adventure comes when you tell the tour bus to stop, and you jump off and say:

'Lord, I want to get into the fray. I want to play a role in the biggest adventure story of all time. Use me to make a difference. Use me to impact a young person for You. Use me to solve someone's problem. Use me to soothe someone's pain. Use me to answer someone's prayer. Use me to feed someone who's hungry. Use me to rescue a child. Use me to bring someone to You. Use me to ease someone's loneliness. Use me to raise a godly family.'

'Use me to deepen someone's faith. Use me to cheer someone on. Use me to help a broken person understand that he's precious in Your sight. Use me to touch lives in your name.

'I don't want to just observe cathedrals through my bus window; I want to roll up my sleeves and build one! Lord, use me to build a living cathedral dedicated to Your glory.'

Johanna Halder

Tour-bus Christians

By Lee Strobel



'Tour-bus Christians' drive comfortably through life as they gaze out of the window at other who are elbow-deep in the daily adventure of service God and working among spiritually needy people.

Tour-bus Christians are insulated from the re-world activity and excitement of God's work. They may avoid some of the pain that's involved, and they may protect themselves from the difficulties and struggles, but there's no real adventure on a tour bus. They miss out of the excitement of living at the edge of expectation. They don't experience the tremendous counter-cultural truth that the more a Christian pours himself serving others in God's name, the more God will fill him to overflowing. The adventure comes when you tell the tour bus to stop, and you jump off and say:

'Lord, I want to get into the fray. I want to play a role in the biggest adventure story of all time. Use me to make a difference. Use me to impact a young person for You. Use me to solve someone's problem. Use me to soothe someone's pain. Use me to answer someone's prayer. Use me to feed someone who's hungry. Use me to rescue a child. Use me to bring someone to You. Use me to ease someone's loneliness. Use me to raise a godly family.'

'Use me to deepen someone's faith. Use me to cheer someone on. Use me to help a broken person understand that he's precious in Your sight. Use me to touch lives in your name.

'I don't want to just observe cathedrals through my bus window; I want to roll up my sleeves and build one! Lord, use me to build a living cathedral dedicated to Your glory.'

Johanna Halder

The Mother of us All.

May 11th was the special day this year when we remembered and thanked those of our mothers still with us and honoured the memories of those who have left us. Mothers can be looked upon as our first best friends – but maybe not if she wielded a sturdy wooden spoon in disciplining us. “This hurts me more than it will hurt you” said as she delivered those well aimed blows!

That day may also remind us of Our Lady Mary, the young mother of our Lord Jesus. The responsibility of raising a precocious youngster in a small village of the Galilee with her carpenter husband Joseph was no doubt both bewildering and in awe.

Mary means and represents many things to those of the various Christian traditions. Catholics venerate her as highly as do those of the Orthodox Communion. She is featured as statues in Catholic churches and as ikons which decorate the walls of their Orthodox counterparts. Mary is seen by the faithful as being “the Mother of our salvation”. Orthodox Christians see her as “theotokos” or “God-bearer”.

But she, perhaps to the surprise of many, transcends the divide of religion and faith. In the 19th Surah [or chapter] of the Qur’an, praises are sung of her. While Mary is celebrated in almost every verse [some 98] of that chapter, her background may not always jell with what little we know of and about her. She is reverently referred to by the Muslims as being “the Mother of us all”. She even outranks the wife of their prophet Muhammed. Mary is mentioned more frequently in the Qur’an than in the Christian [New] Testament to the amazement of many scholars and students.

Luke, the Gospel writer, has her exclaiming and proclaiming her Magnificat in his opening chapter. Echoing the sentiments of Hannah and her exultation in 1st Samuel, Mary lays out the agenda of God, and how blessed she is to be the bearer of His servant Son – His architect in the divine plan.

Mary, like many mothers, entertained the shared hope that her son would do well and achieve his potential. But she also felt the hurt and pain

The Mother of us All.

May 11th was the special day this year when we remembered and thanked those of our mothers still with us and honoured the memories of those who have left us. Mothers can be looked upon as our first best friends – but maybe not if she wielded a sturdy wooden spoon in disciplining us. “This hurts me more than it will hurt you” said as she delivered those well aimed blows!

That day may also remind us of Our Lady Mary, the young mother of our Lord Jesus. The responsibility of raising a precocious youngster in a small village of the Galilee with her carpenter husband Joseph was no doubt both bewildering and in awe.

Mary means and represents many things to those of the various Christian traditions. Catholics venerate her as highly as do those of the Orthodox Communion. She is featured as statues in Catholic churches and as ikons which decorate the walls of their Orthodox counterparts. Mary is seen by the faithful as being “the Mother of our salvation”. Orthodox Christians see her as “theotokos” or “God-bearer”.

But she, perhaps to the surprise of many, transcends the divide of religion and faith. In the 19th Surah [or chapter] of the Qur’an, praises are sung of her. While Mary is celebrated in almost every verse [some 98] of that chapter, her background may not always jell with what little we know of and about her. She is reverently referred to by the Muslims as being “the Mother of us all”. She even outranks the wife of their prophet Muhammed. Mary is mentioned more frequently in the Qur’an than in the Christian [New] Testament to the amazement of many scholars and students.

Luke, the Gospel writer, has her exclaiming and proclaiming her Magnificat in his opening chapter. Echoing the sentiments of Hannah and her exultation in 1st Samuel, Mary lays out the agenda of God, and how blessed she is to be the bearer of His servant Son – His architect in the divine plan.

Mary, like many mothers, entertained the shared hope that her son would do well and achieve his potential. But she also felt the hurt and pain

Why an atheist academic changed her mind on churches’ tax status.

Dr Juliet Chevalier-Watts, Associate Professor, Te Piringa – Faculty of Law, University of Waikato (1st published in the Waikato Times 22/05/25. (Julie shares this, acknowledging all our volunteers.)

OPINION: In the last month hundreds of churches gathered in nine cities across New Zealand to pray for our communities. This was eclipsed by Destiny Church’s actions at LGBT events, triggering widespread scrutiny and raising ongoing questions around whether church should be exempt from pay income tax.

As an atheist, I thought the answer was probably no, and undertook research along side Professor Frank Scrimgeour of Waikato University’s School of Accounting, Finance and Economics, with this hypothesis in mind.

Somewhat awkwardly, after more than a decade of research into religion and charity law, including my current research into the economic impact and value of religious charities in New Zealand, I have reached the opposite conclusion: Without churches, New Zealand would plunge into irreversible poverty and chaos overnight.

The Hidden Value of Churches

The reason charities, including more than 3000 churches in NZ, don’t pay income tax is because the public benefit they provide reduces the burden on the government.

Simply put, without charities, our taxes go up and disproportionately. This is especially the case with the churches, because churches help people in far greater ways than the Government could for a lot less money. They’re driven by more than 65,000 passionate volunteers who are deeply connected to their communities – the average church has six active volunteers for everyone one staff member, a far more generous ration than the charity sector on average of two volunteer hours for every three hours of paid staff time.

Unfortunately, because churches tend to go quietly about helping people in need, avoiding publicity or attention, there is little research into the value

Why an atheist academic changed her mind on churches’ tax status.

Dr Juliet Chevalier-Watts, Associate Professor, Te Piringa – Faculty of Law, University of Waikato (1st published in the Waikato Times 22/05/25. (Julie shares this, acknowledging all our volunteers.)

OPINION: In the last month hundreds of churches gathered in nine cities across New Zealand to pray for our communities. This was eclipsed by Destiny Church’s actions at LGBT events, triggering widespread scrutiny and raising ongoing questions around whether church should be exempt from pay income tax.

As an atheist, I thought the answer was probably no, and undertook research along side Professor Frank Scrimgeour of Waikato University’s School of Accounting, Finance and Economics, with this hypothesis in mind.

Somewhat awkwardly, after more than a decade of research into religion and charity law, including my current research into the economic impact and value of religious charities in New Zealand, I have reached the opposite conclusion: Without churches, New Zealand would plunge into irreversible poverty and chaos overnight.

The Hidden Value of Churches

The reason charities, including more than 3000 churches in NZ, don’t pay income tax is because the public benefit they provide reduces the burden on the government.

Simply put, without charities, our taxes go up and disproportionately. This is especially the case with the churches, because churches help people in far greater ways than the Government could for a lot less money. They’re driven by more than 65,000 passionate volunteers who are deeply connected to their communities – the average church has six active volunteers for everyone one staff member, a far more generous ration than the charity sector on average of two volunteer hours for every three hours of paid staff time.

Unfortunately, because churches tend to go quietly about helping people in need, avoiding publicity or attention, there is little research into the value

Still in Old St John's, Alan Empson, lifelong member of Old Saint John's congregation, tireless chairman of the Board of Trustees, and dogsbody around the parish, was also acknowledged on the anniversary of his passing, with a brass memorial plaque mounted on the wall behind the choir stalls which was dedicated by Bishop Philip. Christopher Empson was present to represent the family and to provide a vase of flowers that features in some of the images.

After joining the early congregation in Robert Harris, Bishop Philip had the pleasure of baptising Eden Pullenger during the service in St John's. He pointed out that he rarely conducts baptisms so may be a little rusty, but he also shared that he recently joined the ranks of grandfathers and was obviously still very adept with babies.



Confirmation of Tihau, Tiaki and Luke



Baptism of Eden Kate

There are more photos in the Gallery on page 25

Still in Old St John's, Alan Empson, lifelong member of Old Saint John's congregation, tireless chairman of the Board of Trustees, and dogsbody around the parish, was also acknowledged on the anniversary of his passing, with a brass memorial plaque mounted on the wall behind the choir stalls which was dedicated by Bishop Philip. Christopher Empson was present to represent the family and to provide a vase of flowers that features in some of the images.

After joining the early congregation in Robert Harris, Bishop Philip had the pleasure of baptising Eden Pullenger during the service in St John's. He pointed out that he rarely conducts baptisms so may be a little rusty, but he also shared that he recently joined the ranks of grandfathers and was obviously still very adept with babies.



Confirmation of Tihau, Tiaki and Luke



Baptism of Eden Kate

There are more photos in the Gallery on page 25

and helplessness in watching her son die a criminal's death in Jerusalem's rubbish dump – her first-born treated like unwanted trash. To lose a child before her own demise was heart breaking, soul destroying.

Jesus, as he hung on the cross and his life slipping away in agony, remembered and honoured his mother as she stood nearby weeping. He entrusted the care of her to his beloved and most trusted disciple and friend. In his dying moments he remembered the Commandments which were handed down to Moses – who incidentally wrote about him – in Exodus, "You shall honour your father and your mother...."

As we leave the celebration of the Easter season and enter into that long period of Pentecost Sundays, let us also remember and honour Mary and our own mothers, just as Pope Leo XIV will do in his new vocation. Mary is the Mother of our salvation, of us all, just as our mothers have given us the gift of life, her nurturing and her unconditional love. Sounds like gifts from heaven.

Something for us all to reflect upon as we walk our respective faith journeys. Blessings to us all in what we do, and believe.

Norris Hall tssf

Bishop Philip's Visit to St John's 18 May 2025

The Confirmation and dedication service held in Old St John's on May 18 was a special service for many reasons. Bishop Philip was present to confirm three people, two of whom were not able to be confirmed in their own Paariha or Tikanga for administrative reasons.

Bishop Philip was willing to lead two services in our Parish so that Tihau and Tiaki could be confirmed in Old St John's which was, like St Paul's, built and worshipped in by Tiaki's tupuna. Being in Old Saint John's had the added blessing of the presence of the portrait of Irihapeti Te Paea Pōtatau, the Maori Princess who prevented the destruction of the building during the Land Wars.

and helplessness in watching her son die a criminal's death in Jerusalem's rubbish dump – her first-born treated like unwanted trash. To lose a child before her own demise was heart breaking, soul destroying.

Jesus, as he hung on the cross and his life slipping away in agony, remembered and honoured his mother as she stood nearby weeping. He entrusted the care of her to his beloved and most trusted disciple and friend. In his dying moments he remembered the Commandments which were handed down to Moses – who incidentally wrote about him – in Exodus, "You shall honour your father and your mother...."

As we leave the celebration of the Easter season and enter into that long period of Pentecost Sundays, let us also remember and honour Mary and our own mothers, just as Pope Leo XIV will do in his new vocation. Mary is the Mother of our salvation, of us all, just as our mothers have given us the gift of life, her nurturing and her unconditional love. Sounds like gifts from heaven.

Something for us all to reflect upon as we walk our respective faith journeys. Blessings to us all in what we do, and believe.

Norris Hall tssf

Bishop Philip's Visit to St John's 18 May 2025

The Confirmation and dedication service held in Old St John's on May 18 was a special service for many reasons. Bishop Philip was present to confirm three people, two of whom were not able to be confirmed in their own Paariha or Tikanga for administrative reasons.

Bishop Philip was willing to lead two services in our Parish so that Tihau and Tiaki could be confirmed in Old St John's which was, like St Paul's, built and worshipped in by Tiaki's tupuna. Being in Old Saint John's had the added blessing of the presence of the portrait of Irihapeti Te Paea Pōtatau, the Maori Princess who prevented the destruction of the building during the Land Wars.