

The Torch December 2021



Howick Presbyterian Church

The Torch



Summer Edition 2021

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Letter from Matt

Well, what a year it's been!

In January I don't think many of us anticipated that we would go into another Lockdown of this scale. When it began, we hoped it would be a sprint. It turned out to be a Marathon! We now find ourselves coming out the other end, a bit weary, but ready to keep adapting, and finding a way forward.

Just like last year, however, I'm very proud of the way we stayed connected as best we could in what was a frustrating and challenging time. There were some wonderful moments of out-reach and grace, particularly for some of the vulnerable people in our community.

Our Sunday worship during last year's Lockdown was built around a Youtube home service I made each week. This time around we wanted to try having live Zoom based gatherings, so that we could see, hear, and interact with each other. I was so thrilled at the level of participation by those who could use Zoom to gather on Sunday mornings. On average we had around 45 households join in each week, and with multiple people in most households this meant we would have around 100 people each week – the same as our usual Sunday average at St Andrews. So thank you so much for being committed to gathering during this time.

After a few weeks of this lockdown, we also decided to offer again the Youtube service as an option for those not on Zoom. Each week we had between 40 and 50 views, so I was thrilled it was helpful for those people, and I'm glad we got it going again.

As we leave lockdown and go into this new Traffic Light framework, we can now use St Andrews again for our Sunday gatherings. It was important for our church to continue providing Sunday worship gatherings for everyone, so we have added an 11:15am Family Service that does not require a Vaccine pass. We will continue with our 9:30am Service, with Vaccine Pass, however it will also be live streamed so that people can watch from home if they want to.



Church Camp August 2021



I want to honour you all as you've navigated this time. I know it's been tough, and we still have challenges ahead. We will keep learning, recovering, adapting and growing, and we will do it together. I want to thank our Church Council and Session for the leadership and care they have provided over this time, in particular Cherie Moran, Elizabeth Tremlett and of course Jane who has kept us connected. I also want to thank those who often go unseen; caring for people, looking after the property, praying for our community. We have a wonderful faith family here at HPC, and an exciting future ahead.

May you have a meaningful and peaceful Advent and Christmas season!

May the Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord make his face to shine upon you and gracious unto you. The Lord lift up his countenance upon you, and give you peace.

Matt Chapman

From the Session Clerk

As I settle to write this I realise that I have a lot of threads running through my brain right now. I am sure in years to come I will find myself pondering what a strange time this was in the life of our church, not to mention what a strange time it has been in our individual lives. Each day there seems to be something new to consider about how we go forward in our life together as a Church Community. There have been decisions to make and sometimes those same decisions have had to be reconsidered in light of some new piece of information arriving in our email box the very next day. There have been directives from PCANZ and conversations with the Northern Presbytery. There have been Session and Parish Council meetings – still on Zoom. I find myself hearing in my head that children's song:

I want to ZOOM, ZOOM, ZOOM,
Around the ROOM, ROOM, ROOM
I want to ZOOM, around the ROOM
And praise the Lord!
When the gates are open wide
I will sit by Jesus' side
I want to CLAP, I want to SNAP
I want to ZOOM, around the ROOM
And praise the Lord.

Zooming now means something totally different I have to say. In today's world Zooming means attending endless meetings, teaching children online, communicating with families for birthdays and celebrations. It has become how we worship and a whole lot more! I hear people saying "I'm zoomed out" and I understand. Matt has put together an excellent communication on where we are currently at in our first steps to opening up.

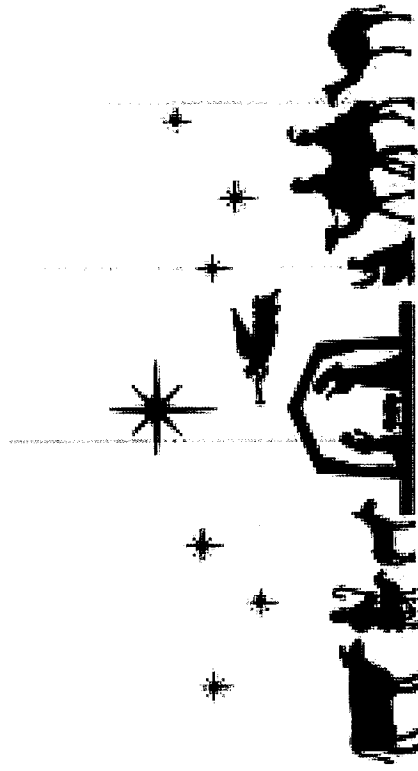
One of things that I have asked that we work toward in this next phase is to improve our communication to those of you who are not connected to the technology of internet and emails. We are going to increase our traditional post outs and I apologise that we could and should have done this sooner.

The other matter that has been floating around my brain space is preparing for our Congregational Meeting to Call the Rev Matt Chapman to be our permanent minister. This is an exciting window in our journey together and those of you who are members and associate members will already have completed your part in that process by the time you get this Torch and you will have received all the information about that in the post.

Please as we move forward remember to be kind to those around you, be kind to the strangers you meet on the street, try to smile from behind the mask, and each day remember to find that little gem that has crossed your path and made you smile and then offer it to God with gratitude.

Blessings

Cherie Moran



Kiara's art work
to remind us of the messages Matt
presented on Zoom.

The children were invited to draw what the children's talks meant to them while the adults listened to Matt's sermons. Using the same themes.



Finance Report from Parish Council

Financial summary for the 4 months ended 31 October 2021.

	Actual YTD	Budget YTD
<u>Income</u>		
Offerings	48,899	52,999
Property income	27,015	29,536
Opportunity shop COVID Resurgence Support	6,700 4,696	9,091 -
Other income	26,167	26,233
Total income	113,477	117,859

<u>Expenditure</u>		
Remuneration	47,503	50,681
Property expenses	39,014	47,156
Levies (PCANZ, Presbytery)	6,561	6,575
Other expenses	35,740	43,274
Total expenditure	128,818	147,686
Surplus (deficit)	(15,341)	(29,827)

Comments:

Offering income continues to be close to budget. Thank you everyone. We continue to have parishioners moving to automatic payment for their regular giving. Thank you.
Property income includes rental from the church house (Vincent St), St Andrews Kindergarten Trust and users of the St Andrew's Church Centre facilities. There has been no income from users of the St Andrew's Church Centre since the beginning of lockdown in mid-August.

The opportunity shop has not been operating since mid-August due to Covid lockdown.
Covid resurgence support payments were received for 2 weeks in August and September.

Remuneration: Staff have continued to be paid their normal working hours while they have been working from home during lockdown.

Property expenses are below budget as a result of reduced regular costs (cleaning, electricity etc) as well as significant maintenance spending being deferred as a result of Covid lockdown.

If you have any questions about HPC finances/offerings, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Elizabeth Tremlett



CHRISTMAS -

A Personal Promise

Christmas is more than an event. It is a promise that has been offered to all mankind - a personal promise that is applicable 365 days a year. And when we understand its significance, Christmas takes on a whole new meaning.

There are two names that help us recognise the true importance of the Lord's birth. The first is **JESUS** which means "God is Salvation". In giving that name the angel was indicating the work that Christ was coming to do.

The second name - mentioned only three times in the Bible - is **IMMANUEL**, which means "God with us".

In the name of Jesus we find forgiveness for our sins, and Immanuel delivered the wonderful promise that God will be with us forever.

Keeping busy during Lockdown

My lock-down activity

Many people have made some comment about how their garden is in perfect condition, the cupboards re-organised and the house in perfect order over this lock-down period. Mine is a different house - the vacuuming and dusting still waiting to be attended to.

Early in September I got the idea of making a Book of Memories for Lomond, hoping to stimulate him into some pleasant thoughts. Lom had been diagnosed with dementia and finds it difficult to deal with everyday living. However, if anyone wants to ask him a question about the Presbyterian Book of Order he can probably give a full and accurate answer.

My efforts to prepare this Memories book on the computer became a mammoth task and I spent several weeks researching photographs to use and being sure I was accurate in whatever comments I was making. My idea was to deal with several aspects of his life such as , Ancestry, Schooling, University, Sport, Career, Military Training, Marriage and many others. I have known Lom since I was 15 years old so felt I could do a reasonable job on the things with which he had been involved. It was a time consuming job finding photographs that suited each subject, scanning them or finding them in the computer and then putting them together with a bit of information. I tried to write it as if I were Lom remembering things. Actually there weren't enough pages in the project I had chosen and I tried to talk the company into moving the information to another book but no go. After taking a deep breath I started again for a revised edition. That wasn't much fun as some of the photos had disappeared out of the computer programme but I got there with the addition of a few more subjects.

What we need now is friends visiting him and being able to discuss the events he and his friends and family shared in days gone by. Hopefully that will happen before too much longer.

It is said that every event has a 'silver lining' and were it not for the lockdown I don't think I would have completed my project as it was my main activity on most days.

Now I am just left with finding out which album or box the photos came from and finally doing some vacuuming, ironing and dusting.

As with everyone I am ready for a break from staying at home; it will be wonderful to attend a church service and share with friends again, to get involved in Church activities, visit my husband regularly and especially to have my out of town family visit.

Crystal Seel

From Thelma Wilson

We enjoyed watching the development of some monarch chrysalises on our swan plants, and the emergence of beautiful butterflies.

Lilah spent time doing a 1,000 piece jig-saw from the op shop.

Charlie and Lilah did a great job polishing our brass.



From Jane Few



Theresia Klein

Knitting for prem. babies in the hospitals



What has Bill Milnes been doing?

Well I've taken on a paying hobby of buying bikes, refurbishing them and reselling on Trade Me - re-cycling if you like. New brake pads, seats, cables, gear tune, de-rust and touch up paint. My car has been excluded from the garage to make way for 'stock' as in the photo. Keeps me focused and out of the kitchen, except at dishes time!



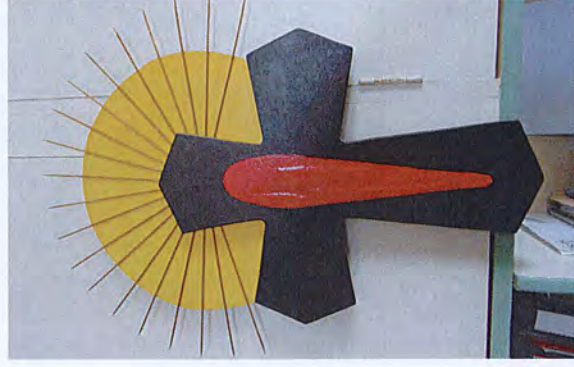
And this is what Robin Georgeson has done

These are Projects I have finally made on hand.

The Cross is from Church and finished with leftover paint, cardboard and kebab sticks.

The theme is; He bled, He died, He rose again.

The Chest of drawers is made from 3 drawers retrieved from the Tennis Club kitchen refurbishment, 6mm plywood from Photocopier Pallets and 19mm ply offcuts from a flooring job.



The chest is being refurbished. So far it has been scraped, planed and sanded, but work is currently on hold due to my recent surgery. I understand it was my grandmother's Linen Chest and that it is made of Kauri. Each side is one piece of timber.



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November 2021

Hello everyone,

After our lockdown, the kindergarten reopened on 6th of October, with the teaching team working on a "job share roster" to care for the children who have returned. Although we have made changes to assist in protecting our children in our current pandemic, we have restarted with some amazing activities so there is much fun and laughter, and a sense of normality. Water play is an exciting resource for the children, and with the warmer weather, we have had lots of fun creating bubbles, coloured water, playground and sandpit adventures, as well as making full use of our outdoor equipment.

On one not so nice weather day, we did an indoor mural using a huge sheet of paper and glad wrap. You start by laying a large sheet of paper on the floor, add blobs of paint, cover the paint and paper with glad wrap and let the children walk, skip, hop, jump or roll to spread the paint. When they have finished, lift the glad wrap off and leave the paint to dry. It is a really colourful piece of artwork!

Prior to the lockdown, the children also had their own kindy Olympics, complete with different coloured medals made of clay and baked in the oven. We had multiple events around a carefully designed playground to represent a "track". The children really enjoyed this, and some were very competitive in their pursuit around the track.

We are thankful that a number of children have returned to kindy; it is a very difficult decision for families to make in regards to what is best for their children. However, the team are dedicated to providing the best care, and a valuable early learning experience for every child regardless of what circumstances we find ourselves in. Thank you

We hope you enjoy the pictures!



Janine Leaming
 Finance & Operations Manager

Psalms 23

(reflections on Covid 19)

The Lord is my Shepherd (that is relationship)

Wow!! You really are my shepherd and I know what it is that Shepherds do for their flock – they put their life on the line – they have a real relationship with their sheep – so much so that the sheep really can tell the difference between their shepherd and the next door paddock's shepherd. It is awesome that I can have that kind of relationship with you Lord. Thank you.

I shall not want (that is supply or provision)

Well that is great Lord but I have to be honest – I feel like I've wanted quite a bit lately like freedom comes to mind – freedom from restrictions, (generated by Covid of course) freedom to see family, freedom to travel, freedom to see my friends without having to treat them like lepers who I can't touch, can't hug, can't shake hands with. I can't even smile at them with that mask over my face! That is quite a lot of wants Lord. But then Lord you take me to stand at the gate of a family who really knows what "want" is and I feel ashamed that I even thought to complain about my selfish wants. They didn't just want, they needed food to put on their tables, health to be restored to them after suffering from Covid. OK Lord I get it – you do provide for my 'wants' – sometimes I just don't think too clearly about the difference between needs and wants. Keep talking to me about it Lord – I'll try and put my listening ears on!!

He makes me to lie down in green pastures (that is peace)

I have to say Lord that green pastures seem to be rather few and far between in the concrete jungle of Auckland at present. My own "green grass of home" seems so well, so not what I was hoping for. None the less I do know that you give me Peace when at times there is chaos all around me. That peace that passes all understanding – what a privilege it is to know that peace – even in the concrete jungle of Pandemic Auckland.

He leads me beside still waters and restores my soul (that is healing)

Come to think of it, just maybe that is what I am looking for in all of this situation Lord – still waters, a place to soak in the reality of what it is that you can offer me. Life is indeed very "still" at the moment – and maybe mixed up with the restlessness of "wanting" I am needing to pause and stop and remember to be in your presence. I have been gifted time in this particular

season of life – keep prodding me to make better use of that time Lord. I've cleaned out some cupboards, and we've weeded the garden – but maybe using a little of that extra time to kneel at your feet might be worth doing. Draw me closer to yourself as you restore my soul. Thanks Lord

He guides me in the path of righteousness for His names sake (that is guidance)

I am beginning to think Lord that there is a little bit of me that doesn't necessarily want to be guided. I mean to be successfully guided I have to relinquish control and just let 'your will be done' and that isn't always easy is it? I mean that my own will gets in the way sometimes. Sometimes that word 'righteousness' is a bit scary isn't it? The dictionary says that means "the quality of being morally right and justifiable". I think I struggle with the fine line between righteous and self righteous as the two are really miles apart and I would hate to be seen as self righteous – that is not a value I hold close at all. Lord help me to differentiate between the two – keep me humble by staying ever close to me. The more I write this the more I see I can't do any of this on my own Lord.

Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death I will fear no evil for you are with me. (that is testing!)

Well Lord this does remind me that this is not all about me and I have been really blessed through all of this pandemic stuff. I am safe. I have provisions. But whilst this has all been going on I have had to say goodbye to close friends who have come to be with you for eternity. It wasn't easy saying goodbye – especially with the lockdown funeral arrangements. It has been hard on those families Lord to be walking through that valley right now. Keep walking with them daily Lord – carry them through until they feel ready to begin the journey they now face of life without that special person with them. Yet I am immediately reminded that in the next verse.....

Your Rod and staff they comfort me (that is reassurance)

It is good to know that comfort in our times of sadness and grief, It is good to be reminded that there is nothing that can happen to me that together we can't handle – thanks for letting me partner with you through these challenging times.

You prepare a table for me in the presence of my enemies. (that is hope)

Just maybe Lord you and I could sit at that table each day for a little longer, talk more, me listen more, that surely will help to restore my soul.

You anoint my head with oil (that is peace and acceptance)

So if I stop arguing about all of this, stop and listen to your quiet voice, I get it now – you will give me that sense of peace and acceptance that comes from being anointed with oil. Peace and acceptance – that great prayer of Serenity comes to my mind

“Lord Grant me the **Serenity** to accept the things I cannot change
the **Courage** to change the things I can
and the **Wisdom** to know the difference”

My cup runneth over (that is abundance)

Well Lord despite all the disruption that the past 2 years have thrown at us, despite the daily Covid updates that can bring anxiety more than peace and reassurance, despite watching rising case numbers, I still can sit in my 4 square walls and realise that actually it is well with my soul. I do have the freedom to breathe. I do have food on my table. I do have family and friends who are always there for me. Covid takes none of that from me. But Lord I cannot ignore that it has taken a lot from a lot of people, some have lost their financial security, some have lost their health, many have lost their lives, some have lost confidence, some have become confused and feel like they have lost their way. Lord keep taking me to places where I can see that you need me to be a part of the solution – we say we are your hands and feet but sometimes amidst our own abundance we lose sight of the needs of those who have not. Don't let me lose a sense of reality about the way others have suffered in this strange time in our lives. Open my eyes. Keep me asking what must I do to help?

Surely goodness and mercy will follow me all the days of my life and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.

That is Blessing and Eternity

Cherie Moran

Lockdown keeping some very busy

Like Retha Kleynhans



And the Scott Family picnicked on the beach—in comfort!!



From the Armchair – November 2021

In the course of an episode in a TV series we recently watched, a character explained how her mother had used the word 'good' when she described somebody she admired. A 'good person' was to the character's mother, a person who was

kind, thoughtful, responsible, considerate and any other positive attributes which could be listed.

This made me think of the Parable of the Talents and the comment of the master to the servant as we read in Matthew chapter 25, verse 23. The master has entrusted his servants with responsibilities while he's been away and when he returns he interviews each servant to find out how they fared with the responsibilities; two have done well and are rewarded with the comment 'well done, good and faithful servant'.

That may not, on the surface seem to be a very meaningful comment but it does show that sometimes, a few words are more powerful than many words. To be described as a 'good and faithful servant' is, to my mind, one of the best things that could ever be said about a person.

However, the Parable of the Talents is not the end of the chapter. It leads into what I believe to be one of the most challenging passages in the Bible. It is a passage which forces the reader to think about what being a Christian means to them. We may think that being a Christian means that as long as we behave ourselves, we will go to heaven but this passage makes the reader realise that being a Christian involves much more than lip-service. From verse 31, we read of how the Son of Man will come in all His glory and all the nations will be gathered in front of him where they will be divided in the same way a shepherd divides his flocks into the sheep and the goats. The 'sheep' are then welcomed into the kingdom which has been prepared for them. The 'goats' are banished into a dark place. When the 'sheep' want to know when they served the Lord, His reply is very simple. 'When you did it for the least of my people, you did it to Me.'

As I have thought about what I want to say in this contribution to 'The Torch' and how I should say it, I started to understand what makes Christianity a welcoming but demanding faith.

In the Old Testament, the Ten Commandments are handed down and become the basis of the Judaeo-Christian system which underpins so many societies today. However, the Ten Commandments is a list of things people should not do. Anyone who has ever had to tell a group of people what they should not do knows that there will always be the 'but what if?'

questions. People will always try to get around the restrictions or argue that in their circumstances, breaking the prohibition is understandable and should be allowed.

In the New Testament, instead of reinforcing the idea that we should not do things, Jesus tells us, in the Parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10 v 25-28), that there are two things we should do – 'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind' and, 'Love your neighbour as yourself.' This is also referred to in John 13 v 34 - 'A new commandment I give to you, That you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another.'

When the emphasis changes from what you can't do to what you must do, the whole dynamic of the relationship changes. It is no longer good enough to argue that because I never did these things or broke these laws, I am a good person. The way I choose to behave becomes so much more important.

This is what, to my mind, makes Matthew 25 verses 31-39 so scary. Suddenly, the reader is forced to acknowledge that the relationship which they have with God has to be a personal one. We have to choose to be a Christian. To say that we are a Christian because we were born into a Christian family is not good enough. To claim that regular church attendance makes us good Christians is not good enough. It all comes down to how we live our lives. How did/do we treat those who are described as the 'least of my brethren'? Would I be in with the sheep or be relegated to be with the goats? I know where I would like to be but has my behaviour towards my fellow man been good enough?

Ron Galliers

Opportunity Shop



This has been a very strange three months or the Opportunity Shop! We have been closed! Auckland went into lockdown from Midnight Tuesday 17th August so we have been closed since then.

We won't be able to open again until we are in the equivalent of level 1 (green light) because of the size of the shop and being able to have the required distancing between customers and those behind the counter. We made the decision not to open until next year. Please keep any items for donation to the shop until February next year. Thank you

Margaret Guyan

A SILVER SUNRISE

Are they tears
Or raindrops
That run gently down over her cheeks

Perhaps both
As alone she walks
Barefoot in the rain on the shore

Always on her own
Early mornings or evenings
She walks to keep safe in her solitude

Rain becomes heavier
Hair drips cold
Turning into the wind she shakes her head

Is she both sad
and lonely
Controlled by levels in her solitude

She is not lonely
Merely walking alone
Rain is God's gift for the dryness in age

The rain ceases
She smiles
Across the water, a silver sunrise.

Rusti Leach



Lockdown Blues

A poem for Nico's birthday 13.10.2021 by Nana Bell

Everyone is suffering from the Lockdown Blues
But it is safer to have that, than all of us to lose -
What we have gained from being in lockdown
We often have to smile when we would rather frown.
With all your Uni lectures now being on line
You'd rather be with student friends but you're coping fine!
And Dominic and Teresa are learning that way too,
(Maybe Tess enjoys online learning more than you?)
Plus, your Dad is lecturing on line (maybe Zoom?)
Mum, like us, is praying that lockdown ends real soon!
Learning with fellow students sitting in a lecture
Asking probing questions is of course much better!
The answer to the Lockdown Blues is of course vaccine.
This Covid Delta variant is the worst the world has seen!
Everyday at breakfast we pray that you'll be strong.
That everyone will have the jab and it won't be long
Till you can be with the kids, their basket ball referee!
Teams will meet at the gym knowing you 're free—
From the nasty Lockdown Blues, each and every day,
The Lord bless you with cool adventures on the way!

Jan Bell

Be Calm,
Be Kind,
Because
Actions
You Can't
Rewind.

The Fresh Avenue

kindness

One of the greatest gifts you can bestow upon another. If someone is in need, lend them a helping hand. Do not wait for a thank you. True kindness lies within the act of giving without the expectation of something in return.

Birthday celebrations in Lockdown



The Brewer family

Here are photos of Liam's 5th birthday (20 September) and my birthday (20 September) and my 40th (19 August). As usual, I don't have any photos of myself from my birthday, just this photo of the fire pit I got from my parents. Mum bought it back in February and left



it in our garage because "you never know what might happen these days". So when we got locked down two days before my birthday it was special to have this present waiting for me. We have cooked our lunch on this fire pit every Sunday since.

Liam's cake has a story as well. Liam wanted a Hundred Acre Wood cake so my mother (in New Plymouth) made the little figures during level 4 and managed to post them to us in one piece.

Karen Brewer



Margaret Guyan

This year I had a birthday to remember! Two of my three sons live locally so it was suggested we meet at the beach for afternoon tea. However the weather was against us. It rained!

Stephen came up with the great idea to meet in the Band Rotunda in Picton Street outside the old post office! It was Saturday afternoon 3.30 pm, shops were closed and few people were about. It was also Stephen's son Alex's 16th birthday that week so we celebrated two birthdays.

Stephen made a layered chocolate sponge with raspberries, strawberries and blueberries on top. He brought paper plate, forks mugs and juice. Catherine brought a candle each for Alex and me which were rather hard to light because of the breeze. They all said "Happy Birthday" to us. The Alex and I cut the cake together like a wedding couple! It was delicious.

A great time was had by all eight of us.



*Twelfth
Birthday High Tea on
the deck with lemon
meringue pie birthday
cake*

Helen's Story



It's a spring Sunday in 1960. I'm a young kid and our family has recently moved to Howick. The dark Uxbridge church is full. The fleur-de-lis carpet and velvet curtains are of the deepest, richest blue; dust floats through shafts of light; established families sit in the same pews that they occupy every Sunday morning; fathers and grandfathers are wearing suits and the women, hats. Arthur Maddock delivers the sermon. I occupy myself by matching the words and tunes of the metrical psalm section of the hymn book.

The choir is singing an anthem. My mother,

Helen, is standing with the sopranos in the front row of the choir. Her clear, bright voice soars into the heights of the church. To me, it's beautiful. So is her face, which glows in light that is reflected by the broad brim of her apricot straw hat.

After church, we play with the other kids as our parents talk outside the door. Animated, fun talk that never seems to end. At last, my mother suggests that people come back to the house for coffee. We race home. She fires up the percolator and throws a batch of scones together and the closeness of the church connections continues for a bit longer.

It's a spring Thursday in 2020. Though I moved from Howick when I was young, I live here again. My parents moved away for a few years to Australia, but they too returned to the area and my mother thinks of Howick as her special place.

At the mid-week service at St Andrews, I'm fairly sure that I'm the youngest person in the room. Instead of a sermon, a thoughtful, contemporary reflection is offered. We sing from a large-font book that I think may have been developed by the Baptists. Certainly, there's no sign of metrical psalms and I'm not sure that anthems are sung any more.

Beside me is my mother, who is now 95 and has come to church in her jeans. She struggles to sing these days but she is gallantly

attempting an alto harmony and she knows the modern songs that have become a part of services since I was last here. I think about the central place that this church has had in my mother's life and the many roles that she has played in the church community.

In the early days, Helen was one of the rostered women who polished the pews, vacuumed the carpet and arranged the flowers for the Sunday service. She baked unfortunate cakes for the annual fair and, because she didn't garden, she bought from the village fruit shop the vegetables that were her contribution to the harvest festival display. No-one will know, she said.

As her faith grew, Helen became a spiritual mentor to many in the church community. She contributed to many a vibrant study group; she taught Bible in Schools; and she and my dad took leading roles at Bible Class camps. For some years, our house seemed to overflow with teenagers who came to play music together, to discuss spiritual concerns with my mum or just to loll about. Helen and her good friend, Betty Brown, were the first women elders in this church. My mum was surprised by her appointment because - as with other things in her life - she refused to take spiritual ideas at face value and often initiated robust discussions with the minister, Sam McCay about matters theological.

Helen was a founding member of the Op Shop. She approved of its kaupapa - to support both the church and the community of Otara while concurrently having a lot of fun - so she joined the committee, sorted clothes in the depot and served in the Otara shop. That first Op Shop committee often held its meetings at our house - meetings that seemed to roar with constant laughter.

Music is strongly threaded through the story of Helen and this church. In early days, the young women of the church produced and performed shows in the hall. Every part of these productions, including music, libretto, costumes and set design, was the source of much hilarity and my mum loved it all.

Sacred music has held an important place in Helen's life. A trained classical singer with a lifelong love of the traditional hymns and psalms of the Scottish church, Helen enjoyed singing with the church choir. This was especially so when Neil Guyan arrived, to bring a sparkling new repertoire, an insistence on excellence and a special brand of wit and humour.

Helen was also an accomplished solo performer and often entertained at church and wider community events. Accompanying herself on the steel guitar and autoharp, she offered mostly folk songs and spirituals, as well as the traditional Scottish and Gaelic songs with which she'd been brought up. It seemed that she was always heading out the door to entertain somewhere, lugging her instrument cases.

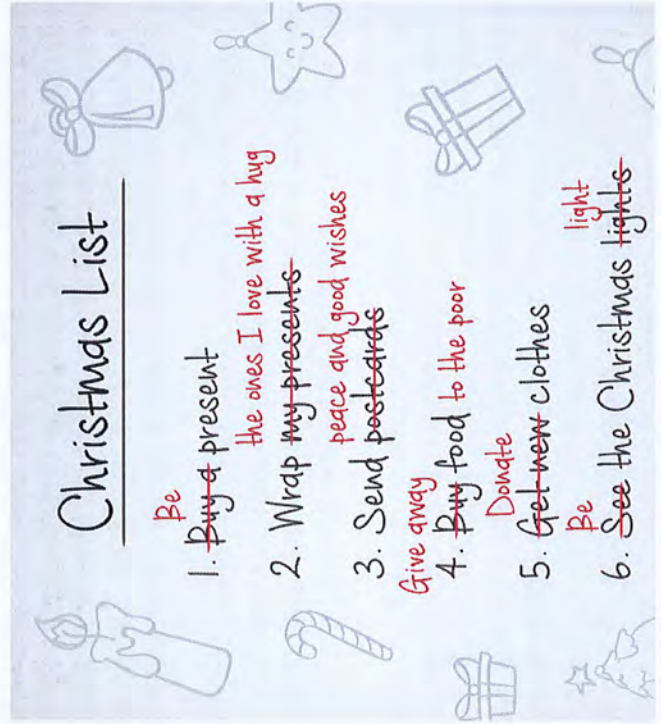
After the Thursday service, we gather around tables that are beautifully laid with embroidered cloths to share a cup of coffee. The mood is warm and kind and Helen loves being here. She feels that the church is a sort of home.

I realise that not many people here know my younger mother: that passionate woman of clear views, strong faith, great fun and beautiful voice, whose involvement with this church community has been committed, long and deep.

Everyone at the Thursday service has a story - many stories actually. I catch snippets of some of them and wish I could hear more.

This is one of my mother's.

Elizabeth Bennett



ST ANDREW'S BIG BAND 2011 - 2021

Naturally I have no SABB report for this edition of The Torch as the band has been unable to meet since our last performance at Elmwood Village in late July.

Instead I thought I would share a photo of what I have been doing every school day since August 17 - teaching on Zoom with my personal bodyguard Toby the Spoodle. Each lesson lasts for 20mins and it has been a wonderful way to stay in touch with students and help keep them motivated during these challenging times.

There have been many memorable hiccups and technological disasters along the way from both the teacher and the students but it has been a blessing to be able to connect with students and share online resources with colleagues. A personal highlight would have to be the trombone lesson with a student who was sitting in the back of their family van parked at Greenlane Hospital while the rest of the family was inside visiting a relative! I have nearly completed 450 of these Zoom lessons since lockdown began and I hope to reach 500 by the end of the year.

The band is still in great shape with all members returning to start again in February 2022. Thank you as always for your ongoing support

Ngā Mihi,



Hamish Arthur
St Andrew's Big Band Musical Director

Margaret Gray

Margaret Kinraid was born on 6th February 1932 in Waimate, South Canterbury. Her father was Station-master at Moana Railway Station, on the West Coast, at the time, so her mother went to stay with her parents in Waimate, for the birth of her baby.

Margaret's growing years were spent in many small railway towns around the South Island and she never spent many years in one place.

On leaving school she attended Canterbury University where she studied maths and science, but eventually

gave this up to train as a primary teacher. It was in her early years at University that she met Michael Gray, an engineering student. They met through her brother Irvine, at St Andrew's Church. On graduating Michael moved to Invercargill and after one year there, and Margaret finishing her primary teacher training and securing a job at Waihapai School in Invercargill, they married in December 1954. After their first year of married life in Invercargill, Michael got a job with Franklin Electric Power Board based in Pukekohe. It was there that they settled, had three boys, Alan, Jeffrey and Richard, and lived for the next 54 years until their move to Highland Park. They were very involved in St James' Church in Pukekohe where Margaret played tennis in her early years with the church tennis club, arranged flowers, took the junior and senior choir and played the organ. She taught Bible in Schools and tutored students in maths as well taking part in other community activities such as meals on wheels.

After shifting to Highland Park, she and Michael enjoyed their involvement with Howick Presbyterian Church and made many good friends. The church in Howick were good to them in their twilight years and offered great friendship, support and pastoral care for which they and the family were very appreciative.

Condolences.

Our sympathy is extended to the families and friends of Barry Curtis and Yacob Latif, who were members of St Andrews Church for many years.

We also remember the Rev. John Cameron from the Libberton Church, in Edinburgh, Scotland, who exchanged ministerial duties with Rev. Sam McCay from August 1992, until January 1993. Several people from our congregation visited the Camerons after their time here.

Kailakuri Health Centre, Bangladesh

In embarking upon his life's work over 40 years ago in Bangladesh, Kiwi Dr. Edric Baker's vision was "Health Services for the Poor, by the Poor." Local primary and high school graduates were trained as paramedics and continue to effectively run the Kailakuri Health Centre today, six years after Edric's death.

How he applied his vision to the problem of diabetes is interesting.

Although Type 2 diabetes is usually considered a First World disease, it afflicts some 10% of the Bangladesh population. This is thought to be because of a change in diet from brown rice to white rice.



At Kailakuri programme diabetics to life. The program is run by a team of whom all of whom are paramedics. The paramedic programme is not surprising. Kailakuri diabetics have been recognised as the most effective diabetes programme in the country.

the village diabetes allows some 1700 live a normal stable programme is administered by a committee (photo), are diabetics, as are working on the programme. Perhaps, the Kailakuri programme has been recognised as the most

When, in his early days, Edric was presented with his first diabetes patient he was puzzled as to what the problem was. Up until that time type 2 diabetes was unheard of out of the urban cities. However, almost in disbelief, he diagnosed the problem as type 2 diabetes. Insulin not being available in the rural areas, he took the patient to Dhaka and found the only (at that time) diabetes specialist in the country. The specialist asked him how he knew that the patient had diabetes. Edric said he tasted his urine and it was sweet!

The specialist was so impressed he personally paid for a supply of insulin for Edric's patient. The specialist was instrumental in setting up the BIRDEM (Bangladesh Institute of Research and Rehabilitation in Diabetes) hospital which to this day supplies low cost, subsidised insulin to all of the Kailakuri diabetes programme diabetics. BIRDEM regularly sends medical personnel to observe and learn from the Kailakuri Diabetes programme.

Peter Wilson

Contemplation

In 2010 we sang Brooke Fraser's Desert Song in church, and it resonated very strongly with me, particularly the first two, and the last 2 lines. We've all had 'desert times' when we feel drained of who we are, and conversely, that 'I'm filled to be emptied again' gives meaning to so much in my life; and that I'm only expected to sow the seed I've received, is enormously reassuring. I can stand tall in the assurance that I was not created to compete with, or to compare myself with others, and will only have to account for being faithful in sowing the seeds I have received.

Bill Mînes

Desert Song Lyrics (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JT3PuMmLhqC>)

This is my prayer in the desert
When all that's within me feels dry
This is my prayer in my hunger and need
My God is the God who provides

This is my prayer in the fire
In weakness, or trial, or pain
There is a faith proved of more worth than gold
So refine me Lord through the flame

I will bring praise
I will bring praise
No weapon formed against shall remain
I will rejoice
I will declare
God is my victory and He is here

This is my prayer in the battle
When triumph is still on its way
I am conqueror and co-heir with Christ
so firm on His promise I'll stand

All of my life in every season
You are still God
I have a reason to sing
I have a reason to worship

This is my prayer in the harvest
Where favour and providence flow
I know I'm filled to be emptied again
The seed I've received I will sow

The Toy Library

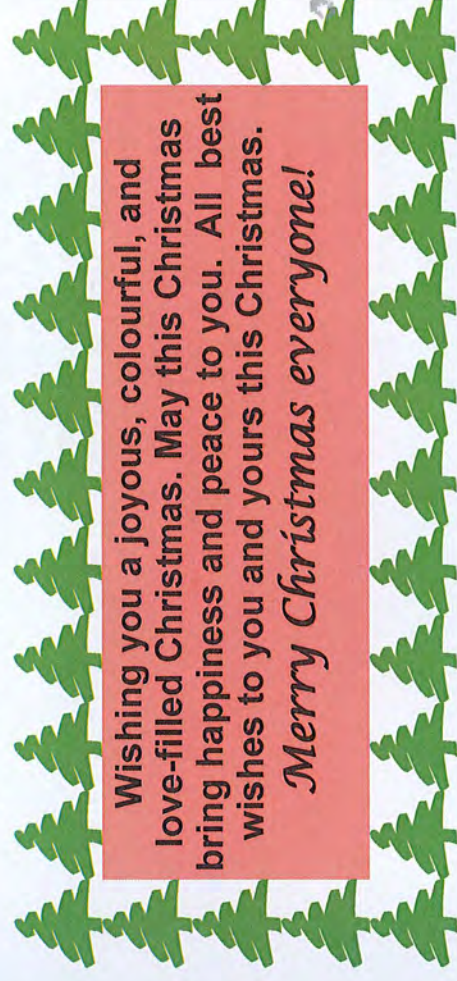
Howick & Pakuranga

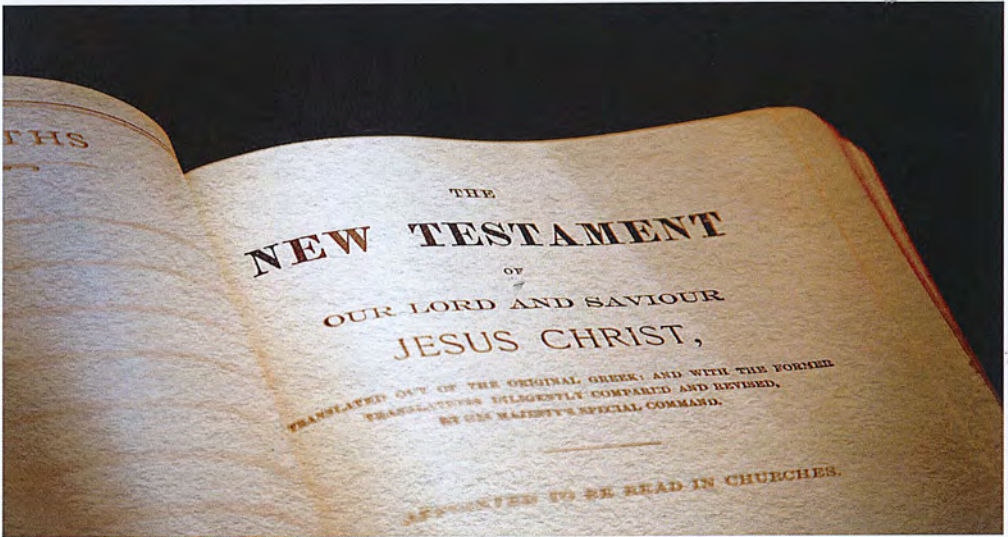
Welcome

By the time you are reading this issue of the torch we will have signed a 2 year contract with the Howick & Pakuranga Toy Library to enable them to make themselves at home in the Dungeon downstairs. We are excited that this is a very good way to interact with our local community and the Dungeon space has not been in use in the recent months so we are happy to have it occupied. The contract begins in January but you may see some movements happening before that as the space is prepared for them to make their move.

The Library will be open Monday from 9 – 12 midday and again on Saturday 9 – 12.30pm. You will find them in the café during that time. If you are interested in learning more about the library and how it operates then feel free to hop over to their website and have an explore around or visit them on Facebook. Membership of the toy library offers opportunity to have a variety of toys on loan for a period of time. They even have a grandparent membership scheme that might appeal to some of us of older years.

<https://www.howicktoylibrary.org.nz>
<https://www.facebook.com/HowickPakurangaToyLibrary>





The books of the New Testament

In Matthew Christ is our Messiah!
 In Mark He is our Servant King
 In Luke He is the great Physician
 In John He is the Son of God
 In Acts He is the Risen Lord
 In Romans He is our Righteousness
 In Corinthians He is our Holiness
 In Galatians He is our Justification'
 In Ephesians He is our Perfection
 In Philippians He is our Provider
 In Colossians He is our Hope
 In Thessalonians He is our coming King
 In Timothy He is our Shepherd
 In Titus He is our Rewarder
 In Philemon He is our Encourager
 In Hebrews He is our High Priest
 In James He is our Wisdom
 In Peter He is our Lover
 In Jude He is our Warrior
 In Revelation He is the Alpha and The Omega!
 Beginning and the End!