



Weekly Newsletter
Sunday 23 March 2014

“Being the Gospel to all People”

A very warm welcome is extended
to all visitors to St Johns.

Morning tea is offered after the service today, so please stay and enjoy some time with us.

Today's theme: “Water for the Thirsty”

Focus Scripture John 4: 5-42

Other Readings: Exodus 17:1-7



The readings this week raise the question of where we put our trust. Do we, like Nicodemus, rely on our position and place in the community or will we allow ourselves to be led into unknown territory, like Abraham? Should we depend for our security on obedience to the law, or place our trust in God who watches over us continuously and sent His Son to save us?

John 3:1-17 (NIV) Jesus & Nicodemus, Now there was a man of the Pharisees named Nicodemus, a member of the Jewish ruling council. He came to Jesus at night and said, "Rabbi, we know you are a teacher who has come from God. For no one could perform the miraculous signs you are doing if God were not with him." In reply Jesus declared, "I tell you the truth, no one can see the kingdom of God unless he is born again." "How can a man be born when he is old?" Nicodemus asked. "Surely he cannot enter a second time into his mother's womb to be born!" Jesus answered, "I tell you the truth, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless he is born of water and the Spirit. Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit gives birth to spirit. You should not be surprised at my saying, 'You must be born again.' The wind blows wherever it pleases. You hear its sound, but you cannot tell where it comes from or where it is going. So it is with everyone born of the Spirit." "How can this be?" Nicodemus asked. "You are Israel's teacher," said Jesus, "and do you not understand these things? No one has ever gone into heaven except the one who came from heaven-the Son of Man. Just as Moses lifted up the snake in the desert, so the Son of Man must be lifted up, that everyone who believes in him may have eternal life. "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him.

Theme: "Learning to See"

Focus Scripture: John 9:1-41

Other Readings: 1 Samuel 16:1-13; Psalm 23; Ephesians 5:8-14

Prayer Points: Please pray for: George Morrison with more recent complications from his surgery; Ray Chisholm with his illness; Dorothy Sinclair with her recovery after ankle surgery. Jeannine and her family, with 3 members having surgery last week and one being diagnosed with throat cancer. Shania with respiratory problems while at home in China.

CHURCH NOTICES AND EVENTS:

Flowers: With a change in the flower help we have been receiving we are in need of anyone who would be able to help Felicity with the flower Roster. Please see Felicity or contact Jeannine in the office.

Preparing Ourselves for Easter

1 Worship Services: This year we will be incorporating into our Sunday worship services during Lent and at Easter, a liturgy designed to help prepare ourselves for this key time of the Christian year. In this we enter the season of Lent with lighted Lenten candles. Each week we will extinguish one candle and so our light will slowly fade into darkness as did Jesus' life. On Good Friday the Christ candle will be extinguished as we recall Jesus death and suffering, to be relit on Easter Sunday as we celebrate the risen Christ and the transforming power of God.

Each week the liturgy will offer a short time for personal reflection, followed by the extinguishing of a candle before we pray together. The Christian Education Team prays that this will be a time of blessing and spiritual renewal for you.

2 Lenten Worship Focus: At the front of the worship room for Lent is a display that will be added to each week. It began with an attempting to remind us of a beach, sand, shells, drift-wood leading our eye to the deeper blue of the horizon. As Island people we do not live in deserts, in wilderness's that for instance enable us to quickly identify with Jesus desert wilderness experience or the more traditional Church Lenten language. We do have the wild expanse of the ocean, the freedom of the beach, the wave and wind scatterings along the shore.... The prayerful hope is that we walk towards Easter mindful of the call of these six weeks to deliberately examine our inner self the image of the wilderness of our sea will provide a place for spiritual engagement between God and self. A kite is added this week as it is a creation for the wind....

3 Lenten Studies: There will not be any group studies this year but Lenten studies booklets are available for those who wish to use them for their own personal or family devotions. Each study has bible readings and a comment from a different Presbyterian minister. They also each have a story from the work of Presbyterian-Support. They depict the many ways this organisation is of service in all parts of New Zealand.

END OF FINANCIAL TAXATION YEAR: 31 March 2014

For those who make their "OFFERINGS" using the St John's "ENVELOPE" System, Sunday March 30 is the last Sunday to have your "OFFERING" included in the receipt total for your 2014 "ENVELOPE" donations rebate claim.

For those who make their "OFFERINGS" using the "ONLINE" banking system, Monday March 31 will be the last day to have your "OFFERING" included in the receipt total for your 2014 donations rebate claim.

"DONATIONS REBATE RECEIPT" It is planned that individual member receipt's for the financial year ended 31 March 2014 will be available for collection with your new year's envelopes on Sunday April 6.

If anyone requires clarification, advice or assistance regarding this important event, please contact Jeannine 534 2305 or Peter Hancock 535 5355

Fellowship Lunch The first Lunch for 2014 will be held on Thurs. 27 March at noon, Palmers Garden Centre, Pakuranga Rd. There is a good selection on the Menu, also Counter food, all reasonably priced. A board is out in the Foyer for you to sign if you would like to attend. Loas Toungh

Quiet Day On Saturday April 12 from 1 - 5pm Chris Skinner will lead us in worship, music and quiet reflection on the theme of "Christ with Us: Stepping into Holy Week" This will be an opportunity to help us prepare ourselves for Easter. Cost \$10. Signup sheet in foyer or contact Loas on 533 0670

Anglican TV : "Thoughtful giving. Hear how a New Zealand business gives back thoughtfully, this week on www.anglicantv.net.

The Handel Consort & Quire directed by Robert Howell will perform Handel's oratorio Samson on Saturday 26 April 7pm at Pitt st Methodist Church and at 3pm on Sunday 27 April at St Andrew's Anglican church in Pukekohe. Soloists include Iain Tetley, Gina Sanders, Dilys Fong, Richard Phillips and Joel Amosa. Tickets available via email handelconsortandquire@hotmail.com or door sales. Website <http://handelconsortnquire.wix.com/handelconsortnquire->

Prayerful Meditation for this week from the text: John 4:17a "Give me a drink"

Lord,

Teach us to seek you,

and reveal yourself to us when we seek you

For we cannot seek you unless you first teach us,

nor find you except you reveal yourself to us.

Let us seek you in longing,

and long for you in seeking.

Let us find you in love

and love you in finding,

O Jesus Christ our Lord.

(St Ambrose of Milan)