

"Let your *gentleness* be known to everyone. *The Lord is near.*"

PHILIPPIANS 4:5

In Haiti, a donkey is a sign of prosperity. With a donkey, a family can plough more ground and carry containers of water or sacks of corn up and down its steep hills. For Aimee (not her real name), her donkey is her friend.

Life in Haiti can be very hard. In the Caribbean, the country is prone to hurricanes and earthquakes. The people have a proud history marked by long periods of poor government. They have learnt to be resilient and find a way to keep going even when they have lost everything. In 2016, Hurricane Matthew lashed the west of Haiti, leaving 1.4 million people in need of relief assistance. Thanks to ACT Alliance Haiti (Action by Churches Together) of which CWS is a member, Aimee's family received tools, seeds and a donkey to carry water from a faraway stream.

There is a donkey in the Christmas story. It has a protective presence in the manger scene and an important role as a people carrier. The donkey connects us to the birth of the baby who would be named the Prince of Peace.

In 2015, world leaders committed us to 17 Sustainable Development Goals at the United Nations. Working on this agenda will require a major investment to achieve

goals like ending hunger, taking action on the climate, and significantly stopping violence. The commitment to 'leave no one behind' by 2030 is an important agenda that needs more attention.

The Christian faith was born with a vision that the world can be different. It is a vision that can be found in the life and teaching of Jesus from Galilee. Through his words and actions, we find inspiration to feed the hungry, give water to the thirsty and respect the dignity of all. It is work we do together to make known God's love for the whole world.

Your gift to the Christmas Appeal will make this vision real: hungry people will be fed and can grow more food despite climate change, families will have safe water from new rainwater systems, and workers will be able to address violence in the workplace and on the streets. Working together, we can take steps to ensure no one is left behind.

Your gift at Christmas will be a lifeline to people who need hope for the days ahead. Please give generously to the 2018 Christmas Appeal.

Find out more by visiting www.christmasappeal.org.nz

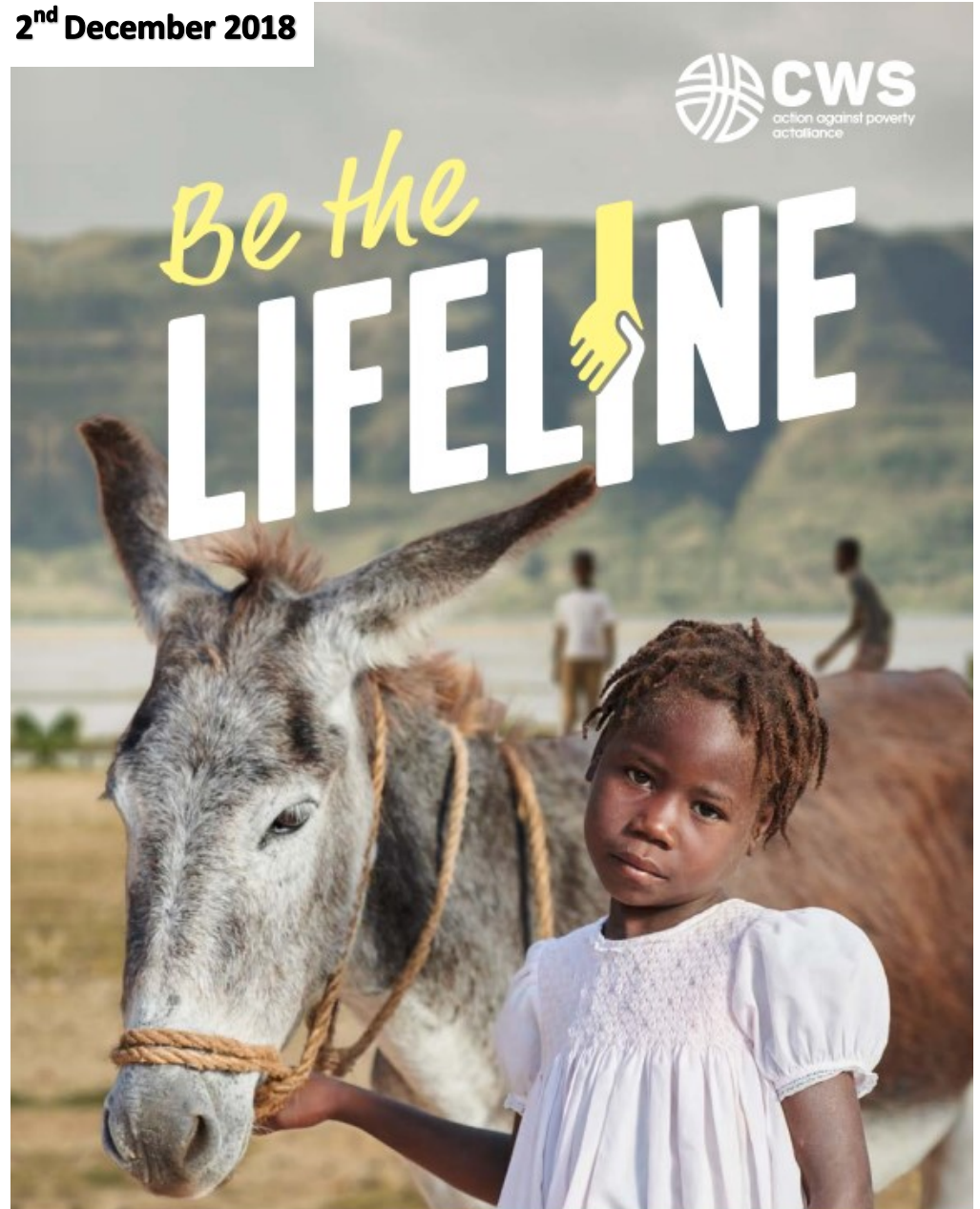
ADVENT ONE
HOPE

2nd December 2018

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We welcome you most warmly to our church.

For 73 years the **Christmas Appeal** has been a lifeline to people in need – please join us to keep the lifeline going. This Appeal puts the spotlight on our responsibilities to each other and the planet our home. In 2015, the United Nations agreed to a new agenda for sustainable development made up of 17 Sustainable Development Goals. You can find out how our partners are contributing to global goals like zero hunger, often assisting hard to reach communities to make sure no one is left behind.

ADVENT ONE

Climate Change is making storms more intense. Finau has lived many years on Tonga's 'Eua island, so when she says that Cyclone Gita was the worst she had experienced, it is the truth. The cyclone damaged the front of her home. Her husband is not well. Thankfully, the women in her local Ama Takiloa group have been a lifeline for her. They have repaired rainwater harvesting systems and are replanting community gardens so they will be able to eat traditional foods like taro again.

Be the Lifeline to communities facing the worst effects of climate change. Support the 2018 Christmas Appeal.

What's On

Tuesdays 8.30 am: PRAYER TIME: 'The House' lounge, Champion Road.

Saturdays 9.30 am: "CHRISTMAS CHORISTERS" for the next few weeks. Meet in church, Songer St.

Tuesday 4 Dec 11.30 am: ANNUAL CHRISTMAS LUNCHEON. Songer St hall. Everyone welcome. Those that haven't received an invitation, please bring a plate of finger food.

Tuesday 4 Dec 4—4.30 pm: YOUTH BIBLE STUDY WITH MARK. Champion Road.

Thursday 6 Dec 10 am: WHAKATU MEN'S GROUP. Meet Champion Road. Exciting gift making morning. Phone Don or Ian for details.

Monday 10 Dec 7.30 pm: RENOVARE SPIRITUAL GROWTH GROUP will meet at Tania Levett's home, 187 Pugh Road, Hope. This will be our final meeting for the year.

Sunday 9 Dec 5pm: THE GATHERING, Rabbit Island. BBQ picnic. Bring rug, plates, cutlery etc. Making volcanos. Theme 'fire'!!

Monday 10 Dec 6.45pm : CAROL SINGING to 'Shut-ins'. Please meet 6.45 at Stoke church carpark. All welcome. Supper at church to follow.

TODAY'S READING: Luke 21: 25–36

General Notices

Christmas Tree Festival is now under way at the Cathedral, and will continue to late in January. There are 43 beautiful trees to view. Our church tree this year is based on the Christmas Carol "We Three Kings".

Christmas Treats for Grandparents. As usual we will be collecting Christmas food treats for Paula to share with the grandparents. Donations would be gratefully accepted on Sundays 9th & 16th Dec for Paula to distribute the week before Christmas. Many thanks for your generosity. Helen and Louise.

Photo's from Lake Rotoiti Walk. Please ask Kaye in office if you want copies.

Baldwin Organ. \$400. This small beautiful organ ex St David's is surplus to requirements. Please contact Elaine. See more details in Dec Newsletter.

Sale of Tahunanui Manse and the removal of the house at Champion Road We anticipate putting the manse on the market early in mid January. The house will be available for removal possibly the middle of next year. If you know of anyone interested in either of these properties please contact Elaine.

Celebration Cake Roster. Baker needed. One cake/year. Please ph Kim 547 5290.

GOVERNANCE COUNCIL SNIPPETS

Birthdays and Celebrations Convenor. Wendy Tolland has taken over this task from Mary Evers. We will celebrate Mary's outstanding contribution one Sunday when her health permits her to attend church.

Champion Road Gardens. Vivienne Parkes would like to hear from parishioners interested in helping with the garden maintenance or 'adopting' a piece of garden.

Welcome Pack for new comers is being investigated and we will bring you more details in the New Year.

Ministry outreach. Next year we will look at making better contact with those in retirement homes and villages. We will also look at developing stronger links with 50ish year olds. Are these mission opportunities for us?

General Assembly 2018 Report. A two page written report on General Assembly is available. If you would like a copy please see Elaine Henry.

More Snippets next week ...

Sun	09 Dec	9.45 am	Advent 2. Worship Service.
Wed	12 Dec	10 am	Final mid-week service for the year.
Sun	16 Dec	9.45 am	Advent 3. Prizegiving Whakatu Kids/Youth Group.