



Tēnā koutou katoa

Advent...a time of waiting. A time to slow down somewhat and take the time to reflect as we approach the season of Christmas. To reflect on the coming of the Christ. A time for the weekly rhythm of lighting an Advent candle, for singing seasonal hymns and songs, to talk of hope, peace, joy and love. And a time when we are very aware of how this rhythm and focus differs quite dramatically from the rhythm and focus of society, of the world.

How do the themes of hope, peace, joy and love resonate in our world at this time? Are they just sentimental, soft words we throw about, or do they speak to our hearts and have their outworking in action?

The backdrop to this church season feels very discordant to such themes. Last week we had the formal public apology from the [government](#) by the Prime Minister to the survivors of abuse in care. I attended a survivor led gathering at the Pipitea marae in Wellington that same day and saw and felt some of the reality of how life is, and has been, for some of those survivors. And last week the contentious Principles of the Treaty Bill had its first reading in the house, eliciting protest, dismay and anger from many. Beyond our shores, across the world, there is continued violence, oppression and prejudice. Do our themes of Advent have anything to say, any power, any impact?

As Christians we believe that they do, and they must. That Jesus, the Prince of Peace, continues to be the way, the truth and the life. Jesus spoke into situations of brokenness, strife and prejudice and showed a different way in which to live. A way that led to life.

Rather than seeing these themes as soft and sentimental, we see them as strong and purposeful.

At weddings I have sometimes used a version of that popular reading from Corinthians which puts it this way... “Love is tough: there is nothing it cannot face. Love never loses hope, never loses heart”. There is a sense of resilience, tenaciousness, strength in this that I believe is seen in the life and works of Jesus.

The pictures that accompany this message are of little Christmas tree hangings made by one of our church members. One for each of the weeks of Advent - hope, peace, joy and love. Can we use these themes to motivate us to action in our particular context? For instance, can we ask/challenge ourselves with questions such as, how can I bring a sense of hope to those in need around me – in prayerful and practical ways? How can I work towards peace where there is brokenness? We can be very intentional in seeking to incarnate the Advent themes into our lives... hope, peace, joy, love. We are all part of the Body of Christ. As we all seek to incarnate these themes into our daily living, we strengthen the presence and effectiveness of the Body of Christ here and now. And we do this in the strength of Christ and by the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

Enter this season of Advent with a sense of expectancy, and the knowledge that through Christ all things are possible.

“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through him and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness and the darkness did not overcome it.” [John 1: 1-5]

Advent blessings.

Rose, Right Rev Rose Luxford

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CWS 2024 Christmas Appeal

This year's theme emerges from listening to our CWS partners in Oceania. Former Archbishop of Tikanga Pasifika, the Anglican Church in Aotearoa, New Zealand and Polynesia, Winston Halapua speaks of a call from the world's largest ocean as "to treasure God's gift of the planet earth." (1) The Advisor to the current Bishop of the Diocese of Polynesia and member of CWS Board, recently described oceans as our hope. "We need to make ocean front and centre of our church, the message, the preaching, the discussions, the intercessions, the prayers." (2) A focus on climate hope this Christmas also aligns strategically with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, in particular Strategic Development Goal 13: Climate action.

ADVENT 1 - HOPE

"Climate hope as seas roar"

In Advent 1, we meet Mrs Mafi. "No one is left behind," declares Mrs Mafi. Mrs Mafi is a wife, mother, and grandmother. She lives on the eastern coast of Tonga. High tides and rising sea levels are damaging vegetable gardens. Mrs Mafi has taken action. She and the women in her community have dug new vegetable gardens on higher ground and rotated their crops so there is always food for older adults. The 2024 CWS Christmas appeal introduces us to Mrs Mafi and to the work that communities in Oceania are doing to ensure no one is left behind.

Youtube Link for this Sunday

<https://youtube.com/live/7J2XY10-t7A?feature=share>

TODAY'S BIBLE READING: Luke 2:8-20 NLT

WHAT'S ON

WORSHIP SERVICES COMING UP:		
Sun 1 Dec 24	ADVENT 1 Hope	Holy Communion
Sun 8 Dec 24	ADVENT 2 Peace	
Sun 15 Dec 24	ADVENT 3 Joy	Children's break up service
Sun 22 Dec 24	ADVENT 4 Love	
Wed 25 Dec 24	CHRISTMAS DAY	9:30AM CHRISTMAS DAY Service

This Sunday 9.30am: **Prayer** before worship.

Tuesdays 9am – 9: 50am: **Prayer time.** Church meeting room – everyone is welcome.

Tuesdays 10.30am: **Country Gospel Ukulele.** Orange room as usual.

Tuesday 3rd Dec 11.30am: **Friendship Group Christmas Lunch.** All welcome. Please put your name on the clipboard at front reception desk to register and bring a small plate of finger food to share. See notices.

Tuesday 3rd Dec 7pm: **Annual Christmas Remembrance Service.** You are all invited. Shone & Shirley Funeral Directors, 164 Tahunanui Drive. All invited.

Wednesday 4th Dec: **Book Club's** final gathering 2024: Coffee @ McCashins, Main Rd St at 2.30 pm. If you're interested to come along, let Eileen know: d-egordon@xtra.co.nz.

Thursday 5th Dec 6pm: **Congregational Meeting.** All church members are invited. We will be discussing the budget that we agreed at the AGM and how things are tracking with our giving, among other things.

Friday 6th Dec 1.30-3pm: **Whakatu Cards & Board Games.** Orange or Green Room. Always a lot of fun in a small group. Everyone welcome.

Monday 9th Dec 6.25pm **Carols in the hospital.** Join the Hospital Chaplaincy Team and the Salvation Army Band to sing carols around the wards. Meet on Level 2 at 6.25pm for a 6.30pm start. Light supper to follow. See poster below.

Wednesday 11th Dec 6.45pm. **Carol Singing to our older Parishioners.** Meet in church foyer for shared transport. More details to come.

GENERAL NOTICES

Church Garden. After this Saturday's one-off working bee, we will resume Tuesday gardening next Autumn. During this summer's hot, dry weather, if you are here at Champion Rd and see it's looking dry, you're welcome to pop the hose on our plants.

Acknowledgements:

TNZ Growing Products Ltd in Richmond have been generously donating free bark with us just paying for the truck driver's time. This has saved us quite a sum of money.

Mitre 10 Mega Nelson offered 20% discount earlier in the year on our pansies (church entrance) and last week donated 150 petunias valued at \$250. Rex has just planted those out where the broken light is along with a ribbonwood. The light has been now disconnected and will be replaced by a different style in the near future.

Rex Hunt and Judy Totoro leading our team to create our beautiful gardens.

Dave Taylor offering to mow our lawns and donate on-going bark.

Adventurer's Christmas Dinner. Our dinner on Saturday night at The Stables went very well. 23 of us enjoyed a lovely meal and good company. Father Christmas even gave out a gift to each, plus the meal was followed by Alison's homemade Christmas cake. The best dressed Christmas lady's prize was won by Anne Carswell, and the men's prize went to David Tait. Well done to you both, plus to all who took part in that. There was an easy game of luck held halfway through as well, and Anne Carswell won that too. Everybody agrees we should go back there again. (Alison Ross)



A thank you from the Chaplaincy/Spiritual Support Team. They were very appreciative of all the goods and work to make this another successful stall with lots of positive interaction with people who came to buy. We ask for your continuing prayer support through the year ahead and look forward to your generous provision when we put out the call for next year's stall. May you be blessed. Miriam Martin, administrator.

A reminder if you wish to follow Jon and Vivienne's walk: To follow Jon's daily videos (8-12 minutes each) <https://www.youtube.com/@VivienneJon> and to follow Vivienne's photo log: <https://ridingandwalking.wordpress.com/>

Presbyterian Support – preparing for Christmas ... now collecting - Packets of jelly, instant puddings and small chocolate treats.

Whakatu Presbyterian Christmas events coming up ...



Christmas Lunch


Tuesday 3rd Dec 11.30am	Friendship Group Christmas Lunch
Wednesday 11th Dec 6.45pm	Carol Singing to our older Parishioners.
Sunday 15. Dec 10.00	Children's Christmas breakup service.

There may be other Christmas events/services not decided upon yet.

WHERE'S SAGE THIS SUNDAY? - He's working in Queenstown running Youth Enabler for PCANZ.

This Sunday's Songs

Cornerstone
This I believe
Go tell it on the mountain
Christmas is Mary and Joseph



Duty Roster – 8th December (ADVENT 2 - Peace)

Lead-Preach:	Sage	Prayer:	Lois	Sound:	John R
Vestry:	Eileen	Reading:	Marilyn	Door:	Helen, Val
Morning Tea:	Bev, Beth	Banking:	Russell, Anne		

Friendship Group Christmas Lunch

*You are all invited
this Tuesday 3rd Dec*

Church foyer, 11.30am for noon.

A small plate of finger food to share would be appreciated.



Our over 80's (that we know of) have received a personal invitation.

Sales table. To assist with catering etc, RSVP on church clipboard (front reception desk) or phone Rachael Higgs 021 026 86970 or 548 9488 (no answer-service). Deadline 2nd Dec.

**CHRISTMAS CAROL SINGING
NELSON HOSPITAL**

Monday 9th December 6.30pm

Join the Chaplaincy Team and the Salvation Army Band

Assemble on level 2 at 6.25pm
to sing with us around the hospital

CHILDREN & FAMILIES WELCOME LIGHT SUPPER TO FOLLOW
COME DRESSED FOR CHRISTMAS

Our Mission Statement

Loving God, loving others and caring for God's creation