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the Gateway

Autumn 2020

Magazine of the Anglican Parish
of Upper Riccarton - Yaldhurst



Reflections From the Vicar & the Editor on the theme of **New Beginnings**
Features Restoration, Mural, Thoughts from a Mosque Survivor
Reports Various parish groups including St Luke's
History The Lychgate
Articles Forgiveness, Christiana's mercy mission, Stephanie Hersh
Activities Explore the Maze & Colour-me-in for readers of any age!
 ... and MUCH more...

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Usual Sunday Services

St Peter's...

8.00 am Holy Communion.

9.30 am Holy Communion.

11.00 am Family Church

every 4th Sunday.

St Luke's...

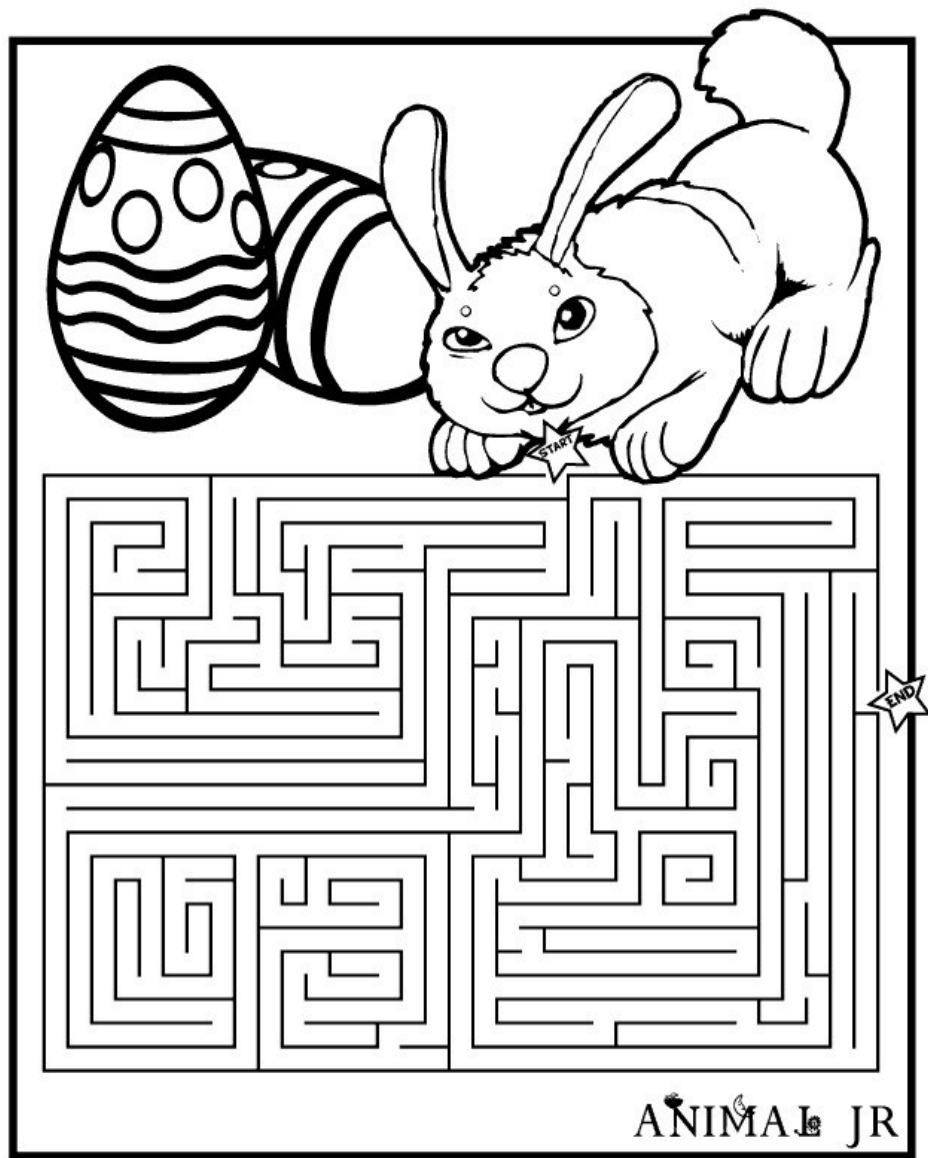
9.30 am Holy Communion every 1st and 3rd

Church services are cancelled from 23rd March due to the Covid-19 virus. Updates will be posted on the St Peter's Facebook page.

← Cover photo—A panel from the new mural along Yaldhurst Rd

Colour me in!





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New Beginnings



One of the things I enjoy most about my job is the opportunity to baptize people, whether it was like last week and a tiny baby with a beautiful smile, or a young adult, (as at the end of this month,) or someone who has turned to Christ on their deathbed. I know it's not about me, but it does give me joy. Baptism is a new beginning. A fresh start as a person gives their life over to Christ.

Our world, created by our loving creator, bursts with new beginnings. As I write this a monarch butterfly is soaring around the Vicarage garden. Emerging from the struggle in her chrysalis, I wonder if the butterfly realises what beauty she brings into the world?

In case you have just arrived from Mars, you may not have seen two other new beginnings here at Church Corner. The St Peter's Anglican Preschool is a new beginning as it welcomes tiny people, giving them a sense of belonging and God's love. The emerging, (out of its white chrysalis) restored St Peter's Church building is also a new beginning. To be opened on the 13th of December by the Bishop with all due pomp and circumstance, it will provide a spiritual home for generations to come; an awe inspiring, warm, safe, hospitable sacred space.

Our God is giving us all these new beginnings and many more besides.

This is really what Easter is all about. A new beginning. Not content for the suffering and death of Jesus on the cross to be the last word, God's love raises him to new life on Easter morning. Jesus is the first born from the dead and we the people of God will be next! This is our hope, this is our new beginning from which all our other new beginnings find their meaning. God's love is stronger than death.

As we gather for our Holy Week and Easter worship a mysterious thing happens: we become God's new beginning too.

A sacred space where God's love abides. — **Happy Easter!**



The great gift of Easter is hope - Christian hope which makes us have that confidence in God, in his ultimate triumph, and in his goodness and love, which nothing can shake. - Basil C. Hume

We often sing about an "Upside-down Christmas", but never of an "Upside-down Easter". Yet while Christians in the northern hemisphere celebrate Easter with the promise of spring in the air, here in the southern hemisphere winter is fast approaching. Instead of signs of new life, we see nature shedding its summer mantle and preparing for colder days. However, there is a certain appropriateness to celebrating the crucifixion and resurrection in autumn. There is a symmetry between the baring branches of the trees, and the starkness of the cross; the stripping of the foliage and the stripping of Christ's raiment. The Easter candles shine more brightly, reinforcing the message that Jesus is the light of the world, and the beginning of new hope.

Every year we experience the changing seasons, with the cold and grey of winter dampening spirits and sometimes testing good humour. But the forerunner to winter is autumn, and in Christchurch, it is glorious, with its richness of colour and wonderful evening light. Surely this richness is a promise to us that winter is but a temporary state, and that death is but a new beginning.

STOP PRESS

Most of the articles in this edition were written before Covid-19 hit us. Now, services and fundraising events are cancelled or postponed.

Christiana Heine, Nick's daughter, has not gone

on her mercy mission to Senegal and the Mercy Africa ship has returned to its home. But we have decided to leave the story for you to read. There will be no Easter Week services. The Fashion Show is postponed.

Vicar Nick hopes to be able to have you attend virtual services, streamed in the internet. St Peter's will do its very best to keep you up-to-date. Watch the parish Facebook page. (www.facebook.com/stpeterschurchcorner). Don't hesitate to contact any of the parish Care Bears for information or help.



STOP PRESS

Holy Week services at St Peter's and St Luke's are cancelled. We are not sure about Good Friday with the Methodists. Please check the parish Facebook page for recent decisions and information.

HOLY WEEK AT ST PETER'S & ST LUKE'S



Palm Sunday (5th April) at St Peter's

9:30am service - Combined Preschool and Parish

Holy Thursday (9th April)

7:30pm Foot Washing & Eucharist at Parish Hall

Good Friday Service (10th April)

9:30am at the Methodist Church

Easter Sunday (12th April) at St Peter's

8am & 9:30am - Eucharist & Greening of the cross

**Please bring some flowers or greenery to transform the cross*

Easter Sunday (12th April) at St Luke's

9:30am - Eucharist & Greening of the cross

**Please bring some flowers or greenery to transform the cross*

- ♦ Fashion Show, Saturday 18th April, 7:30 pm (POSTPONED)
- ♦ Parish AGM, 3rd May after 9:30 am service (UNKNOWN)
- ♦ Book Sale 11th-13th June (UNKNOWN)
- ♦ Family Service Patronal, 28th June (UNKNOWN)

From the Parish Register

Baptisms (2020)

01 Mar 2020 Zachary Adam Raymond (Parents: Sabrina and Stephen Raymond)



Funerals & Interments (2020)

26 Jan 2020 Harold and Elinor Holmes (Interment)

14 Mar 2020 (Mary) Jean McLachlan



Feedback and ideas please!

Like it? Or not?

We want you to know what you think about this edition of the Gateway. Have your say by emailing the editor through stpeter@world-net.co.nz.

Got a story idea?

We encourage you to submit stories or ideas for stories, comment on any article, or send feedback by emailing the editor. We would love to hear from you!

Lesly Grefe

Getting to Know You!



Kia ora koutou! My name is Lesly Grefe and I am a born-and-raised Californian with big hopes of becoming a Kiwi someday. I feel so honored to be included in this month's Gateway magazine for St Peter's Anglican Church, and am privileged to be working with both St Peter's Preschool and Parish every day.

I moved to New Zealand in December 2018 to be with my significant other, Aaron, after a year and a half of long distance dating. The two of us met in 2017 while we were both counselors at a summer camp for children called "Camp Sonshine" in Maryland, U.S.A. I am sure you have heard this said many times before, but I can confirm that people TRULY will do crazy things when it comes to love.

Back home in California I was raised by my mom, Lisa, my dad, Bill, and grew up with my younger sister, Hannah all of whom moved to Texas shortly after I moved over to New Zealand. My mom is a nurse, and although currently unemployed, is an expert in hospice care. My dad is a mechanic and has been fixing cars since the age of 14. My sister is currently working at Home Depot and living life alongside her partner, Andrew. Although California is a wonderful state, I rarely miss the physical place like I do my family.

I am passionate about animals, music, building connections with others, creatively expressing myself, and most of all -- children! It has been the greatest gift being employed by the preschool, and seeing the Lord's work in the lives of all generations here at St Peter's. I pray each and every one of you has a wonderful Easter season and that you feel encouraged to reflect on the never-ending and vast love Jesus has for His creation.

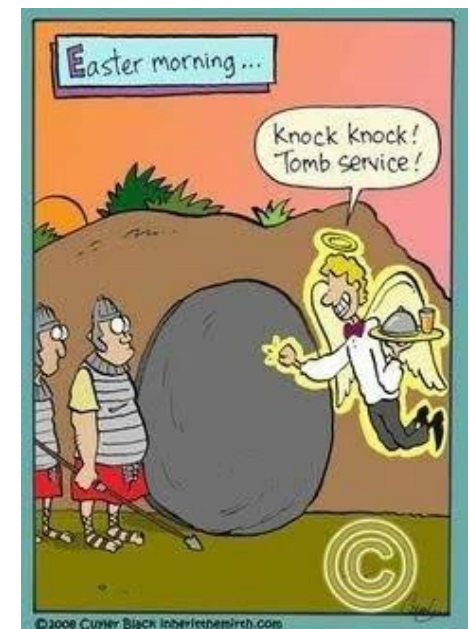
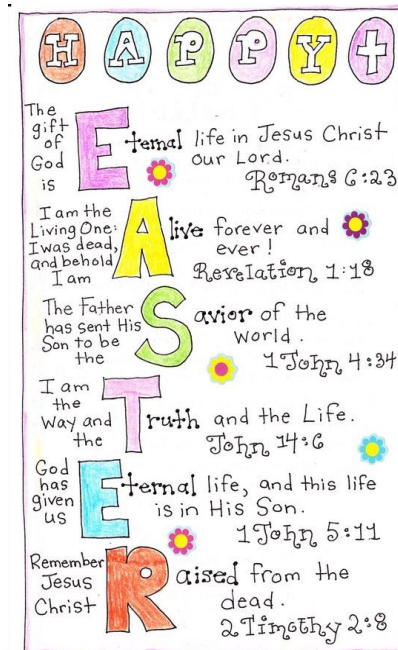


On March 15th, 2019 at about 1:40 pm, *Yasir Amin*, an IT specialist with the Christchurch City Council, and his father, *Muhammed Amin Nasir*, on holiday from Pakistan, walked briskly along Deans Avenue towards the Al Noor Mosque for their regular Friday prayers. Suddenly a white Subaru stopped very near them, and the window opened. Yasir glanced towards it and noticed the driver inside pointing a gun at them. He shouted to his father "I think we had better run!" Both started running away from the car as shots rang out. The younger man was quicker, but his 67-year-old father was an easier target. He fell to the ground, hit by at least four bullets, then the Subaru raced away.



Yasir Amin, IT specialist with the Christchurch City Council

On a pleasant morning in late February, Graeme and I met up with Yasir to have a coffee and a quiet talk about the last 12 months. We wanted to know how they were coping with any ongoing trauma. Yasir began by saying that he felt he had moved on from those terrible events and had been able to tuck those memories away, so now it just felt like a dream. However, as the conversation evolved, it was evident to us that the scars from that day are still there. His father was visiting from Pakistan at that time and was one of the final victims shot by the gunman as he left the mosque. His surgery is still ongoing, with the latest being in December, and another scheduled for March. He continues to live with Yasir, who has a wife and 4 young children as well. He needs continual help and care with managing his colostomy bag, and the special diet he now requires. It is doubtful whether *Muhammed Amin* will ever go back to live in Pakistan because, although the health system there is free, it is so overcrowded and understaffed that at times there can be two patients having to share the same bed.



90th Birthday

Fay Mangos

On 14th February the **Conversation English Class** celebrated Andrea Baker's 90th Birthday. Andrea has been a very supportive volunteer at the class from the very first lesson.

Although numbers are lower this year, we had a wonderful afternoon tea party, with party games, singing, dancing and music from the students. Ethan contributed to the entertainment with his talented guitar playing.

Another highlight of the afternoon was a presentation of a multi-coloured scarf to Andrea by the Chinese members.

Afternoon tea was a sit down affair with decorated tables, birthday cake and lots of other treats, enjoyed by all!



G



Whenever his father requires surgery, Yasir takes time off work to spend the days with his father, as he speaks no English and only understands a little. The last hospital stay ended up lasting 30 days in total, and during this time Yasir's wife still prepared all Muhammed's meals for him. Yasir desperately needs a holiday, but has used up all his compassionate leave, his sick leave, and has just a few days of his annual leave left.

His care of his father leaves him little time for his own family and he feels keenly that he is neglecting his children and wife. His one passion is cricket. Recently he broke a finger while playing and decided to sit out the rest of the cricket session. However, after 3 weeks away he realised that he needs this time for his own mental wellbeing. This is the only time he gets to be free of responsibilities, and to just enjoy socialising with his friends.

Just last month the police asked Yasir to write a victim impact statement. He agreed, but found that once it came to record his feelings, he couldn't do it – the memories were too overwhelming. He had no intention of being part of any memorial service for that same reason, but a few days after speaking to us he changed his mind.

Yes, I had no intentions, but last week I decided to go along with it. The reason is this memorial is being held for us for New Zealanders to show their love, support and solidarity to us, and we should stand together to show we are one. We cannot revert to the past so we should move on with what we have in the present.

As we prepare ourselves for Easter, let us also keep in mind the destructive outcome when hatred spills over in our community, and hold in our prayers Yasir, Muhammed, their families and all those in our Muslim family whose lives were forever changed on

March 15th 2019.



Muhammed Amin Nasir
with his son Yasir

G

For some time now, we have seen steady progress on the outside of the church. The north and south transepts have been pushed out, and scaffolding has grown and then shrunk back, then grown again.

It is interesting to look back at some of the old photos of the interior. We think this one (below) is from the early 1900s and is looking through the nave to the west (back) of the church. Look at how narrow the nave was, compared with today. Of course, this was the old wooden church, and our magnificent limestone font was there then! Notice also that the lights were kerosene and candle.



Our building restoration contractor, *Higgs*, has been doing much unseen inside work and we thank them and in particular the site manager, Ray MacFarlane, for a recent guided tour outside and inside to capture the progress for this Gateway.

2020 began on February 2nd with AAW Sunday. The committee was commissioned and we had a special morning tea to mark the occasion. This was followed by our Wednesday meeting when, following years of tradition, our Vicar Nick was our guest. He gave us a very thought-provoking talk which sent us away with a lot to think about. Lynn Ellis and I attended the Diocese AGM at St. Barnabas which brought February to a close. Our guest at our March meeting was Patrick Murray, Executive Officer at Anglican Care, who told us about the changes in the way they work. We hosted *World Day of Prayer* which must have been a success because we provided a "cupper and food," and all were most happy to stay and chat. Always a sign of a successful meeting.



Patrick Murray



To date, we have collected well over 400 pairs of our unwanted spectacles that are being passed on to those more in need of them than do our drawers!

They are being delivered to the Islands to folk who are very appreciative of them.

There is a (marked) drop off bag in the hall for any that can be spared.

Thank you - keep them coming!



St Peter's Church & Sally Mac's of Amberley

Fashion Show

Sat POSTPONED 20

St. Peter's Church Hall, Cnr Yaldhurst and Main South Rd

Tickets \$25.00 (Incl. supper),

**Avail. from Sally Mac's, the church office or
phone Anne on 3428-374.**

All proceeds to the St Peter's Church Restoration Fund.

The new atrium on the north side is growing steadily. Much heavy steel framing and laminated wooden pillars are now in place. Its large concrete floor is rigidly tied to the corresponding floor of the south side extension, by a massive reinforced concrete beam under the old church floorboards.



A bird's-eye view of the new northside atrium

Scaffolding has recently



Site manager Ray MacFarlane at the top of the almost fully-repaired bell tower

appeared around the bell tower and we have seen workmen cleaning the stonework. The tower, in particular the parapets, required substantial remediation to be safe in another big shake.

As well as at the top of the bell-tower, there are castellated limestone caps around the outside of the clergy and choir vestries at the west end. These have been fixed in place

by inserting long steel rods down into the stone walls.

The concrete roof at the top of the bell-tower was badly cracked. It was repaired by injecting adhesive into the cracks through holes drilled every few inches along the cracks. When polished, the repair will be very tidy!



A section of repaired cracking in the bell-tower roof

Everywhere we look, there is steel reinforcing. Should you, one day, venture to the top of the tower, you will be impressed by the restoration, and the view!

For several months, the south transept extension has been shrouded in white plastic. I'm told that the reason for this is simply to enable construction to continue in bad weather.



Top of the bell-tower wall secured with a band of steel pinned into the stone.



Under the cover, the roof over the south transept is taking shape



Looking toward the south extended transept with its new brick column

Much is happening under the covers. On the south facing wall, new wooden frames have been installed for three stained glass windows, including the wonderful blue rose window designed by Christchurch artist Bill Sutton.

The frames look identical to the old limestone frames embedded in the original stone wall. The south extension will be finished in zinc sheets rather than stone.

Inside the church, the choir vestry has had its plaster lining stripped from the walls, exposing the original brick lining. Cracks have been filled.

Walking into the nave, there is still scaffolding along both walls. To accommodate the new atrium and the south transept extension, the brick walls along the nave have been reduced

Some Panels from the Yaldhurst Rd Mural



The mural comprises 6 different scenes across 25m x 1.9m in front of St Peters Anglican Church and Preschool. The ideas for these scenes were given to Ivey and me by the manager of the preschool, Tony Bracefield.

The six scenes are: Jesus's birth, Jesus walking on water, Jesus's death, Jesus's resurrection, Noah's ark, Preschool children (Matthew 19:14).

So, with that information, I put some ideas together and got it all approved by Nick and Tony. I started painting the mural on the 9th of December 2019 and we finished on the 31st of January 2020.

I grew up in Christchurch and moved to Auckland to study a Bachelor of Medical Laboratory Science in 2018. I board with the Bracefield family in Auckland, so this is how I got the opportunity to be a part of a vision for a mural at the preschool. I come back to Christchurch in my holidays to work and see my family, so I was blessed to have the whole summer to do this project! Art is one of my favourite hobbies so it was very cool to have a part in such an awesome mural! Ivey Vinson, a very talented art student who also lives in Auckland, came down at the start of January to design and complete the final children scene.

We both are aware of the privilege it was to paint this mural, and have been truly touched by the community's response to it. I really pray that people will find some encouragement and meaning from it as they pass by.

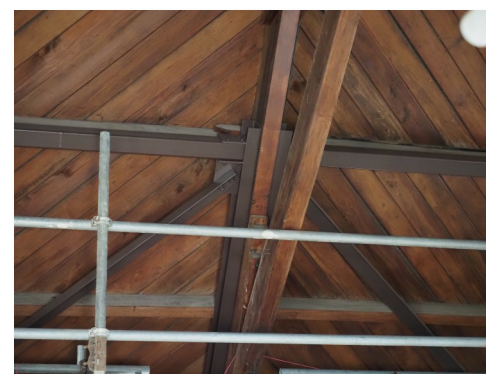


Susannah stands in front of one of her mural panels

in length. Most noticeable are two new brick columns, built to exactly match the old walls. The feeling of space created across the transept is now just amazing! This will be more so when the semi-circular raised floor is removed.

After a walk around at ground level, we climbed the internal scaffolding, legs protesting. Critical strengthening work inside the church has been the installation of steel reinforcing beams to strengthen the roof. The steel has been designed to hold the roof and walls together in the event of a large earthquake. To do this, a new steel framework was constructed under the wooden roof lining and alongside the old roof support beams (and painted

black to make them less obvious). They are fastened to the wooden beams and fixed to the tops of the walls with long steel pins down into the masonry walls.



A typical section of roof reinforcing

This retro-fitted black steel frame can be seen along the full length of the nave and also above the old sanctuary (the new chapel). Above the south transept, the roof is being reconstructed around a new steel framework. There is also steel framing built into the rebuilt north transept roof. The somewhat shorter north transept leads into the new vestibule that is built around a laminated timber framework.



Inside the choir vestry the cracked plaster finish is gone from the walls, and cracks in the brick walls has been repaired

A consequence of adding space into the design is that the stone walls of the old sanctuary become partly absorbed by the new exterior and appear inside the church.

The picture of the south sanctuary stone wall shows a steel reinforcing vertical beam at the wall's end to hold it firmly in a shake. Note the lowered concrete floor for the new organ foundation where the organ will sit alongside the stone wall.

One cannot help but be very impressed by the clever engineering that is being used to restore the extensive damage. Ongoing safety underpins our desire to transform the church into a much more useful building, and at the same time to honour the heritage that our predecessors have entrusted to us.



Reinforced south wall of the old sanctuary at the organ pit



A bird's-eye view from the scaffolding, towards the centre of the transept



Participants brought along items from Zimbabwe, including three small baskets woven from orange string bags that we used for the offertory, a soap stone ornament of the national bird (eagle), a carved wooden Madonna, as well as other items that



were on display. These included Maureen Dixon's African drum, tambourine, and a small doll with a pounding pot, made from corn husks. Also displayed were various items portraying indigenous food – rice, sweet potato, mushrooms, groundnuts (peanuts), copies of the Coat of Arms, Zimbabwean flag, the

Flame Lily (this means 'full of glory'), and a woven mat Kofe gave us to place on the altar which was draped with colours from the flag – green, yellow, red, black and white.

World Day of Prayer services always end with the rousing singing of "The Day You gave us, Lord, is passing". A sumptuous morning tea was served after the service.



This year our parish was host for the service in our area. It used to be Women's World Day of Prayer but is now open to everyone. The theme was "**Rise! Take your mat and walk**". The Bible text (John 5:2-9a) related to the theme, when Jesus saw the man who had been ill for 38 years who couldn't get into the water without help, yet no one came to his aid. Jesus asked him, "*Do you want to be made well?*" When he answered, Jesus told him "*Stand up, take your mat and walk.*"

We involved members of our parish, Upper Riccarton Methodist, Our Lady of Victories, St Teresa's, and St Ninians. This year's service was prepared by the women of Zimbabwe with music from their country. We changed some of the songs for alternatives that were known to most people. Judith Bylett played the piano for the service and one of her choir members sang "Come as you are" with words shown on the screen. This was a delightful touch and we were grateful for their music.

Our Vicar, Nick, welcomed everyone at the beginning, and gave the blessing at the conclusion along with some prayers. Members of the other churches took parts of the service that I had allocated. We were pleased to have Brother Yan from St Teresa's, and three school girls who lit three candles and whose coloured sashes represented different concepts. *Red* - God is Love. Let us rise with our hearts full of love! *White* - Jesus is the Prince of Peace. Let us take up our mats for peace among us! *Yellow*, - God makes all things new. In Christ we are reconciled to God. Let us walk towards a new life of reconciliation. They had taken a collection that they brought along, which considerably boosted the offertory taken at the service.



While funds continue to come in from a number of sources we remain a way off our final target of \$2.5 million and so ask for a renewed effort from every parishioner to achieve our 2020 vision and have all the bills paid by the time we reopen the doors - Sunday December 13th being the anticipated date.

Over recent months we have run a successful Christmas raffle and quiz night, and hosted a chocolate extravaganza with a presentation and tasting provided by Stephanie Hersh. For those who have been asking for more we are delighted to report that Steph will return in July - watch for the date. Also coming up is a Fashion Parade in conjunction with Sally Mac's of Amberley on Saturday 18th April at 7.30pm (tickets now available from the parish office or Anne Strachan ph 342.8374). Planning is also underway for a major ball later in the year.

We continue to invite participants in the Living Stones and the Living Bequest programmes and information brochures are available on request. As we come to the end of the financial year all donors are reminded that receipts for their gifts can qualify for tax rebate. Always on the lookout for trusts and charities along with individual benefactors we would value any suggestions about such sources. Making applications is a fairly specialised task these days and if anyone could advise us of an experienced person who could assist us with this we would be most appreciative.

So many people are involved in our project in many and various ways and it's encouraging to see the progress on the actual building as we peep over the fence. Thanks to Graeme Cox's good efforts we have photographic evidence of what's happening inside, and we hope to provide an information session with the site manager and Graeme at some time soon. Also coming up we are hopeful for an exciting announcement regarding the new chapel in what was the former sanctuary and choir area and negotiations to this end are ongoing.

In the meantime please continue your generosity and speak to any member of our committee at any time - Corin Murfitt, Paul Rhodes, Bob and Lynn Shearing, Fiona Gilmore, Graeme Cox, Bruce Williams, Jo Winfield, and Vicar Nick.

The humanitarian organisation, *Mercy Ships*, runs a number of charitable floating hospitals. The *MV Africa Mercy* is a converted rail ferry and is currently the world's largest non-governmental floating hospital. It is set up to provide onboard medical care, an intensive care unit and a recovery ward. Common conditions treated include head and neck tumours, hernias, cleft palate, crossed eyes, cataracts, bowed legs, club feet and burns. More than 1,300 volunteers from over 50 nations serve with *Mercy Ships* each year.



The *MV Africa Mercy*

The *MV Africa Mercy* is currently assigned to the port of Dakar in Senegal. This is a country in West Africa. It is bordered by Mauritania in the north, Mali to the east, Guinea to the southeast, and Guinea to the southwest. Senegal also surrounds The Gambia, a country occupying a narrow sliver of land along the banks of the Gambia River, which separates Senegal's southern region of Casamance from the rest of the country.



Senegal

Christiana Heine is a professional nurse and currently works in the Emergency Department at Christchurch Public Hospital. She has made the decision to join the Mercy Ship's mission, and leaves on March 14th for two and a half months.

During this time she will be sharing her sleeping quarters with over a dozen other women. In preparation for this adventure, Christiana will need many inoculations, as well as shopping for appropriate summer clothing to wear among a mainly Muslim population. The additional fear of the coronavirus makes this a particularly brave decision on Christiana's part. This is purely a charitable venture, and all expenses incurred will be met by Christiana and her husband.

After the presentation I had several people coming up to me, saying that we must get her back and ensure we advertise widely as she was a joy to listen to and so gracious with her time and advice. So pencil in the month of July, as we do indeed hope to get her back and we hope that you will be able to join us.



Two options, both require chocolate!



Previously-prepared tastings. Yum!



Nobody can tell a story quite as well!



Maybe the diet starts tomorrow!

Stephanie Hersh, chef instructor and former executive personal assistant to the legendary Julia Child, promised us a wonderful afternoon full of chocolate, cooking tips and tales. And she did not disappoint!

The first part of her presentation included cooking three different ways with chocolate. By using a basic ganache recipe she showed us how to make a Chocolate Roulade, Chocolate Pot de Crème and Truffles. The smell was divine and it was even better that we all got to have a tasting of each of the above, and a copy of each of the recipes. Her little tips as she cooked were brilliant, simple and got us all wanting to try these at home!



Stephanie explains the importance of Ganache as a vital food group!

After a very generous afternoon tea and a cuppa supplied by some church volunteers, a crowd of over 80 people gathered together again to hear about Stephanie's life experiences, including her current job working on a cruise ship and also working as personal assistant to Julia Child. She had some wonderful tales and told them with such humour. There were a lot of questions asked and the audience gathered could have stayed for at least another hour. A raffle was drawn which included two Julia Childs' cookbooks which Stephanie graciously signed for the lucky winners (which included our own lovely Sue Chappell). In addition, at Stephanie's request, we auctioned off some of the treats she had baked.

At the conclusion, Stephanie mentioned that she is due back in New Zealand for the month of July and generously offered to come back to do another presentation based on a different ingredient. This was met with great enthusiasm by all attending.



Christiana Heine

This is a wonderful example of how a few people can make a huge difference to the lives of so many. Those being treated would otherwise live out their lives with disfiguring, soul-destroying conditions. It is people like Christiana that give so many new hope and the chance for a new beginning.

This Eastertide, please remember Mercy Ships in your prayers, and in particular Christiana.

For more information, go to <https://www.mercyships.org/>



Christiana talks with the Vicar (her father) about her plans for volunteering in Senegal

What is the meaning of Lychgate?

A lychgate, also spelled lichgate, lyke-gate or as two separate words lych gate, is a gateway covered with a roof found at the entrance to a traditional English or English-style churchyard. The name *resurrection gate* is also used. Formerly used at burials for sheltering a coffin until the clergyman's arrival. — [Wikipedia](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lychgate)



St Peter's Lychgate

Heather Casperson hastens to remind us all that our lychgate is the assembly point should we need to vacate any of our buildings in an emergency!

But where did the lychgate originate? In the York Room of the main hall hangs a photograph of the old wood & stone church. It shows an entrance porch that clearly was later converted into the present lychgate.



The old wood & stone St Peter's church with the entrance that later became the Lychgate.

When the photograph was removed from its frame, the name Bowen appears in several places on the back of the frame. This is possibly **Sir Charles**

Bowen, who was a vestryman, church warden and synodsmen at St Peter's for 29 years, as well as being credited for being the originator of the idea of installing the first electric telegraph in New Zealand. He was the MP for Kaiapoi, and the Minister of Justice. He promoted the Education Act of 1877, which gave New Zealand free, compulsory and secular education. He rests in our churchyard.



Other writers too have expressed their verdicts in similar vein. T.S.Eliot for example spoke of the “rending pain of re-enactment” while the renowned philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche referred to the wounds of the past becoming the “gravediggers of the present”.

So the question becomes, will we allow these misdeeds to lock us permanently into the past? To which the Bishop proffers the only solution that can extract us from the destructive cycle of settling old scores. *“Only unconditional forgiveness,”* he contends, *“can switch off the engine of madness and revenge and invite us, with infinite gentleness, to move on into the future. Until we can do that, we are exiled in the horror of the past, locked in the unspeakable nightmare.”*

Let us be clear, forgiveness does not excuse evil and wrong-doing. God is certainly not indifferent to injustice, nor should sinners expect to escape scot-free the consequences of their actions. But forgiveness means we wish for the good of the person we have forgiven. We no longer seek revenge for what has been done to us. We no longer seek to hold on to bitterness and other dark thoughts that we may have reserved for those who hurt us. Forgiveness means that we metaphorically free the person from the chains that bind them in the slavery of resentment and release them with goodwill. Which ironically is not only intended to benefit the offender but as one person put it, *“To forgive is to set a prisoner free and discover that the prisoner was you.”*

So Paul, addressing the Christians in Rome, would counsel *“Do not repay anyone evil for evil. So far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all. Beloved never avenge yourselves. No, if your enemies are hungry, feed them; if they are thirsty, give them something to drink. Overcome evil with good.”*

Do we still harbour feelings of resentment or ill will towards someone who has hurt us? Have we been reluctant to set out on the road to reconciliation and healing of memories? If so, we do well to heed the clear words of Jesus in that most well-known of all prayers, for he makes it plain that God cannot forgive us our transgressions if we are withholding forgiveness from another person.



Two events, separated by the centuries but close in our thinking at this time, lead me to a common theme. The first we will recall on Good Friday as we consider Jesus Christ upon the cross; the second being the anniversary of the Mosque shootings a year ago. And what was demonstrated on both occasions? Forgiveness. Even as the executioners went about their bloody work at Calvary Jesus prayed for them - *“Father forgive them, they know not what they do.”* And the response from many of those who had lost loved ones in Christchurch on March 15th was similarly an attitude of forgiveness, even for such a heinous act.

This reaction was very difficult for a lot of people to comprehend. In our society it could even be described as counter-cultural. For we live in a very accusative, condemning society where reprisal is the expected response for any hurt that is inflicted. Perhaps beneath the veneer of respectability there lurks the more primitive code that demands an eye for an eye, a life for a life. While the call for justice may be a very honourable one, this can so easily tip over into a desire for vengeance, a justification for pay-back. Individuals, communities and nations can so easily harbour anger and resentment for past injustices; so much so that the response can come to dominate their thinking and their actions. As the former Bishop of Edinburgh, Richard Holloway, has written, *“We see this process pitilessly at work in those chronic ethnic and religious feuds that sentence generations of people to decades, sometimes centuries, of bitterness and bloodshed.”*

As he focuses attention particularly on the Israeli/Palestinian conflict, his conclusion is: *“Every day we witness the terrible wounds these crucified communities inflict on each other, with neither side able to feel the other’s pain. Neither community seems capable of forgiving the past in order to discover a new and better future. It appears that they would rather go on dying separately than try to learn to live alongside each other.”*



New digital piano for St Luke's—Haydn Hill reports...

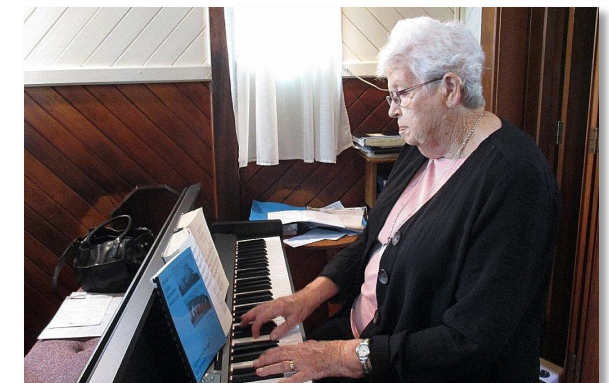
St Luke's church, Yaldhurst, has a new digital piano to replace its aging spinet electronic organ. The Korg C1 Air digital piano has been donated by parishioner and choir member Max Anderson, who is enthusiastic to maintain the musical standards at St Peter's and St Luke's.

The Korg has a full-size touch-sensitive piano keyboard with 30 different sounds available including organ sounds. It has many other features also and is so sophisticated that you can use Bluetooth connectivity on your smartphone to transmit your favourite music to the Korg's speaker system!

Thank you, Max, for your generosity and I am sure that worship at St Luke's will benefit from this new instrument.

Comments from the Congregation...

St Luke's members loved the sound of the new piano. The hymns sounded bright and uplifting and they thoroughly enjoyed singing along to it. From the comments overheard following the service, Audrey enjoyed playing it too. What a generous gift!



Audrey at the new piano





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Margaret Duffy Create with Fibre

Most Tuesday afternoons (1pm to 3pm), *Create with Fibre* meets in the York Room. As well as sharing biscuits and a hot drink, we have conversations that cover many diverse topics, and we even turn our hand to a variety of crafts.



This year we have seen beanies made for the Seafarers Mission to distribute, teddies have received faces in preparation for children in hospital, quilting has been unpicked, crochet skills have been honed, a car seat blanket is being knitted, and a cardigan is making slow progress.

We enjoy visits and chats with clergy and other folk who pass through. You are encouraged to come along, and bring something to do. Making progress on a project is not mandatory; the things that we create are just an excuse to gather. The real reason we get together is to talk, laugh, get out of the house, and we'd love you to come and join us!

G

