



# ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING REPORTS 2023/24

*for*

the Anglican Parish of Upper Riccarton–Yaldhurst

*meeting on*  
Sunday 28<sup>th</sup> April 2024  
at 11:30am



**St. Peter's & St. Luke's Churches**

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## Vicar

In reporting on the year that has been, I am very conscious that our Parish is a large network of people giving of their best to each other and to the work of our Church. As I write this on a typical Friday morning we have just finished Christian meditation in the Chapel, I talked with one of the Sunday School teachers about the new service, the A Team is trimming the hedge, Mary is folding the service booklet and newsletter in the old office, Peg is sorting out Sunday PowerPoints (on a non-paid day!) the ladies (under Jo's watchful eye, are sorting through garage sale stuff, Heather is at the vicarage sorting through carpet to sell, Bobbity has made a wonderful morning tea and Corin is standing by to eat it! and.... you get the idea. It would be an impossible task to name everyone who is a part of the network of care and work but please accept my heartfelt gratitude for all you do.



I do want to name the paid staff for special mention. Shyuan Wong in the office. She is so eager to please, especially with her digital skills and languages. I'm sure her language skills have helped our Mandarin speaking members to feel at home. It is worth noting that without our partnership with the Preschool we would not have a full time staffed office. Liz Orr and the staff at the Preschool make mixing with the families such a delight. Bob Gaudin is an exceptional Music Director and along with the unpaid commitment of Bill Grubb they make our choir the envy of many. Peter Zyskowski on very part time hours does an amazing job, especially digging the holes for the many interments. Ikumi Sakamoto keeps the church immaculate. Reverend Peg Riley is a joy to work with. She has energy and vision and we love her. Ethan Wilson-Bruce has done an amazing job this last year. Not only does he manage all the live streaming but has added podcasts this year. We have a high digital presence thanks to Ethan and the advertising he does on a tiny

budget shows at times like Christmas, when midnight filled the church for the first time in many years. We have been able to keep Ethan in this role thanks to a grant from the "Journey to Jesus," fund.

I'm also very thankful for the ministry this last year of our wardens Edwin Boyce and the people's warden Jo Winfield. How Edwin has time to do everything I don't know but my personal thanks to Essie for keeping him going. Jo is standing down this year after a number of years. Jo never says no - in fact I don't think it's in her vocabulary. She works tirelessly and is so gracious in doing it. Thank you Jo you have many achievements to look back on including restoring the church, building the preschool and welcoming the 2 o'clock congregation. My thanks also to the vestry and our treasurer Lynn Shearing who is somehow able to be a very full time accountant too.

This past year is notable for the Mission Impact Review,

undertaken by visitors from the Diocese. They praised us for many things and enjoyed many of our ministries. The overwhelming message, more so than any other parish ever reviewed, was that we want young people and their families to come to Church and be part of us. So they made 8 recommendations, including starting a new service. Following the review vestry considered the recommendations and last year we held 2 meetings with parishioners. The first meeting was to get the "feeling" of the parish, and the second to vote on the mission action plan. Vestry made a few changes to the original recommendations. The Special General Meeting unanimously endorsed the mission action plan with its 10 points of focus. (See below) So on the 7th of April we started our new service. Our motto is; Good music, Good kids programme, Good Coffee, Good News. This new service will be different and involve us all getting behind it, (even if you don't come you can pray for it).

Like every other parish in the Diocese, we face significant financial challenges. The budget contains a \$100,000 deficit. We can't go on having these deficits without making some difficult decisions very soon. I'm committed to "thinking outside the box," to find a way forward.

As we navigate the future together I am encouraged by a quote from Oswald Chambers, "faith never knows where it's being led, but it loves and knows the one who is leading." May we love and know the one who leads us more deeply this coming year.

*Ven. Nick Mountfort Vicar*



**Mission Action Plan headings for 2024:**

- Prayer
- Ministry of all the baptized
- Disciple making
- Stewardship programme
- Care of creation
- Accessible office
- Regular Finance committee
- Maintenance committee
- New service
- Incorporation strategy

**Associate Priest Report**



Thank you for your ongoing

encouragement and support through this year, I feel so grateful to be part of this worshipping community and larger community of Upper Riccarton/Yaldhurst.

We are challenged to do something different in our community. Our focus over the past two years is to be intentional about welcoming people, hopefully some younger adults and families into our parish. The work that the vestry, staff and congregations have been engaging in is the welcoming home for people to seek, to grow, and to learn about God's love.



And to develop our culture of prayer for the vision and courage to change, we pray:



parents to join us more regularly. It is fun to meet with the preschool children each Wednesday, reading to them in the Chapel before the Wednesday morning Eucharist service. Occasionally we are involved in their evacuation drills.

To begin our changes, we made some room for children in our church.

The corner was tucked away, and the children were in with us.



Just a few weeks ago, we moved the children's space into the atrium, with excellent activity packs created by Linda Sinclair.



The children continue to be a delight, though we would pray for more to join us each week. We have the preschool and would encourage those children and

Though we all need to be prepared.



Last December, we changed our Family Church services.



The best bits of this service are the musicians and families that take part in each service in readings,

prayers and taking part in the activities which go with the talks.

Always a highlight is the Christmas Children's service on Christmas Eve.

There have been many baptisms, weddings and celebrations of life, filled with smiles and tears.



And the precious pastoral moments:



Our Care Bears are wonderful people: Thank you to each of them for their caring, prayers and dedication. (Sorry, this is not all of them in the photo!)



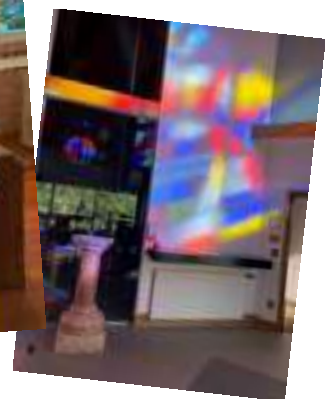
And the many people who give of their talents and time to the service of our congregations.



I also took time last year to learn about Children's ministry in parishes, and finished that course with a retreat weekend in Wellington.



There is so much to be involved in, take pride in, and have fun.



Thank you again, and God Bless us all.

Blessings,  
*Peg Riley*





## *Wardens' Report*

It is with great pleasure and gratitude that we present the annual report for the Parish of Upper Riccarton Yaldhurst. As wardens, we are honoured to serve this vibrant and caring community, and we extend our heartfelt thanks to each and every one of you for your dedication and support throughout the year.



We are committed to supporting and encouraging the vital work of our Vicar the Venerable Nick Mountfort and our Associate Priest the Rev'd Peg Riley and any other clergy serving in our midst. We recognize the significance of their ministry in nurturing our faith, providing spiritual guidance, and shepherding our community.

Additionally, we are dedicated to ensuring the provision of all necessary resources for public worship, maintaining the sanctity of our worship spaces, and preserving order during services. Through our steadfast commitment to these

responsibilities, we strive to create an environment where all can encounter the presence of God and grow in their relationship with Him.

First and foremost, we wish to express our deepest appreciation to our clergy, staff, and volunteers. Your tireless efforts and unwavering commitment to serving our parishioners have been truly commendable. Whether through pastoral care, worship leadership, administrative duties, or volunteering in various ministries, your contributions have made a significant impact on the spiritual growth and well-being of our community. Your dedication is the cornerstone of our parish's success, and we are immensely grateful for your service.

As we reflect on the past year, we are mindful of the ongoing and increasing costs associated with running a parish. From utility bills and maintenance expenses to staff salaries and outreach programmes, the financial demands continue to rise, especially those associated with insurance. Despite these challenges, we remain steadfast in our commitment to stewarding the resources entrusted to us responsibly. We are deeply

thankful to all parishioners who generously contribute their time, talents, and financial support, enabling us to fulfil our mission and ministry effectively.

In addition to financial considerations, we also prioritize health and safety matters within our parish community. This goes beyond the normal health and safety issues and now encompasses safeguarding, that is to say making our churches a safe place to be in every aspect. We recognize the importance of providing a safe and secure environment for worship, fellowship, and outreach activities. We remain vigilant in our efforts to safeguard the well-being of all parishioners, visitors, and staff members.

Furthermore, the maintenance of our buildings remains a top priority. Our church facilities serve as sacred spaces where we gather for worship, prayer, and community engagement. As such, it is essential to ensure that these spaces are well-maintained and conducive to spiritual growth and fellowship. We are grateful for the diligent efforts of our maintenance staff and volunteers who work tirelessly to upkeep our buildings

and grounds, preserving them for future generations to enjoy. Currently there is design work underway on the Bowden Hall to enhance its earthquake rating.

We extend our heartfelt thanks to all those who attended the "Leading Your Church Into Growth" (LyCiG) conference, where we were inspired and equipped with practical insights to nurture spiritual growth and vitality within our parish. Your participation reflects a shared commitment to the mission of expanding God's kingdom and building up His church.



Additionally, we express our gratitude to those who participated in the Mission Impact

Review, a reflective process that has prompted us to consider new service times and formats to better meet the needs of our diverse community. Your input and engagement have been invaluable as we discern how best to serve and minister to those entrusted to our care.



We extend our heartfelt thanks to our Mandarin Congregation for their unwavering enthusiasm for the Gospel and their remarkable energy in serving the Lord. Your dedication to spreading the message of Christ is truly inspiring and fills our hearts with joy.



We are deeply grateful for the generous gifts of money and in-kind contributions that you have bestowed upon our parish. The pathway from the car park to the church and the refurbishment of the Upper Room in the Parish Hall

are tangible expressions of your love and support, enhancing the functionality and beauty of our shared worship spaces.

As we express our gratitude, we also eagerly anticipate the continued connection and collaboration between our congregations. We look forward to deepening our bond through joint worship experiences and mutual participation in the life of the parish. Together, may we continue to glorify God and advance His kingdom, united in love and purpose.

Overall, we extend again our deepest gratitude to everyone who has contributed to the life and vitality of the Parish of Upper Riccarton-Yaldhurst over the past year. Your continued support, dedication, and prayers are invaluable as we journey together in faith. May God bless each of you abundantly as we continue to serve and grow in love and fellowship.

*Vicar's Warden*      *People's Warden*  
*Edwin Boyce*              *Jo Winfield*



## **St Luke's Church**

St Luke's has had a busy year. We are very lucky to have a core group of people committed to keeping our little church running smoothly with regards to the running of services, cleaning and general maintenance as well as outreach into the community. We have had construction going on around us on adjoining properties which has seen the church property now with a six-foot fence on three boundaries.

### **Worship**

We have been very blessed to have a number of different people take our services this year: Nick and Peg backed up by Gerard as well as others. We thank you all. Our clergy were ably assisted by Janet Noonan, who retired from this role at the end of last year, and Sue Chappell.

We had our annual Pet Service in March 2023; everyone loves seeing the animals in the church. Once again students from Yaldhurst School were invited, unfortunately we have not been taken up on our invitation as of yet.

We had a farewell service for Janet Noonan where she was presented

with flowers and a thank you card. This presentation was delayed until January of this year due to Janet's ill health. We wish Janet all the best.

St Luke's Patronal festival was celebrated with a great service on Sunday 15th October celebrating 130 years. The service was followed by morning tea which included a birthday cake. It was lovely to have St Peter's choir join us for our celebrations. Thank you for joining us.

On the 17<sup>th</sup> March a Harvest Festival service



was held and the produce donated was taken to the City Mission to aid their Foodbank.

### **Music**



Last year we welcomed Anne Marie

Manzano as our new organist. She was new to playing at



services and grew into playing with confidence and vigour. It is great having Anne Marie as our organist as she is willing to try new things. A big thank you to Anne Marie. We have also been lucky that Audrey Armstrong has stepped in for the Sundays that Anne Marie has not been available.

### Maintenance

Although the roof repair took many months from planning to finishing it was well worth the wait. The church looks very smart with its new dark grey roof. After the roof was completed, the church needed a really good clean inside. A couple of working bees were held and the church was cleaned inside and out. The garden was given a good spruce up with weeding and the trimming of shrubs and trees. We still have an ant problem but that is being dealt with on a regular basis.

### Growing our Church Conference

Both James Cliff and I attended the Growing our Church Conference that was held at St Christopher's Church. It was an informative couple of days and gave us both the push to try new things at St Luke's.

### Coffee and Chat

As a way to reach out into the community we trialled for 3 months, a "Coffee and Chat" session. These were held on the 3rd Monday of each month



starting on the 16<sup>th</sup> of October beginning at 8.45am. At the end of the 3 months, we had a review and it was decided to continue to hold the Coffee and Chat mornings but to start them a bit later - they now start at 9.30am. We have had new people turn up every month, numbers varying from meeting to meeting. The most recent has proven that we are making headway and it was the right



decision to continue. Everyone has enjoyed the great food and coffee, and the camaraderie being developed is

awesome. I would like to say a great big thank you to Colleen,

Rachel, Liz and Sue for their support in this venture.

### **Home Group**

Another new initiative for St Luke's is the instigation of a 'House/Home Group' which is being run by James and Robyn Cliff. It is still in its infancy but those who are attending are enjoying the time spent learning about each other and discussing passages from the Bible. At present we meet every other Tuesday at 6.30pm.



Thank you to all who attend and assist at St Luke's, it is a privilege to join with you at our services

*Carol Carryer  
March 2024*



### **Card Makers**

2023 was a great year for our group. We made many very beautiful cards using a lot of our

equipment and this helps our creativity. Our group shares ideas for cards. We meet once or twice a month in the Bowden hall from 10am to 4pm. We have a shared finger food lunch. New members are always welcome. If anyone would like a card for a special occasion, we are very happy to make the card. Our group started in 1998 and over the years our cards have gone to many places in New Zealand and overseas.

*Irene Coman*



### **Care Bears**

The committee consists of clergy plus 10 laypeople, David and Jo Winfield, Sue Robb, Sue Chappell, Liz Delamare, Mary Shirtcliffe, Barbara Clarke, Bobbity Murfitt, Bruce and Adrienne Williams.

We meet twice monthly, alternating between face to face meetings and via zoom. Each meeting we consider those in the parish with special needs, those that need prayer and update the prayer list for the weekly pew sheet.

We are kept abreast of the ministry to the elderly in the 8 rest homes

in our area and any special initiatives that may enhance the Pastoral Ministry of our parish.

*Adrienne Williams*  
*(Minute Secretary)*  
2 April 2024



### **Choir & Music**

The last year has been an extremely successful one for the choir. We've continued growing our repertoire, with some new anthems by composers such as Ruth Elaine Schram, Bob Chilcott and John Rutter. In addition to the new repertoire, we've continued to mix in some of the old favourites like *The Lord is my Shepherd* (Goodall) and *Set Me as a Seal* (David N. Childs). I am always impressed by the eagerness of the choir to learn new music, as well as improve upon old pieces. I am truly grateful for everyone who comes to sing each week, of which there are currently over 20! We are always recruiting, and pleased to report we've had a new bass join us in the last few months.

A particular highlight for us this year was our performance of "Invitation to a Miracle" on 17<sup>th</sup>

December, which replaced the usual Carol Service. This performance was a year in the making, and involved much work on behalf of myself, the choir and the small group of instrumentalists who came to accompany us. Overall, this event was a massive success and was highly praised by the audience (of which there were over 100). Whilst a piece of this scale is not feasible to put on every year, we will be investigating similar projects in the future when time/opportunity allows.



I'd like to give special thanks to Nick and Peg for their continual encouragement and support. Kathy has now retired from creating the weekly service sheets and the slides for each service, but

it cannot be overstated how much of a contribution she made to keeping the show running! Peg has now picked up these duties, as well as Pamela Hindin-Whitewood, which we appreciate greatly. I'd also like to thank Ethan for ensuring that the livestream viewers are able to hear our music, so that nobody misses out on the hymns and the anthems even if they are unable to attend in person. I must thank Shyuan for her support in printing our music, as well as keeping us in the loop with church events and correspondence from the wider community of church music around Aotearoa New Zealand. Finally, I'd especially like to thank



Bill Grubb, our wonderful organist. His enthusiasm and passion shines through every week, and he is a joy to be able to work with.

*Bob Gaudin*



**eypsO**

Greetings All.

It has been another busy year for all our groups, offering all sorts of activities to parish and our wider community. I admire their enthusiasm. It has been particularly lovely for me (with eight grandchildren living overseas) to see so many more children and families joining in with activities and worship.

Change is something most of us resist – me included. Here we are in the midst of an exciting change to grow our parish, and none of us knows where this adventure will lead. We have great leaders and motivated people getting behind this initiative.

We do care.

I am pleased to say that I feel a sense of belonging – a part of this family of the parish of Upper Riccarton, St Peter's and St Luke's churches. We are fortunate to have stunning properties being well cared for, and able to be hired out to different groups. This is partly due to the wonderful volunteers we have in our community. We really are in an



ideal situation for learning and growth.

Thinking of people – all people, reminds me that I am writing a report – one that tells you I am grateful that there has not been a situation requiring escalation because of bad behaviour, neglect or abuse, brought to my attention. As I have said before, each of us has a responsibility to care for and protect our children, young folk, families and treasured elders.

There may soon be an opportunity for those, who are working with various groups and interested, to attend Safe Ministry Training workshops. At present we are waiting on confirmation of dates & venues. Several Vestry team members have done this training. I will let you know when I have further information.

See you in Church, choir, at our AGM & out & about.

Stay safe & well.

*Gin McKenzie*  
*CYPSO St Peter's & St Luke's*  
*Churches*  
*March 2024*



## **Digital Ministry**

Hello everyone! Reflecting on our Digital Ministry for 2023, I've realised it's been quite a year! A blend of trials, successes, and lots of learning. Our aim was to boost our online presence with a special focus on younger audiences. Here's a brief overview of what happened.

### **Embracing Video Formats**

*Short Videos: A Great Success.*

Our short videos, mainly clips from sermons, really took off, particularly on Instagram and TikTok. They were a hit, with some videos reaching thousands of viewers and one video reaching millions! Prayers are needed to maintain this record.

*Long Videos: Learning and Growing.*

Our longer videos on YouTube didn't quite hit the mark. We would post full length sermons from Nick or Peg and the occasional special guest speaker. They mostly ended up as a backup or replacement for those who missed our live streams, attracting at best, a few hundred views per video. There's definitely room for improvement here and a rethink

on what content we should use for this video format.

### *Livestreams: Consistent Growth.*

Our livestreams have been steadily growing, building a solid online community. We've seen a consistent increase in viewers each month, which is encouraging. When comparing it to 2022, 11 out of 12 months saw a larger increase of watchers in 2023 compared to 2022. It is great to see such consistency in growth!

### **The Numbers Speak**

Our YouTube channel showed growth – we're talking over a thousand hours of watch time and nearly 150,000 impressions (impressions are how often our videos appeared to people on YouTube). Interestingly, we've seen a shift in our age demographics. In 2022 a large majority were aged 65+, at the end of 2023, our largest viewer age bracket were ages 25-34.

### **Social Media and New Initiatives**

Our social media presence has grown steadily. We went from around 550 followers to 5705 followers at the end of 2023. The 'Prayer Requests' showed a meaningful impact at a small scale and 'Plan My Visit' never really

took off. Both have been key in understanding what our audience engages with.

### **Facing Challenges**

We've encountered a few challenges, especially with changes in social media algorithms as many platforms began to actively suppress content with "religious themes" and also managing negative comments at scale. It's been a learning curve, but we're adapting and improving our content to continue growth into 2024.

### **Looking Ahead to 2024**

With all our learnings, we're planning some changes for 2024. We are starting podcasts. We noticed over 2023, though people were watching our content, they were hesitant to comment and engage, creating a "consumer audience" rather than a community. We hope podcasts will allow people to feel more comfortable to convey their thoughts and engage more in what is being discussed, not just "watch for entertainment". We're focused on keeping our digital community engaged and deepening those connections which may decrease overall views initially, but in the hopes we build

a community of people who ask questions, and share thoughts and ideas, rather than an audience of consumers.

### **Wrapping Up**

2023 has been a year of growth, discovery, and reaching new people. We've learned a lot and laid the groundwork for a more connected digital community. We're excited to see where 2024 takes us, continuing to spread hope of Jesus to all online.

If you would like to read the full detailed breakdown of 2023's stats, please send me an email at [ewilsonbrucew@gmail.com](mailto:ewilsonbrucew@gmail.com)

*Ethan Wilson-Bruce*



### **Donation to the City Mission**

This year we have donated over 40 Food baskets to the City Mission. Often it is the large plastic crate in the choir vestry and some bags or boxes. This food and other items make a huge difference to those in need and to the work of the City Mission. Well, done and please keep up the good work!

Thank you, Peg Riley for taking the food in when I've been away.

Nga mihi  
*Heather Caspersen*



### **English Conversation Class**

We have a core of 6 people and many more sporadic students. We usually have 20-25 folk at each session. Liz Delamere, who is the coordinator, is in China as I write. She has trialled the Parish Hall as a venue but has found the echoes disturbing, so we are back in the Bowden Hall.



Fay Mangos and Heather Caspersen retired from the team last year, and we miss them very much. Their energy and enthusiasm was infectious. Elizabeth Grubb has joined us this year, she has done some teaching but prefers to lead groups and contribute ideas. Niya Kochakkan and Shirley Richards remains as helpers. Niya comes straight from school to join us and Shirley knows all the ropes.



Subjects for discussion have included: hospital, juries, Freedom of the Press as well as mundane things such as jackets and hats. We have discussions in small groups but join together for introductions and feedback. The students' ability to converse varies greatly.

Last year we had Reverend Peg, Pastor Stephen and Constable Carey as guest speakers. They

were appreciated by all. We always have afternoon tea and we occasionally play games. We operate from 4pm – 5:45pm each Friday in term time.



*Margaret Morton*



### *Exercise Class*

The Exercise Class meets every Tuesday between 9.30 – 10.30am in the Parish Hall where we aim to stretch and flex our muscles to attempt to keep our bodies fit.

There is an average of 13 attending each week.





We are a very friendly group and after our class we enjoy each other's company by chatting in the York Room over a cup of tea/coffee.

This Financial Year with our fee of \$4 per class we have raised \$1626 for Missions.

*Jean Anthony*



### ***Family Orchestra – Big Change***

Since Rev. John McLister started Family Church many years ago, the orchestra group has had the role of providing music for this service. Over the years we have had many members come and go. We have adapted through Covid lockdowns and our church restoration and have served the Family Church service faithfully through all of this. And in 2024 we once again prepare for change.



After the feedback from our parish review, it was decided that Family Church as we have known it, is set to change. This leads to an exciting opportunity for the orchestra. Firstly there is a shift from 11:15am to 10:45am and instead of playing music bi-monthly as we had been doing, we will now get the opportunity to play every week. These changes will help cement our group as a fundamental ministry to St Peter's Church.

Another big change for us is in the style of music. Thanks to John, we have had an amazing repertoire of Christian folk music which has served our Family Church well. For our new 10:45am service, we are looking to provide a more contemporary style of music. This

means younger generations that come into this service will be able to recognise some of their favourite songs. We are also looking at playing well known hymns in a contemporary style so that younger generations are able to connect to the amazing lyrics of past hymns. Furthermore we are putting more of an emphasis on singing Maori Christian songs as a way to connect people with the culture of Aotearoa/New Zealand. This will be a big shift for us as musicians but we are excited to take on the opportunity to play new music and serve the church through a different style.

I'm personally excited to begin collaborating with the vast amount of talent within our parish as we look to gather musicians from the Mandarin congregation, and the 9:15am service. These musicians are set to join in with our experienced Family Orchestra musicians to create a whole new group with a whole new sound. The willingness for people to step out in faith, to put up their hand and say "I want to support this through music" has been really encouraging to see. It really feels like the whole parish is behind this new service and new style.

Lastly I want to say my thanks to the orchestra musicians who have been serving so faithfully over the many years and many changes. There are so many of you to acknowledge but in particular I want to thank Matt, Bill, and Callum, who week after week, have practised and played with a joy for serving others through their gifts of music. Without your commitment we would not be in the exciting position we are in today.

Change is coming, and it is exciting to see!

*Ethan Wilson-Bruce*



### ***Garage Sale***

The weekly gets together of a small team of dedicated workers to prepare for the Annual Garage Sale continues.





There are four of us who come together in the Garage Sale Shed opposite the Parish Hall to receive, sort and pack sale items away until October when it all comes out for the Sale and then the process continues all over again.

Every now and again we receive items which we pass on to our Trade Me dealers, Dennys or Tim to sell if they can so we can get a much better price than if we sold it ourselves.



We encourage you to have a look around your place for items you no longer want and pass them on to us to sell to our clientele. With few

exceptions, we will sell almost everything.

If you are looking to help with something in the parish and can spare a couple of hours on a Friday morning we'd love to have your company. We have a great morning tea as well!!



*Jo Winfield – Convenor*



### ***Grounds at St Peter's and St Luke's***

**The lawns** at both St Peter's and St Luke's continue to be mown by contractor Turf Technologies on an as-and-when-required basis. Steady rain over Spring and early Summer caused a major increase in grass growth that necessitated more frequent mowing. Now we are in a drought, just like last year.

**Peter Zyskowsky** has continued as our very capable part-time Groundsman. He does well to maintain our grounds on just 14.5 paid hours per week. Over recent weeks, we have observed that Peter has a helper – an unknown man has been seen spending quite some time going along every line of graves and scraping off the moss from the concrete, and this has helped to make the graveyard look more cared for. I have approached him on a couple of occasions to thank him.

**Tree maintenance** continued with the thinning of the crowns of some of the larger trees in the Glebe, and in the cemetery along Main South Road. With the help of our chipper, all of the material has been able to be either chipped or turned into firewood, leaving nothing to take to the dump.

Regrettably, there has been a build-up of branches etc at St Luke's over many years of accumulation, and when the neighbour suggested that we shift the pile away from his boundary, we were forced to address the issue. Sue and John Chappel came to the rescue, with John loading it up on a truck and taking it to his farm for burning. We are very

grateful for his help, which frankly was beyond us.



*Fergus Gillon  
trims the  
Vicarage  
hedge*

**The rose garden** has been struggling of late, even though we were able to resurrect the irrigation system. Fortunately, help has arrived in the form of Peter Troon, who has offered to lend his expertise to rejuvenate the rose bushes. Some may have to be replaced as they are now very old and gnarly. Our thanks go to Gwen for looking after the roses over the past year or two.

**The Chipper** continues to give valuable service, and we now have a fairly large pile of chip for sale as garden mulch.



*Peter Troon pruning the roses*



The “**A Team**”, a small group of volunteers, has met regularly, mainly on Friday mornings, to carry out maintenance work including minor repairs to buildings and services, and grounds maintenance, such as tree pruning, leaf raking, compost maintenance, gate and fence work, and hedge trimming. The team currently includes Brian Anthony, Fergus Gillon, Keith Marshall, Gwen Guild, Fred Chung, Chris Sinclair, David Lewis, Peter Troon and yours truly. Please feel free to join us. The highlight of the day is the exceptional morning tea, which is shared with Jo and Brian David Winfield’s garage sale team.



*Anthony repairing an internal fence*

**The Parish Community Garden** project in the Glebe flourished again last year, with several gardeners participating. The fruit trees produce apples, plums, pears, peaches, quinces, black and red currants, and kiwifruit, much of

which gets sold on the Mission Table, while the gardens produce potatoes, pumpkin, cabbage, cauliflower, broccoli, leeks, rhubarb and sweet corn for those who take the trouble to grow them.



*Gwen Guild and Fred Chung bagging compost for the Plant Sale*

Thank you to the parish for giving us the opportunity of participating in these activities, and to our loving God who upholds us all in the fulfilling work and keeps a smile on our faces.

*Dennys Guild 7/3/24*



### ***Health and Safety Report***

No major accidents or injuries had been reported this year to date. However, three minor trip/fall incidents, a minor glass cut and a hot water splash incident were

reported during this year. One trip incident had resulted in a protracted knee injury.

Preventative actions to minimize further occurrence of these injuries have been taken.

The Church fire evacuation drills had been taken as required over the last twelve months covering all Church services.

The next drills are scheduled for April and October this year.

*C Sinclair*  
*Health and safety co-ordinator*



***Lenten Study: Praying the Scriptures through Lent - Five Sessions (20 Feb to 19 Mar 2024)***

This year, our study group met on Tuesday evenings and it was encouraging to note that this year the numbers had grown to 14. This growth meant moving to the Atrium. (which worked well) and made car parking easy.

The Revd. Peg was our inspiring and enthusiastic leader and we followed the Lectio Divina (divine



reading) method. The Lectio course is a five session video series with Pete Greig and his special guests, exploring the ancient practice of Lectio Divina. Pete Greig is a UK Pastor and Author. *Readings: Mark 8:31-38 / John2:13-22 / John3:14-21 / John12:20-33 / Mark 11:1-11*

The meetings began with prayer, followed by a short video and ended with discussion. We then took it in turn to slowly read through the set passage three times, with a few moments of silence in between, listening for any words or phrases which stood out for us. We could then share these with the group and discuss what we felt God wanted us to do. Once again, there was interesting discussion as members related experiences which had a bearing on what we had just been studying.

Prayer focused strongly too and when we pray, we should rest in God's presence and concentrate

on what He is saying, and respond to Him in our own way.

Each session ended with fellowship and refreshments, and when it came to the last one we felt quite sad that the study had come to an end, but were all looking forward to the joy of Easter.

We are very grateful to Peg for taking us through these sessions and explaining everything in a very clear and helpful way. Thank you so much, Peg. Thank you also to Sue Robb for kindly leading the 3rd session when Peg was unable to be there.



*"For God so loved the World that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." John 3:16.*

*Margaret Kent*



## ***Mah-jong Group Report***

We have a core group of eight people who play the Western version of Mah-jong. Several Asian people have inquired about the group and we say we are happy to set up a table for them – the Chinese version is quicker and less complicated. So far none of these people have joined us.

Early this year a member of the Mandarin Congregation donated us an automatic table. This means that the tiles are sorted and delivered at the push of a button. It takes off at least 3 minutes between each game, so there is more playing time.



We do try to encourage people to join us. Please come as we are only too willing to teach you the game if you are a beginner. We operate from 1:30pm-4pm on Wednesday afternoon in the York Room.

*Sue Robb, Margaret Morton*



## ***Maintenance Report***

This year I have stepped down from the maintenance role. I wish to thank the retiring Maintenance Committee Jane and Neil Bates and Fiona and Brett Gilmore for their generosity of time and skills which enabled me to carry out this role.

I also wish to thank the A Team for their contributions throughout my time in this role. Their skills, knowledge and generosity are amazing!

### **General overview**

Rats and Pigeons are an ongoing battle and will be for the foreseeable future.

Our Historic Lime trees are booked in to be trimmed by Advance Tree Services. This has been delayed by a couple of years as we tried to get the council to cut their trees at the same time and share the cost as we have done in the past. They have declined.

New "Stop" signs will be placed at the exit from the carpark to Main South Road and Petersgate exit gate onto Curletts Road (Stop and check for pedestrians).

A new "No Parking" sign will be placed on exterior stairs by Stage

door (at the main hall) to keep entry into the glebe clear (replacing old sign).

**St Luke's** roof replaced, and some minor repairs carried out. Several ant nests in ceiling were removed by the roofer and fresh ant bait laid. Dead birds and live ones removed from within the ceiling space. Netting and bird guard installed to stop birds entering ceiling space.

All roof timber has been treated for borer by the roofer and borer bombs have been used within the church during borer flight season. New smoke alarms installed at St Luke's.

### **Rental properties**

All properties are tenanted, and tenants are all up to date with their rents. We are blessed currently with very reliable tenants and have no issues to raise before the Tenancy Tribunal.

### **27 Yaldhurst Road:**

Curtains replaced in all the bedrooms. Two new sets purchased, and one set donated by a parishioner.

Tenants requested to maintain the garden.

### **31 Yaldhurst Road:**

New spouting installed around property along with new flashing along lean-to roof.

New shower curtain, bathroom shelf for over shower installed. Bath resurfaced early January. Cost donated by a parishioner. \$690.00.

### **30 Main South Road:**

Garage door springs replaced.

New filters fitted to range hood and spares given to tenant to replace as needed.

### **24 Main South Road Vicarage**

New carpet installed. Carpet donated. Parish paid for install and shortfall for two rooms (family room and study). New carpet throughout the vicarage. A parishioner paid for two bedrooms rather than have a lot of joins in the carpet. \$646.00

1 x New heat pump fitted in hall replacing old night store, replaced faulty heat pump in family room. Minor electrical repairs carried out. Hall completely painted and damage re-plastered.

### **Church**

Bell tower is now locked due to unauthorized entry and the

potential for people, especially children, falling (Office has information about the key location).

Window leaking near organ. Vicars Warden and CPT asked to check if this is covered by the building or window installers from the rebuild. We may void the warranty if we repair it ourselves.

Various minor repairs carried out to plant such as vacuum cleaner parts etc. New handle on upper exit door onto roof of bell tower. Netting placed around some of the downpipes to try to stop pigeons nesting and blocking downpipes. (Thank you Dr Chris Sinclair and Brian Anthony).

There are still some big items requiring work in the near future throughout the Parish properties for the new vestry to sort out. Mainly from deferred maintenance over many decades. All have been mentioned in the Schedule presented to Vestry many times.

Ngā mihi nui, *Heather Caspersen*  
*Maintenance*  
*Parish of Upper Riccarton-*  
*Yaldhurst*



## *Mandarin Congregations*

It has been a great year full of God's providence and grace. *His thoughts are higher than our thoughts, so are His ways higher than ours.* I just want to give all the honour and glory to Him who is Omnipotent and ever-dwelling among us. We thank God that Eric Wang has been elected as one of the Vestry members and David Huang has also helped in the Maintenance Team for 2023.

**@ Baptism.** We did enjoy the Easter potluck lunch before our baptism ceremony of four adults and one child in the afternoon. It was very touching when we heard their stories of how their lives had been changed from atheism, ego-centric, bad smoking habit, bitterness and Pharaoh's heart to Christ-likeness.

**@ Home Groups.** Our Youth Connect group is steadily growing in numbers and spirituality. Samuel has done a great job in leading them with Bible Studies and games sometimes. The younger generation will be more involved in leading the worship occasionally. They did it very well last month. Besides, another baby group has recently been born with

around 9 new truth seekers in our Matthew's Group led by David Huang and Helen. Moreover, the two pastors are also leading the Timaru homegroup via Zoom every Friday morning with 6-10 new immigrants. We have had 2 evangelistic meetings in Timaru so far.

**@ Guest Speakers.** Occasionally we invite Eric Wang, David Huang, Adylyn Chin and Pastor Zhang to share at our pulpit. Others include Ps. Mark Wang from Auckland, EnSoo of World Vision, Dr. John Ong from Malaysia, a missionary Jamie Summerville of Thai Ministry.

**@ St. Peter's Day.** We joined the morning service with our Choir on that day. We were glad to meet Bishop Peter Carrell who was preaching and being with us in the afternoon Mandarin worship, when we performed some dramas or stories in the Bible. Oscar Awards go to Timothy Home Group.

**@ Special Events.** Mother's Day Celebration with a big feast is a must every year. Others such as Dumpling Festival, our church's 12<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, Father's Day, Moon Cake Festival and

Thanksgiving Service. Then we had the New Zealand Chinese Pastor's Retreat held in Christchurch in 2023. Christmas was celebrated in December when we went to Timaru for caroling, and also organised our first "Children Got Talent", highlighted with some children under the age of 10 playing the drum, piano, harp, violin and guitar. They are our future musicians.

**@ Training.** Moving to the main church has been a great blessing and challenge. So we had a few training sessions on the Sound system, PowerPoint, TV and Worship leading. A big team is needed every Sunday. Our bonding is promoted by having BBQ once in a while. Besides, evacuation drills have been carried out too. Our Logistic deacons are ready for any unprecedented incidents.

**@ Holiday Trips.** I was overseas for 3 months from August till October last year (2023). Ps. Stephen did a good job in leading the church. I went back to my hometown in Malaysia for around two months where I helped the Victory Drug Rehabilitation Centre with Bible Studies, preaching and counselling, and also the Choir. I

really feel that the harvest is plentiful, but the labourers are few. They have 92 people living in a congested centre.

Then I flew to China for my Ancestry Roots Tour. At the same time, I visited a Bible College and many registered churches in FZ, and I was amazed for what God has



done for the locals. The government is helping them build the biggest church in the city, which can accommodate 5,000 worshippers. I was astonished that HZ also has the same size church building as early as 2005. I went to HZ for a mission trip where I shared the gospel in a factory with 800 workers and a rest home in the remote area in ZJ. According to statistics in 2018, there are over 44 million Christians in China. But the challenges are great too. At the moment, the young people under the age of 18 are not allowed to enter the church for worship. Thus, the Youth Group and the Sunday

Schools will have to be closed down. That makes the house churches very significant. Finally, I thank God that I had a wonderful time in China and I came back with my sore knees. Too much walking!

**@ Job Accomplished.** In August 2023, we were blessed to have the mezzanine as our multi-functional office at the Parish Hall. We had renovated the whole place and use it also for our Home Group and Sunday School classroom. Moreover, the Mandarin Congregation has helped upgrade the muddy pathway and paid the cleaning cost of all the windows of the church buildings. Our next project is the car park next to the Parish Hall. However, some trees have to be removed. We are also glad that our people can help with the Garage Sale as before.

**@ Deacons' Election.** Before Ps. Stephen went back home for holiday break this year, we had elected a batch of new leadership for those coming up to 3 years.

Chairperson: David Huang

Secretary: Jennifer Wang

Treasurer: Luke Wu

Worship:

James Zhu & Easun Xu

Care:

Eric Wang & Kimberley Sun

Logistics: Jero Xu & William Wu

They will begin "taking office" in April, and the Inauguration Service will be on the 14<sup>th</sup> April 2024.

**@ Celebrations:** Chinese New Year 2024 is one of the happiest celebrations in our church. This year we had the St. Peter's Vestry family and we also invited the Jesus First Christian Fellowship (a Filipino church) to join us for a big Reunion dinner. Indeed, how good and pleasant it is when God's people live together in unity.







As for the Easter afternoon service, we had a wonderful time together in remembrance of the Passion Week through Musicals. The actors have done so well in their creative presentations. Partly because of the English problem, Easter long weekend holiday and a lot of house moving among us, we had decided to have our own Mandarin Easter celebration. Indeed, Jesus is the Resurrection and the Life.

**@ Baptism:**

for a couple - JP Zhu and YY Wu, who were school teacher and headmaster from China, on the Sunday, 17<sup>th</sup>



March 2024. The wife used to be a numerologist or fortune teller, dealing with spirits. Their daughter's family became Christians in 2019 at Victory. After much prayers and Bible studies, both the parents became Christians and got baptised.

**@ Please promote for us:** a big *Evangelistic Rally* in Christchurch on the 13<sup>th</sup> May, 2024 at Aurora Centre Burnside High School at 6:30pm in Mandarin with English translation. The evangelist Dr. Stephen Tong from Indonesia has a megachurch in Jakarta called "Messiah Cathedral" with more than 7,000 members. We pray for full attendance from all the Chinese churches and welcome English speaking Christians and truth seekers.

I would like to take this opportunity to express my big thank you to Rev. Nick and Rev. Peg for your continuous support and friendship. Thank you all the Vestry team for your wonderful fellowship, and the VCC deacons for their commitment to the Lord and faithfulness.



May God bless all of His humble servants.

*"Now to Him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to His power that is at work within us, to Him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen." (Eph.3:20-21)*

*Pastor Albert Tang*



### ***Meditation Group Report***

The Meditation group began in October 2022 and had been meeting regularly on a weekly basis on Friday mornings (except Public holidays) at St Peter's Church, 9.00am – 9.40am. The time spent in actual meditation is 20 minutes. It is preceded by an inspirational reading and opening prayer and closes with a short discussion and a closing prayer. About four to seven people attend each time.

This year a road sign to advertise meditation was created for the Yaldhurst Road St Peter's Church



signage and has attracted very positive comments.

A variety of resources are brought by the participants (e.g. the World Community of Christian Meditators, Father Richard Rohr, Spiritual leaders writings and poetry) to inspire, and teach about meditation and support our meditation practice. The meditation time is led by different participants, depending on people's availability.

This practice on a regular basis is a great way to still the inner voice, cultivate a peaceful mind and help us face our day with equanimity.

Thank you to those who attend, and the support of Rev. Nick Mountfort.

All are welcome.

*Bobbi Laing (Convenor)*



## *Mission*

It has been a hugely successful year for the Mission Table (up nearly \$800 on last year).

Out total is \$5427.20...\$1508.60 of that has been donated by the exercise group. Well done. Thank you to our regulars who make jam, pickles, baking, veges and handcrafts etc. The contributions from our glebe garden are well received. Jill and I appreciate Dennys and helpers for setting up for us.

Our funds go to various New Zealand and overseas countries. Our stall in May was amazing as we received over \$600 towards the Hukarere Anglican Girls school in the Esk Valley, near Napier, that was severely damaged by cyclone Gabrielle.

Our last stall received over \$500 towards the St. Andrew's High School in Tonga, run by the Hornsby trust. Thanks so much for your wonderful support.

*Noeline and Jill*



## *Petersgate Counselling Centre*



**They say that money can't buy you happiness.** At Petersgate Counselling Centre we dispute that.

Last year Petersgate counsellors discovered, the hard way, that when people don't have enough money, their lives can become severely impacted, not just materially but also socially and emotionally.

In 2023, the media suddenly lost interest in headlining Covid-19 infection numbers, morbidity rates and resulting mortality. Reality was however, that waves of the virus continued to sweep across New Zealand. The resulting restrictions spreading unprecedented financial distress, leading to increased psychological distress.

Poor financial and mental health are inextricably linked. Financial difficulties cause stress, anxiety and depression which then

restricts a person's ability to seize opportunities to rise out of their debt, ad infinitum.

The lack of coverage from mainstream media also led to a societal dichotomy in that outwardly, people tried to show resilience, and rebellion, by refusing further booster inoculations and the wearing of face masks, but inwardly, remaining terrified of the virus. This was evidenced by people exhibiting hyper-vigilance about their own health and the health of loved ones, (aka FOGO or fear of getting sick), catastrophizing any new symptoms that suddenly appeared, they then protect themselves from further harm by reducing social interactions, leading to increased isolation and loneliness.

Of the 895 clients seen at Petersgate last year, totalling 5,346 counselling hours, it was no surprise that nihilism and dysphoria, manifesting as general anxiety, remained the main mental well-being issue. Clients presented this at 31% of appointments, and depression at 26%, followed by relationship issues (caused, in part, to financial stressors and the overuse of drugs/alcohol) at 15%,

and personal growth concerns at 10%. Other issues were the remaining 18%.

What was surprising, however, was that younger people (aged 20 to 40 years), were the predominant demographic presenting to Petersgate for counselling at 52% of appointments (noting that Petersgate counsellors only counsel clients 12 years and above). Most of these young people were already vulnerable before the arrival of Covid, such as Rangatahi, youth from other ethnic minorities, Rainbow youth, disabled youth and youth living in remote rural locations. Further exacerbating segregation was their heavy social media and internet use, trapping them in artificial digital bubbles, viewing utopian worlds which they felt inadequate to emulate. Social media and the internet also created additional vulnerability through predatory opportunities for the unscrupulous, spirally youth down rabbit holes and confronting them with implausible conspiracy theories that negatively affected their perception of reality and further stunted them socially. Passing on reputable information is therefore another important role of Petersgate counsellors.

Older people (over 60), were only 11% of client appointments in 2023. Most older people are proud and stoic, not prioritizing their own physical and mental health needs, instead choosing to “suffer in silence”. Truth is that their mental health has also been significantly affected by the general living cost increases while surviving on a fixed income, especially for basics like food, electricity, and rent, but also reducing their overall ability to socialize and pursue hobbies, leading to increased loneliness. Petersgate’s goal in 2024 is to therefore reach out to our often hidden aged population, offering them heavily reduced counselling and practical advice through our Trust Fund which can be used to rescue people who urgently need professional support but, through no fault of their own, are living in severe financial hardship.

Petersgate continues to be open from 9.00am to 9.00pm Monday to Thursday, and 9.00am to 5.00pm on Fridays for face-to-face counselling. We also provide telephone counselling and, with the implementation, at the beginning of 2023, of our new client management software “Cliniko”, we now also provide

secure online telehealth counselling.

Counselling from Petersgate’s professional counsellors helps break the cycle of poverty, isolation, and poor mental health by acknowledging and validating their emotions. This helps them learn new techniques to manage stress, normalising their worry and teaching healthy ways to address future anxiety, overall bolstering strengths and creating realistic hope for the future. We also provide advice on self-care practices such as getting exercise, eating well, having a good routine, and getting enough sleep, all widely recognised as essential for resilience building.

However, these counselling services would not be possible without the continued practical, financial and spiritual support of our 6 constituent parishes, St Peters being a founding one. On behalf of the Petersgate family, I would therefore like to sincerely thank Nick, his administration team and the parishioners of St Peter’s for your continued support of Petersgate Counselling Centre and wish you all another very successful year.

Gray Crawford  
Business Manager  
Petersgate Counselling Centre



## Plant Sale

The annual Plant Sale was held on 7 October and nearly \$7000 was made. This included sales on the day and those made at the Garage Sale (in very windy weather) the following week, on Facebook Marketplace and those made by Fred Chung and Irene Cheong throughout the year. We are extremely grateful for Fred and Irene's continued support and work. Once again we had an abundance of helpers and the support shown by our parishioners in supplying plants and garden related items to sell, time and morning tea to ensure the success of this event was humbling. Setting up and cleaning afterwards was quick and a few laughs were had by all. Once again we want to thank the A Team for bagging the soil.

We are beginning to see many members from the community help this event by donating plants to sell and we hope to build on this

support. This highlights how much this event is valued and enjoyed by many and we hope that we can sustain this event for years to come. However more experienced growers are unable to support us so we are looking for more people to assist by growing plants. If more people could even pot up several plants each year this would be of benefit. Furthermore, we are exploring how we publicise this event more widely as gardening,



outdoor and indoor, is very popular again. Even more exciting news is that we welcome Angela Mereitz-Reid onto our small committee. If anyone else wishes to join, please let us know; no

gardening experience is needed and we only meet twice a year!

We are looking forward to holding this year's sale on 5 October and potting mix has been bagged and is ready for collection in the potting shed. We have so many experienced gardeners in this parish so please don't hesitate to ask. We will continue to provide updates both in the bulletin and The Gateway and if anyone has further suggestions on how we can make this event even more successful don't hesitate to get in contact.

*Fiona Gilmore*

*Ann Thane*

*Dianne Rait*

*Angela Mereitz-Reid*



## **Preschool**

It's that time of the year again when the AGM is fast approaching. It's always good to write this report and take the opportunity to look back at God's faithfulness and goodness to us over the last year. God continues



to bless our preschool and honour your prayers for us in many ways.

Our preschool is still very multicultural which adds to the vibrancy of our centre. God is blessing us with children from every corner of the globe. Our current ethnic make-up of our 43 children is: 9 Indians; 9 Filipinos; 7 Mainland Chinese; 4 New Zealand Europeans; 3 Malaysian Chinese; 3 Māori; 3 Bangladeshi; 3 Nigerian; 1 Fijian; 1 Samoan; and 1 Sri Lankan; (and 1 Iraqi on leave) which is representative of 11 cultures / ethnicities. This year we are looking for ways to honour our families from all over the globe, through the learning interest of the upcoming Olympic Games in July/August.

Yesterday, (as I write this) children and families from the preschool had the joy of being part of the Palm Sunday service at St Peter's. Walking around the church behind the donkey Edmund was a special moment as we re-enacted walking behind Jesus riding a donkey for His triumphant entry into Jerusalem. The highlight of the day was definitely the children spotting a real donkey then having the opportunity to have a ride on the donkey after the service.

Over the last year our partnership with the church has deepened to grow through regular articles in the church bulletin, and Gateway Magazine as ways to keep you informed of preschool happenings. We are informing our parents of church events in our termly newsletter. Last year we facilitated a 'Nurse Maude' week again (leading up to the Nurse Maude service in July). The children's weekly visit to the church building on a Wednesday morning is proving to be a really rewarding exercise for everyone.

The children are now familiar with the church building which makes them more settled when we are in the church for performances. Our staff continue to celebrate communion together once a term that is led by one of the clergy. We are grateful for the wonderful relationships with Reverend Nick and Reverend Peg.



The Lord has continued to be so faithful to us during this last year with a wonderful staff team. We have had a few new staff join us over the last year. In September we welcomed Teacher (T) Grace to our team as our preschool Administrator. She is a Filipino and it is wonderful hearing her talking with our Filipino parents in their home language. In November we welcomed T Agnes, our new Team Leader in the Kowhai Room and Leader of our School Readiness Programme. She has settled in well and is a marvellous addition to our teaching team. In January we welcomed T Becca who is our specialist Under 2's teacher. This is a great blessing to the parents of our Under 2's children and it is lovely to see her building warm relationships with our youngest children. In February this year we welcomed T Esther, as an extra teacher in the Kowhai Room to complete the team. She is Korean and fabulous to hear her talking to our Korean parents in their home language. We are planning on



expanding our Korean cultural interest (now we have a Korean teacher) by connecting with local Korean cultural groups and churches.

God has also called some staff onto new adventures from preschool and so we have farewelled a few staff over the last six months. T Bex; T Hannah; T Natasha; and T Ariana all left our staff team to begin new chapters in their Christian journey with the Lord.



One of the consequences of having so many international families is that parents like to go back home to visit loved ones they left behind when they emigrated. This means we often have a few children on extended holiday visiting families internationally so our roll is very fluid. At the moment we have 2 children away on extended leave. Our license is for 44 children, which means the maximum number we can have here at any one time is 44 children. A lot of children have part-time

hours so our daily roll ranges from 30-38 depending on the day of the week and the time of the day.

Our van service demand has reduced this year with so many children (17) graduating for primary school for the beginning of the school year. Our children come from many suburbs and the van drives from Upper Riccarton, Ilam, Avonhead, Sockburn, Halswell and Hornby every day.

We are excited to resume our visits to St Allisa's for Easter. We are planning a visit on April 5 to share some Easter songs and an Easter play with the residents. The children are making Easter cards to give to the residents. One of the goals of these visits is for the children to establish relationships with the residents. This will be a work in progress, especially after such a long break.

The new system of having the church service and the family celebration on the same day encouraged many more families to join us for the church service. It worked well for our Easter, the combined celebrations of the Preschool's 4<sup>th</sup> birthday, the Chinese Mid-Autumn festival in September, and our end of year

Christmas celebrations. Clergy and preschool management were delighted with the turnout from both parish and preschool. It was marvellous to gather around the table again to share food, fun and fellowship.

We celebrated Matariki (Māori New Year) with a shared meal with our families and a disco. The children were all so surprised to come to preschool at night and the preschool looked very different to normal. T Cindy created a fun play list which meant we had people (big and small) up dancing from the first song to the last song. The spinning disco ball on the ceiling added to the atmosphere. It was wonderful to see children and parents having fun dancing together.

A highlight of the year was the preschool's involvement with the Mother Goose float in the Christchurch Children's Christmas parade in November.



God blessed us with a lovely sunny day, but not too hot. We also set up a mini preschool at the showgrounds as part of the event which attracted a few hundred visitors throughout the day.

Mr B (Tony) flew down to be part of this event and he was a diligent flag bearer in the parade.



It was fabulous to see over 20,000 people there to support this event

so well supported after a few years break.



The biggest highlight of this year has been gaining a sister preschool in Christchurch (only 9 minutes away). MCC Trust have taken over the management and day to day running of Aidanfield Christian Preschool which is located in the grounds of Aidanfield Christian School. The preschool opened to children on 29 January and was immediately full for 4 days a week, with a waiting list. The Lord has blessed this preschool with a full role and a wonderful staff team, and it is a privilege to support the team as they establish a new preschool.

My special thanks must go to Tony Bracefield (MCC Trust Manager), Melitta Henry (MCC Trust

Education Adviser), Karen Greenhow (MCC Trust Special Projects Manager) and the team of Head Teachers in Auckland (Ruth, Tessa, Janine, Lisa) and Adele, the Head teacher at our sister preschool in Aidanfield, for their ongoing support and encouragement. Their knowledge and passion for preschool is so inspiring. It is such a privilege to serve the Lord at St Peter's Anglican Preschool.

My thanks must also go to Heather C for your dedication to the Health and Safety and Property church portfolios, Fay M for her green fingers in our flower beds, Corin and Bobby, and David and Jo for their valuable input, and the vestry and parishioners of St Peter's and St Luke's for their ongoing support in many ways. Mostly however my thanks go to our heavenly Father who is our purpose and passion, our wisdom and strength, our hope and our joy.

*Liz Orr (Head Teacher)*



## **Publications**

### **The Gateway**

It is now coming up to five years since we took over the publication of Gateway. During that time (and 20 editions) we have endeavoured to produce a well-balanced magazine that covers many of our parish activities, as well as some human-interest stories. It is always a challenge to find new and interesting material, but we are fortunate in that so many parishioners are willing to help.

It is gratifying having so many people prepared to contribute. Because this is the case, it is becoming



increasingly important that items are submitted earlier rather than later. We have a maximum size limit of forty pages, and once that is reached, we cannot include more, no matter how relevant or noteworthy it may be! We are so fortunate that St Peter's is an active, outward looking parish full of wonderfully interesting people, who do not mind having their

photographs appearing in this publication – it does make our job so much easier. We would like to take this opportunity to thank all those who have contributed over the last year, and especially the clergy who are always so positive and enthusiastic about our endeavours.

2023 provided some excellent opportunities for us, particularly with the Victory Church becoming part of our Anglican journey. Our partnership with them, as well as our on-going relationship with the Pre-School, has provided a broader base for us to draw on. We hope that this will continue throughout 2024, and that plenty of interesting stories will be forthcoming!

### **The Parish Website**

To help make the parish and its activities widely available, we also maintain the parish website. This is the main framework that allows anyone with internet connection to learn about the parish and to read most of the parish's public documents. These include weekly bulletins, service rosters, the Gateways, sermons, and any special notices.

The website was created in 2011 after the earthquakes, and its initial focus was to support fundraising. While it still has this role, we see the need to broaden its focus. To this end, Ethan Wilson-Bruce is prototyping changes to the website to better support the parish's relationship with its community.

You can view the parish website at <https://stpeterschurch.nz/>

### **Social Media**

The parish continues its efforts to develop and maintain a strong social media presence. We are thankful for the excellent work that Ethan Wilson-Bruce has started and the new ideas he is bringing to this programme.

If you follow the parish on Facebook, ([www.facebook.com/StPetersChurchCorner](http://www.facebook.com/StPetersChurchCorner)) you will have experienced the new "look and feel" to our page where you can watch the cleverly edited videos that are there. The parish seems to have a growing online audience.

The internet is now an essential part of our individual lives, as it is of the parish life. Each 9:30am Sunday service is broadcast

through YouTube, so you don't have to be in the church building to be part of the worship. And it also allows virtual attendees to chat with each other during the service. Once again, the contribution of Ethan to this effort is vital and he deserves our ongoing thanks and support!

Regards,  
*Heather and Graeme Cox*  
13 March 2024



### ***Rest Home and Home Communion Ministry***

Throughout the Bible, Christians are encouraged to care for one another. This is the responsibility of all believers. For many years, members of St Peter's church have taken the sacrament to share with residents of the rest homes in our parish. In the past year, we have provided this service to eight rest homes. We will also take Holy Communion to parishioners in their own homes if requested. Members of the ministry team are: The Revd. Nick, Jo and David Winfield, Barbara Clarke, Peter Troon, Margaret Morton, Sue Robb, and Mary Shirtcliffe. Our

Pianists are: Margaret Kent, Bill Grubb, and Roger Merriweather.

We take a service once a month at each home working mostly in teams of three—Worship leader, helper and pianist. At times, we have only two in the team, but that is when a member of staff steps up and helps with the communion. They also know the names of residents, which makes it more personal.

Residents of the homes appreciate the service and are always very pleased to see us, as are the staff. We enjoy chatting to everyone at the beginning and the end of our visit, including staff, some of whom stay for the service. It is fortunate too, that in several of the homes the activities staff remain the same and this is helpful all round. The residents come from a variety of denominations, but our services are for all and, with the exception of a few, everyone is happy to receive communion.

Our service is quite short—just under 30 mins—with an easy to follow order of service which has the residents' parts printed in bold type. The service comprises readings, prayers, reflection and three hymns. We have our own

rest home books and also an extensive set of hymns on sheets, in groups of three.

At one of the homes we were without a piano for over a year as the one there became unplayable. We were pleased to see an electronic piano there just before Christmas! Music is such an important part of our worship. Those attending love to sing, especially the well-known hymns.

Each week, rest home services are noted in our weekly bulletin. The



homes to be visited the following week are prayed for, and the sacrament to be taken is blessed.

Our ministry team find it a privilege to share the celebration of the Eucharist and to meet the pastoral needs of our extended church family.

Many thanks to all those who give their time to this important ministry.

*Sue Robb (co-ordinator)*



## **Restoration Fundraising Report**

Although our restored church is now very much in regular use and enjoyed by many, the work of fundraising is still with us as we need to replenish the glebe investment held by CPT which is committed to allow the construction to begin. This is necessary for the sake of the ongoing life and ministry of the parish into the future. While we may not be able to access major donations from trusts and charities any longer, we continue to be supported by individual donations along with the Living Bequest programme.

Special events continue to replenish the coffers with more being planned. The Book Sale and Quiz Nights are our regulars but the return of Stephanie Hersh was again popular with culinary delicacies combined with the fascinating storyline of her experiences. As previously indicated, we remain on the lookout for other events and funding sources.

Our committee remains on task and we give our sincere thanks to Corin Murfitt, Paul Rhodes, Fiona Gilmore, Graeme Cox, Jo Winfield,

Bruce Williams, Bob and Lynn Shearing, and our Vicar Nick. May their dedication be rewarded with many more thousands of dollars reaching our goal.

*David Winfield*  
(Committee Convenor)



## **Sunday School**

Last year, Ruth started the year with Sunday School during the 9.30am service on the second and fourth Sundays. Linda and Mary filled in from about mid-year when Ruth went on extended leave. There was just a handful of children except when there was a combined service with the Chinese Church (16-18 children). Many thanks to the mums that stayed to help. Also, a children's corner was set up in church with activity bags to be used during any service. This year, Sunday School will start again on 7 April with the new service. Leaders are Linda, Mary, Ethel and Renju. Prayers appreciated.

*Linda Sinclair*



**Dear Lord,  
Today I want to say thank You  
for my life. Thank You for the  
chance to feel sunshine, to  
taste fruit, to swim in water and  
to watch lightning. Thank You  
for my home and family, my  
church and friends. Thank You  
for the chance to know and  
serve You, now and eternally.  
In Jesus ' Name, Amen.**



# *Appendix*

## **PARISH OF UPPER RICCARTON YALDHURST**

### Minutes of the Annual General Meeting

Held in St Peter's Church at 11.00 am on Sunday 30 April 2023

**WELCOME AND PRAYERS:** Nick welcomed us to the meeting and said a prayer, asking for vision, wisdom, and joy, whilst remembering our mission action plan in this year of growth.

We aim to grow our digital community, to care better for creation, to grow family church and to strengthen our relationship with Victory church.

He asked those gathered to circulate and sign the attendance sheet and record names of those who had given their apologies.

**PRESENT:** Venerable Nick Mountfort - Chair; Reverend Peg Riley – Associate Priest; Pastor Albert Tang; Pastor Stephen Yong; Gin McKenzie - Vestry Secretary; Lynn Shearing - Treasurer; Dr Corin Murfitt - Vicar's Warden; Jo Winfield - People's Warden; Carol Carryer; Edwin Boyce; Richard Milne; Sue Robb and forty-five parishioners.

**APOLOGIES:** Angela Meiritz-Reid, Bobbity Murfitt, David Lewis, Fiona Gilmore, Kathy Doughty, Margaret Berry, Max Anderson, Michelle Butler, Shirley Richards.

Apologies were not read - a clipboard was circulated, and attendees asked to record names of those known to them, who asked their apologies to be recorded.

**CONFIRMATION OF PREVIOUS MINUTES:** Minutes of the meeting held on Sunday 01 May 2022 had been circulated by email. There were no matters arising, or changes.

**MOVED** *that minutes of the Annual General Meeting, held on Sunday 01 May 2022 were agreed true & accurate – Jo Winfield*

**SECONDED** – Corin Murfitt      **CARRIED**

**CALL FOR GENERAL BUSINESS:** Nil

### **REPORTS:**

An AGM Reports booklet had been prepared, printed, and circulated by email.

As a rule, reports were taken as read.

- Nick read his report, which gave a thorough summary of activities over the past year. He thanked all who contribute to worship, maintenance, activities, music, pastoral care, and all the work required that allows St Peter's and St Luke's Churches to thrive.
- Peg mentioned highlights from her report, explained photographs and advised she felt very much at home in the parish, after only two years with us. Peg reminded us of the Lenten Studies being held in the atrium on first and third Sunday of the month at 11.00 am.
- Pastor Albert read his report, stressing how grateful he was to be able to join St Peter's parish, bringing his community with him, creating a mixture of faces all on the same adventure, worshipping God.

Nick stepped through the reports booklet, inviting each group to add snippets if wished, and welcomed questions from the floor.

There were snippets added, and a couple of questions asked – see below.

- Choir - Bob Gaudin thanked church leaders & those involved in music & choir particularly for their support, encouragement, and patience.
- Digital Growth - Ethan thanked the community for their patience as he finds his way in this area where there is massive growth.
- Mission Table – The team has raised \$4,628.30 over last year. Fabulous effort. Thank you all those contributing.
- Preschool – They now have forty-two children enrolled, with twelve different ethnicities.
- Petersgate - As Chair of Petersgate's Board, Corin urged us to become 'friends of Petersgate' advising they have a 'hardship fund,' which means those needing help but unable to pay for it may apply for financial help, so that they get the help they need.
- Rest-home visiting – Sue said the team would love more helpers. Recently Pamela and Peter have joined them. Welcome & thank you both.
- Victory Church – The covenant between us will be displayed on a wall – when such wall is decided on.

**MOVED** *that all AGM reports be approved* – Peg Riley

**SECONDED** – Sue Chapel

**CARRIED**

## **FINANCE & BUDGET:**

The time and effort required to oversee finances for our parish is massive. It has been suggested that our books are the most complicated in the Diocese.

Treasurer, Lynn Shearing did not have a written or verbal report prepared. Unfortunately, Lynn had a broken arm which impacted completion of her report. Lynn gave an *off-the-cuff*, step through the accounts for the year, noting highlights, along with an explanation of the predicted budget allocation of funds for the coming year.

- Lynn thanked those helping with collection of funds & acknowledged the financial & other support given to our community over the last financial year.

**ELECTION OF OFFICERS:** Nick explained the nomination process and asked new nominees to introduce themselves. Bronwyn and Eric each said a few words. We are pleased to welcome them both to Vestry.

- Bronwyn and husband Wayne have lived in China amongst other places, recently returning to NZ, and have a wealth of knowledge in relation to mission work.
- Eric Wang teaches Maths at Riccarton High School and has three small children, the youngest attending our pre-school.

Nick advised that Corin Murfitt was resigning as Vicar's Warden after 36 years, and that Edwin Boyce had agreed to be his new Vicar's Warden. Corin hopes to remain on vestry for a further year.

Once elected, to remain on Vestry, each person must be nominated and elected each year, with at least 50% of the votes to their name.

Voting forms were distributed and while we voted, Nick told one of his jokes!

Once counted by scrutineers Heather Caspersen and Peg Riley, (thank you ladies), the result was given to Nick, and he confirmed that all nominees were successful in being voted onto Vestry.

**MOVED** by Chair that nominated persons be elected to Vestry

**CARRIED**

Congratulations to all and thank you for your ministry.

Vestry is as follows:

Vicar's Warden - Edwin Boyce

Parishioner's Warden – Jo Winfield

Synod Representatives – Sue Robb and Richard Milne

Financial Treasurer – Lynn Shearing

- Bronwyn Tucker
- Carol Carryer
- Corin Murfitt
- Eric Wang
- James Cliff

**GENERAL BUSINESS: Nil**

**THANKYOU'S AND GRACE**

Nick thanked us all for our attendance, said a final prayer and we said the Grace together.

We were invited to move to the atrium to farewell Corin as Vicar's Warden, followed by a shared lunch. Sadly, Bobbity was unable to attend as was not well. Their son Phillip was able to be with us on this special occasion.

There was to be a presentation to Corin, and speeches were recorded.

No further business meeting closed at 12.30 pm

Thank you

*“With  
GOD  
All Things  
Are  
Possible!”*