

Dear friends,

It was good to be gathering together again face to face last Sunday. Even if it meant I had to change out of my slippers this week. Even though it means that we have to convey our joy at seeing each other with our smiley eyes rather than simply our smiles. Even if we have to negotiate our way through, peoples comfort levels with physical distancing. Also I hope those who joined our zoom service on Sunday also feel very much part of us as well.

At the AGM tonight (just a reminder) I will be sharing on Psalm 107: 23-32, part of a Psalm about the Lord guiding people back to Israel after the exile. This section reflects on an epic sea voyage through a stormy ocean (think Paul in Acts 27). The story of Jesus calming the storm in the gospels also comes to mind (Mark 4:35-41). God able to protect and guide people through storms and to a safe haven, it finishes with the people testifying of the goodness and faithfulness of God in that situation. We can trust God in the midst of the storm, as the gospel story tells us to be in the boat with us, but also to be the one who brings us through. But the key point I want to make tonight, and now is that it says at the beginning of the section of Psalm 107 is it is those who go out into the deep who see the wonders of the Lord. It is easy in the sort of difficult times we are in, the stormy weather we face to simply want to batten down the hatches, 'hunker in the bunker' and stay in port, but the call of Christ to us is are we willing to be people who will risk unfurling our sails and heading out into the deep. To go out into the wild waves, keep focusing on the mission that God has for us in these times, as we do we trust the wind of the spirit to fill our sails and the one who can calm the storm to lead us through.

Here are the notices...

COVID alert level 2

We are now in COVID alert level 2, with the delta variant limits changed to what they were before. We are now able to meet in groups of up to 100. It is mandatory for people to sign in for contact tracing when they come to church, wearing of face masks is highly encouraged. We do acknowledge that for some this is not possible for medical reasons. People are asked to respect those who wish to maintain social distancing, this includes hand shaking etc. Wash hands regularly, and ***please stay home if you are unwell***, and exhibiting cold and flu like symptoms. We can serve morning tea at services, but will not serve any food (*the COVID exec will review this policy for November*). On the government website it tells people traveling to faith gatherings to keep 2 m distance from people they do not know. The government's best health advice is that it is important for people to be fully vaccinated.

Sunday October 31st Morning worship

We will have services at all three sites this Sunday. At Onerahi and Tikipunga they will be holding our regular fifth Sunday in the Month 'Gospel and Healing Services'. If you would like prayer for healing or know someone who is in need of such prayer, we'd invite you to go to one of these sites. At central we will be continuing with our look at the book of Revelation. Once again we are limited to 100 people so if we are over 100 at central people will be redirected up to the 10am service at Tikipunga. If people are unwell or unable to come please note there will be a zoom service.

10:00am @ HopeTikipunga – Gospel and healing; Lorne Campbell

9:30am @ HopeCentral - Revelation 3: 14-22, Howard Carter

9:30am @ HopeOnerahi – Gospel and healing, Dennis Thorne

Zoom service 9:30am Sunday October 10th

There will be a zoom service on Sunday. It will be a **streaming of our 9:30am service** from HopeCentral.

The link is

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89285364673>

If you are using an app on a mobile device the **meeting ID number is: 89285364673**

You can join via landline the phone number is 09 884 6780 you will need to input the meeting number when Meeting ID prompted: 89285364673

We will be inviting people to stay and catch up in break out rooms after the service.

If we are in COVID alert level 3 lockdown. The zoom service will be the only service and will be at 10am. With Enosa Auva'a preaching.

Church AGM Tuesday October 26th 7pm - Hope Central

The churches AGM is at **7pm TONIGHT (Tuesday)**. We had asked people to pre-register because of restrictions on numbers due to COVID level 2, at present we believe that the walk up crowd will not put us over the 100 person limit so we would encourage people to come.

The reports are available online. Here is the link

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1brEjcsRphLJGuHQwkRgs-8uaLp-5Fe5U/view?usp=sharing>

They are also available in the church foyer.

Baptism Service 6:30pm Sunday November 7th Hope Central

After the Alpha course we have four people who are wanting to get baptised or reaffirm their baptism by emersion. This is exciting for our Church. It is people connected to both Central and Onerahi.

With COVID alert level restrictions we have decided to have a special baptism service to celebrate this wonderful event.

We are restricted to 100 people at the moment. We want to give those who are being baptised and reaffirming their baptism to invite family and friends and for those who have journeyed with them through the Alpha course to be able to come, and after that we want to encourage as many as can to come. If you are wanting to attend please contact Colleen at the church office by phone 438-1667 or by email colleen@hopewhangarei.nz As it is a whole of HopeWhangarei event and such a joyous one, we will be zooming the service and the link will be in the pastoral email next week.

Parish Clerk

We are in the unusual position of looking for someone to serve as our parish Clerk. We are very much indebted to Dennis Thorne who has served in this capacity for the past two years, but is wanting to dial back his commitment. The church council has the power to co-opt people (or at least come to the congregation and ask them to add a member to the council. We are looking for a person who is willing to serve on our Church Council as our parish clerk. There is a job description available.

It really requires someone with a good administrative mind and working knowledge of things Presbyterian. If there are expressions of interest please contact Howard Carter 027 7508602 or by email howard@hopewhangarei.nz

Christmas tree festival at St John's Church

Billy Portch is heading up HopeWhangarei's contribution to the Christmas tree festival at St John's Church this year she is making decorations around the theme of fishes and bread. So is inviting anyone who would like to participate and make decorations to come together **at 9:45am at HopeTikipunga on Monday November 8th**. A great way for people to get together and get to know each other while doing some craft work together and being part of a missional activity.

Billy says "This is a low key way of giving a Christian message at Christmas time to the unchurched."

Hour of Prayer

An hour of prayer will be held at HopeOnerahi on Saturday 30th October at 3pm for the Healing Service there on Sunday. All Welcome.

Community Christmas Morning Tea – Wednesday November 17th – Hope Tikipunga

A time of fellowship while making Christmas Decorations and enjoying morning tea together.

Please contact Helen McGregor @ Ph: 437 3656

Blessing

I was out with my camera on Monday and went up to the Whau Valley dam. Apart from the blessing of a full dam with water going over the spill way, I happened across a family of Pūtangitangi (Paradise Ducks). It was raining and it must have been afternoon nap time for the little chicks. But Mother Duck (you can tell female Pūtangitangi by their white heads) was there keeping a watchful eye over the chicks, she was very relaxed (as was the father, male Pūtangitangi have black heads) were very relaxed about me taking photos. AS I did I couldn't help but think of the great image of God's care for us being like a mother hen that shelters its chicks under its wings. Jesus even used that image to express his love for Jerusalem. While in the psalm the words are masculine it is also a wonderful image.

So let me leave you with that blessing today. May you find joy in knowing that we are sheltered under the wings of God.

Psalm 91:4

He will cover you with his feathers,
and under his wings you will find refuge;
his faithfulness will be your shield and rampart.

Ka hipokina koe e ia ki ona hou,
a ka piri koe ki raro i ona pakau:
ko tona pono hei whakangungu rakau, hei puapua mou.

Howard Carter
SENIOR MINISTER
HOPEWHANGĀREI

OCTOBER 26TH 2021

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-Psalm 91:4



HOPEWHANGĀREI
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH | SINCE 1859