

Dear friends,

I had to design a flyer for an autumn gathering last week and I had to stop and think about how do you represent a change of season in Northland from summer to autumn? I could of used the image of leaves falling and changing colour. While the fig tree in our garden had fruited and its leaves are browning and falling, when I look at the hills around us I am aware our native trees are evergreen and remain the same. I did wonder about the change in temperature. While the nights are starting to cool to a bearable temperature I was sitting in my office with the temperature about 25^o. In the end, and not surprisingly I hear you say, I chose the image of terns who had gathered together in a flock after breeding season, a sure sign of the seasonal change.

On Saturday I went for a walk round the Onerahi foreshore and was surprised by another sign that summer is going and autumn is here. There on the line between sea and land were those wonderful large white birds. The kōtuku-ngutupapa, or Royal Spoonbills had returned after breeding season to winter in the harbour. And you also won't be surprised that there is a spoonbill photo with this email.

The change of seasons is part of creation and life, as it says in Genesis 8:22 "As long as the warmth endures, seedtime and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night will never cease'. It is a gift from God which allows the world to produce its bounty. But it is also a metaphor to talk about change. In Daniel 2:21 it says "He changes times and seasons, he deposes kings and raises up others. He gives wisdom and knowledge to the discerning." Many of you, I know, are wrestling with changes in the seasons of life, as you move from one life stage to another. Historically we have been through some season changes as well, after what has been quite a time of stability and calm we've moved into a stormy season of change and uncertainty: This pandemic, social unrest in New Zealand, the war in the Ukraine and even the fast pace of social reforms that have left us puzzled and bewildered or feeling that society is moving away from our Christian understanding of the world.

This pandemic has also been a season, and in particular wrestling with vaccine mandates has been a difficult season for us to deal with. I believe that season as well is changing. We still are in the midst of the omicron wave, it definitely cresting up here in Northland. But also we are going to see a change with mandates being removed, if not this week then soon. Like all seasonal changes, how we adjust and move into the next season is going to be challenging. Justin Duckworth, the dreaded Anglican Bishop of Wellington, talks of "two viruses that have plagued New Zealand the coronavirus and the virus caused by polarisation... a social virus we have unleashed on ourselves". That is a virus that has and does impact the church. So, what of this new season? What will it be like and what will we need for it? Firstly, like all the seasons of life, we will need to trust God to lead us through. Secondly, there is going to be a need for a lot of listening to one another, of not speaking past each other and there is going to be a need for a lot of grace and forgiveness, understanding and tolerance. Let us pray for the grace needed for this next season.

Here are the notices.

COVID contact at HopeCentral

We have been notified by the DHB that someone who tested positive with COVID was at our worship service at HopeCentral on March 13. We are grateful they notified the health department, they did all the right things. If you were at the service on March 13th you do

not need to self-isolate. However, if you do develop COVID symptoms you should get a test and self-isolate until you get your results.

Message from Elaine Holwell for Central City Chaplaincy

We would like to offer the friends in our surrounding businesses a gift at Easter time. If you are willing and able to contribute by making some small bite sized treats, such as, fudge, bliss balls, coconut ice or other such small sweets to make an assortment to present. If anyone is talented enough to make hot cross buns, we could also package these up. Please have them ready and delivered to Hope Central by 9-30am on Tuesday 12th April. Those of you who would like to help wrap and deliver on Tuesday, please come and enjoy the blessing that gifting can be.

Any questions please phone Elaine 0220812784

Marjory Smith says hello to everyone !!!

Marjory (102) is in Puriri Court rest home and wanted to say hello to everyone at church. She misses coming to church on Sundays and also everyone's smiling faces. She asked to say " God bless you all' to everyone.

The persecuted Church (from Lorne's message on Revelation 11)

Preaching as we are through the book of Revelation, should make us a lot more aware of the persecuted church.

Revelation was addressed to the churches in Asia Minor that were facing persecution. 1,900 years on, nothing has changed.

However the pace of persecution has definitely picked up, and we need to be prayerful of those who live in places of persecution.

A number of our mission partners live in areas of the world where persecution and discrimination occur.

Vietnam ... Mozambique ... the Middle East ... Cambodia and Indonesia are places where Christians can be targeted.

Here are two websites people could explore:

<https://www.opendoorsusa.org/christian-persecution/>

<https://www.christianitytoday.com/news/2022/january/christian-persecution-2022-countries-killed-world-list.html>

Ministers retreat Tuesday March 22nd-Thursday March 24th

Howard and Lorne will be away at the annual Northern Presbytery Ministers Retreat at Long Bay this week. Please keep them in your prayers for a time of refreshing and encouragement. Please pray for our national moderator Rt Rev Hamish Galloway, as he leads the retreat on the theme of vulnerability and authenticity.

Rev Enosa Auvaa

It is great to be able to announce that Enosa Auva'a, our intern for the past two years, has received a call to ministry. Enosa has been called to St Peter's Presbyterian Church in Tauranga. He and Felicity will be heading there around the middle of the year. We will be

arranging for those who wish to travel down and be part of his ordination and induction, and also will hopefully be able to provide those unable to go to be part of it via live streaming. **Here is a message from Enosa**

Message From Enosa and Felicity Auva'a

Faafetai Faafetai Lava. Thank You Hope Tikipunga, Hope Onerahi and Hope Central

Lou Agaga fa'amanu atu ia ile Alii; aua foi nei galo se mea o ana faamanuiaga (Praise the Lord, my soul; all my inmost being, praise his holy name Psalm 103:1)

It is with great Joy that we let the good folk up in Whangarei know that Felicity and I have accepted a call to St Peters in the City Presbyterian Church in Tauranga.

We praise and thank God for our wonderful church family up at Hope Whangarei: for your love and care, for your encouragement and support in prayer and hospitality, and for your amazing welcome to us and to our children, grandchildren and friends during our time there as an intern. Thanks for the courage to take on this "Samoan Boy"

Thank you Rev Howard Carter and Rev Lorne Campbell for your guidance and care in my formation.

Thank you, Dennis Thorne, for your leadership at Session and members of session for affirming my call as an intern to Whangarei

Thank you to the Ministry Reflection Group (Billy, Rod, Harold and Patricia) for your commitment and support in our monthly meetings over two years

Thank you to our Connect group (Jimmy, Cherie, Hugh, Noela) for enabling me to finish some really major projects and assignments for KNOX and our weekly fellowship.

To John and Helen (Tikipunga) and Brian and Gail (Onerahi) thank you for your prayers and wise covering.

Thank you to my lovely landlady Glenys for your provision of accommodation in such a beautiful spot.

Lastly thank you to all the people that make up the three congregations at Hope, for blessing us, for making us feel at home and for inviting us into your homes.

We are very excited and feeling overwhelmed.

Ua faamalo le tapuai ua tau faiva I le alofa o le Atua. When fisherman in Samoa return following an overnight fishing expedition- the village elders would be heard calling out welcome back! and praise God for leading you and keeping you safe! The fisherman would in return say thank you for keeping me in your prayer and praise God we have returned safely, thank you for being there with us.

Felicity and Enosa Auva'a
Blessings,
Mercy, love and peace be yours in abundance

Rev Enosa Auva'a
Dip Ministry (KNOX)
Grad Dip of Applied Theology
MEdLM
High Dip Tchg

The unanswered prayer course

If connect group leaders are looking for a good resource for after Easter and our season of prayer, the church has available a six week video led series called The Unanswered prayer Course. A sequel to The Prayer Course. It looks at the very challenging question of unanswered prayer and where is God in the midst of pain and suffering. If you are not in a connect group and would like to do this course please let the office know and we can arrange a time for a group to do it after Easter.

End of Tax year – Donations receipts 2021/2022

The end of the financial tax year is fast approaching. Any donations received into the church bank account by the 31st March will be included in the 2021/2022 tax donation receipts. If you have any questions please contact Karen in the church office Monday – Friday 9am – 2pm or via email karen@hopewhangarei.nz.

Worship services Sunday March 27th

HopeTikipunga @ 10:00am - Revelation 10 (Howard Carter)
HopeCentral @ 9:30am - Revelation 11 (Lorne Campbell) communion
HopeOnerahi @ 9:30am - Revelation 12 (Rolland Schreurs)

COVID Health and Safety

Basic health and safety measures for COVID will remain constant under the new COVID Protection Plan.

Hygiene: washing and sanitising hands.

Mask wearing: Mask wearing at gatherings like worship is “strongly” encouraged...

Scan or sign in using the COVID tracing app: This is mandatory for gatherings such as worship.

Please respect physical distancing: we are aware that some people are still very conscious of physical

Distancing and we ask people to respect this.

Stay at home if you are unwell: The best way we can protect one another is to stay home and join

Worship via zoom if we are unwell.

The government’s best health advice is to get vaccinated.

Government COVID suppression plan

Under the government COVID suppression plan (AKA traffic light system) Northland is under Red.

Our services will require the vaccine pass and numbers at each service are limited to 100. A non-differentiated service will be held in the lounge at HopeCentral, under Red it is limited to 25 people.

With omicron in mind the government are also encouraging people to have a buddy system with another person or household, if in the eventuality of having to self-isolate then you have someone to check on you and shop for you if required. Please feel free to let us know at the church if you need assistance. Ring church office: 438 1667 or Howard Carter on 0277508602.

Zoom service

The worship service at Central is zoomed each Sunday.

The zoom 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.

Please note that the process has changed. The phone number is 09 884 6780 you will need to input for the meeting

The number when Meeting ID prompted: 89285364673 followed by the # key. Then you will be asked for a further ID number or to press the # key again. Press the # hash key again.

The host will ask for your name so we can put it on the computer screen so after the service people will know who you are.

After the service we will break into small groups so people can catch up, pray with each other. If you are on a landline you can unmute yourself by pressing *6. If you have someone on a landline in your group please introduce yourselves to them.

Blessing

We started talking about seasons and I want to finish with **Psalm 1** which speaks of the word of God being like a water source that is reliable in all seasons for us. May you have that water source that allows you to stand strong in all seasons.

**Blessed is the one
who does not walk in step with the wicked
or stand in the way that sinners take
or sit in the company of mockers,
2 but whose delight is in the law of the Lord,
and who meditates on his law day and night.
3 That person is like a tree planted by streams of water,
which yields its fruit in season
and whose leaf does not wither –
whatever they do prospers.**

**Ka hari te tangata kahore nei
e haere i te whakaaro o te tangata
kino,**

a kahore e tu i te ara o te hunga hara,
kahore ano e noho i te nohoanga o te
hunga whakahi.

2 Engari ko te ture a Ihowa tana e
whakaahuareka ai;

kei tona ture ona whakaaro i te ao,
i te po.

3 E rite hoki ia ki te rakau
i whakatokia ki te taha o nga awa
wai,

e whai hua nei i te po e hua ai:
e kore tona rau e memenga;
a, ka pono ana mea katoa e mea ai ia.

Blessings

Howard Carter

SENIORMINISTER
HOPEWHANGĀREI

March 22nd 2022

Ps:- As promised here is a spoonbill image. Quite apt I think, standing strong on the Onerahi shoreline with a wave breaking behind it. It has come to the harbour with the change of seasons. A time of food and renewal, but also of challenge and unsettled weather.

