

Dear friends,

Lorne and I were away at a minister's retreat last week. It was a couple of days of input from our moderator Rt Rev Hamish Galloway, quiet contemplation and reflection, refreshment and a chance to catch up and be encouraged by some old friends and colleagues.

The Vaughan park retreat center at Long Bay was a great venue. However I have to admit that I was often drawn to look out the window of the conference room at the beach during the sessions. No comment on the content, just the beauty of the beach, in fine weather and also the stormy days as well. Suddenly the window was filled by a St Andrews cross, or a Scottish flag. A symbol I remember from my youth as a pulpit fall in our church; the white cross on blue background with the burning bush logo in front. At first I thought it was a flag being flown from a flagpole, but it was actually a kite surfer down on the beach whose kite had filled with wind and had almost got away from him. As I watched the kite surfer get control of his rig, he started out on the waves and choppy sea. Later another minister who had been watching, talked of the kite surfer falling a couple of times and having to get back up. But I couldn't help reflecting on what I'd seen as encouragement from God, that He is able to fill us with the wind of the spirit and take us out on to the wild waves following him. An Ezekiel 37 moment when the dry bones, take on flesh and come alive again as the spirit is breathed on them. Hope that while we find ourselves rather pushed about by the stormy times of COVID that God is wanting us to unfurl our sail, kite and head out following him again.

I couldn't help but remember the words of the prayer of St Brendon as he set sail from his native Ireland in a coracle looking for the kingdom of God across the wide wild Atlantic Ocean. A prayer willing to follow where the spirit would lead.

*Shall I abandon, O King of mysteries, the soft comforts of home?  
Shall I turn my back on my native land, and turn my face towards the sea?  
Shall I put myself wholly at your mercy, without silver, without a horse, without fame, without  
honour?  
Shall I throw myself wholly upon you, without sword and shield, without food and drink, without a  
bed to lie on?  
Shall I say farewell to my beautiful land, placing myself under your yoke?  
Shall I pour out my heart to you, confessing my manifold sins and begging forgiveness, tears  
streaming down my cheeks?  
Shall I leave the prints of my knees on the sandy beach, a record of my final prayer in my native land?  
Shall I then suffer every kind of wound that the sea can inflict?  
Shall I take my tiny boat across the wide sparkling ocean?  
O King of the Glorious Heaven, shall I go of my own choice upon the sea?  
O Christ, will you help me on the wild waves?*

Let's be willing to unfurl our sails, kites and let the spirit enable us to follow Jesus out into the deep.

**Here are the notices...**

### **Sunday Worship April 3<sup>rd</sup>**

We conclude this section of our series on the book of Revelation this week. I have been amazed at the number of people who have found systematically working through this most exciting and perplexing book helpful and encouraging. However we are taking a break between Easter and Pentecost, to focus on Holy week from Palm Sunday through to Resurrection Sunday, then between Easter and Pentecost we will be look at the Lord's Prayer, as part of the Thy Kingdom Come season

of prayer between ascension and Pentecost (26<sup>th</sup> May-5<sup>th</sup> June). Then after Pentecost we'll be back into the second half of Revelation.

10:00am @ HopeTikipunga, Revelation 11 (Lorne Campbell)

9:30am @ HopeCentral, Revelation 12 (Roland Schreurs)

9:30am @ HopeOnerahi, Revelation 10 (Howard Carter) communion

### Covid Update

The government is lifting the need for vaccine passports as from Monday April 4<sup>th</sup>, so sadly there will still be a need for vaccine passports for this Sunday. A non-pass service (limit 25) is available in the lounge at HopeCentral. Content is live streamed from the 9:30am service at Central.

### Covid Health and Safety

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

**Hygiene:** washing and sanitising hands.

**Mask wearing:** Mask wearing at gatherings like worship is still "strongly" encouraged...

**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.

### 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.

***Even with COVID restrictions easing after next week will continue our zoom service for the foreseeable future.***

### Being more aware of the suffering and persecuted Church - (from Lorne's message on Revelation 11)

As we preach through the book of Revelation, our eyes can be opened more to what is going on in our nation and the world.

I was personally aroused to discover the increased persecution of our brothers and sisters in Christ in many countries in the world over the last 120 years.

Jesus suffered for the good news of the Kingdom – He was not the type of leader people wanted. The good news of the Kingdom always challenges the status quo.

Our Christian brothers and sisters are persecuted because they stand for a kingdom that opposes authoritarian and fanatical religious ideologies.

If you would like to become more aware of the suffering church ... here are a few websites I recommend:

1. Open Doors NZ: <https://opendoors.org.nz/>
2. Barnabas Fund NZ: <https://www.barnabasfund.org/nz/pray/> \*\* NB there are some Barnabas Fund magazines at Central in the foyer
3. Mission without borders: <https://mwb.org.nz/about-us/where-we-work>

### Move over Bradley Walsh and the Chasers - We have a champion!

At the inaugural Northern Presbytery Quiz last week at the Ministers retreat, Howard was part of the winning team that smashed all comers in the Northern Presbytery Quiz night.

The winning team won .... A golden chocolate egg! Well done Howard.

*Rev Lorne Campbell*

### Julie Porter – a celebration of her life: Thursday March 31<sup>st</sup>, 1:30pm at Tikipunga Baptist Church

Many will remember and know Russell and Julie Porter who were part of St Andrews many years ago ... and of course Phillip ( Julie's son) and Siobhan Porter, who served here as assistant pastors during the early 2000s. Julie passed away peacefully on Saturday evening. A celebration of her life will be at Tikipunga Baptist this Thursday at 1:30pm.

### 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, **THIS THURSDAY**, 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](mailto:karen@hopewhangarei.nz)

### Easter Blessing for the CBD: 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. So we know what is coming could you please let Elaine know. Please also have them ready and delivered to Hope Central by 9-30am on Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> April. Those of you who would like to help wrap and deliver on Tuesday, please come and enjoy the blessing that gifting can be.

Contact Elaine 0220812784

### Blessing

Let me leave you this week with another of St Brendon's Prayers. Sorry I don't have the Te reo translation.

"Help me to journey beyond the familiar  
and into the unknown.

Give me the faith to leave old ways

and break fresh ground with You.  
Christ of the mysteries, I trust You  
to be stronger than each storm within me.  
I will trust in the darkness and know  
that my times, even now, are in Your hand.  
Tune my spirit to the music of heaven,  
and somehow, make my obedience count for You."

*Howard Carter*

SENIORMINISTER  
HOPEWHANGĀREI

March 22<sup>nd</sup> 2022

PS:- For this three-week period I've been preaching on Revelation 10, with its image of a mighty angel standing on the sea and the land. While not a massive creature or even an angel, as this leucistic Oystercatcher (Torea), affectionately known as "Marmite", stretched its wings, on a sand bar at Onerahi, I couldn't help but think of an angelic being. Leucism is the white colouring of a bird that is normally another colour.

