

Dear friends,

I want to start the pastoral email this week by once again thanking the people who have stepped in and helped out as I ended up in hospital again last week. I had to laugh as I came back to work yesterday to note that this infection came back on April 1st. Thanks to Billie Portch and Cath Bremner for standing in for me and preaching at Onerahi, and the folk at Onerahi for seemingly bearing the brunt of my second bout of cellulitis. Thanks also to Lorne Campbell who not only carried his own workload but shouldered mine as well. We are blessed to have him here at Hope.

I have left the inspirational reflection this week to the moderator of the Presbyterian Church, Rt Rev Hamish Galloway. We will attach a pdf of his Easter message, *Passionately Hopefully*, to the pastoral newsletter email this week. We've also printed a physical copy for those who get the pastoral newsletter by mail. If you prefer here is a link to it...

<https://www.presbyterian.org.nz/sites/default/files/Moderators%202022%20Easter%20message.pdf>

This week is Holy Week on the church calendar, starting with Palm Sunday it invites us to walk with Jesus in that last week of his earthly ministry. Like last year we are having a Good Friday gathering at the cross in the green space outside HopeCentral. We will focus on the cross and the gospel accounts of Jesus crucifixion. There will be a series of very short reflections by the pastors of various churches. This year we will look at the cross through the eyes of the people who were there. What do they say to us and how do they invite us to reflect on the cross. With the change in COVID alert settings there is no limit to the numbers we can have in an outdoor gathering. However the pandemic has still had an impact with some of the people we had lined up to take part now unable to because of COVID. One key issue however is the weather, with ex tropical cyclone Fili coming ashore in Northland today. The forecast, however, for Friday is fine, even with the weather on either side of it being wet and wild. It would be good to pray for the weather.

Easter Sunday we are having a 10am combined HopeWhangarei gathering at HopeCentral. With the new restrictions being a limit of 200 we are able to do this, and part of the thought is that it will be great get together after such a long time when it has been impossible. There will still be a Zoom element for those who cannot come in person or who are still being understandably careful about crowds.

Here are the notices...

Easter services

9:30am Good Friday April 15th *'At the cross'* - A gathering, reflection and communion at the cross in the green space outside HopeCentral. This is a combined service run in conjunction with the Whangarei Regional Ministers Association. If you would like to march down to the service there will be people gathering and walking from Church Unlimited at 9:00am. Inside HopeCentral if weather is bad.

10:00am Easter Sunday April 17th *'He is Risen'* - A resurrection Day celebration. Combined at HopeCentral.

Please Note: - We had originally arranged to live stream the service to both Tikipunga and Onerahi, however due to circumstances we will not be doing this. I apologise for any inconvenience, the combined service is at HopeCentral or you can join us via zoom.

Zoom service

The worship service at Central is zoomed each Sunday. (no Zoom service for Good Friday)

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.

Thank you



Thank you to all the people who contributed to the Central City Chaplain's Easter gifts. Many of you made sweets and baked goodies for us to take around to various businesses in the CBD. Also thank you to the team who came and beautifully crafted the gifts and helped distribute them. Part of our vision for the central city chaplaincy is to simply be neighbourly and it was great to be able to share a blessing with our neighbours to celebrate Easter.

Teach us to pray

Between Easter and Pentecost we will be taking a break from our journey through the book of revelation. As part of our Thy Kingdom Come season of Prayer (May 26th-June 5th) we will have a series of messages on the Lord's Prayer: Jesus pattern for prayer and for life. We will be working through the Lord's Prayer line by line as a way of encouraging us to pray and allowing Jesus own words and prayer be our guide.



COVID Health and Safety

We are still in Red on the COVID suppression framework (aka Traffic light system). However things have changed. Vaccine passes are no longer required for gatherings. Scanning in is also no longer mandatory. There is no limit on outside gatherings and a 200 person limit on inside gatherings.

Basic health measures are still our best defence

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.

Blessing

Psalm 121 is a psalm of ascent, a psalm for pilgrims on their way to Jerusalem. A psalm from the road. You can imagine a weary traveller stopping for the night. The camp being set up round them, a guard being set, the caravan leader going about the tasks to keep people safe. Off in the distance the hills of Judea, the traveller's final destination and those hills and the dangerous road up from Jericho the final obstacle. The pilgrim, looks for help and strength for the journey and looks up as the sun sets and the stars come out, realising that their help comes from the Lord, the maker of heaven and earth. As they review their journey so far they are aware of the truth of the blessing they received as they had left home. A blessing for all of our lives as well.

*The Lord will watch over your coming and going
both now and forevermore.*

*Mā Ihowā e tiaki tōu haerenga atu,
me tōu haerenga mai aianeī ā ake tonu atu.*

Psalm 121: 8

Blessings

Howard Carter

SENIOR MINISTER
HOPEWHANGĀREI

April 12th 2022

Ps: - About three weeks ago I managed to get this wonderful photo of two Royal Spoonbills (Kōtuku-ngutupapa) flying into the late afternoon sun. The image is called 'into the heart of the sun' and what amazed me was the way the sun shines through their almost translucent wings. A great picture of our lives as well as we head towards the son, Jesus Christ, the hope is that Jesus love and light will shine forth from us to those around us.

