

Dear friends,

It has been quite an interesting (a euphemism perhaps) couple of weeks here at Church. With Lorne and I affected by Cellulitis and COVID and all the disruption that has meant for staff and services. One of the things the pandemic has taught us is how to be adaptable in difficult and changing situations. It has also shown us how to use technology in those times. I know it's not ideal, but thank you for people being willing to put up with the message at Tikipunga on July 3rd and at Central on July 10th being via video.

Thank you very much for all your prayers over these last few weeks. I've really felt them and the care of the Church family here. You'll be pleased to know, I'm back at my desk (be it with my foot up as much as possible) and Lorne is back from COVID and his isolation period. I am hoping that things will return to normal (yes I know, the new normal) this week, God willing.

I have found myself feeling very exhausted over the past few weeks, I think it is a symptom of having and fighting an infection. I've found it puts a dampener on my spiritual life as well. No I'm not losing my faith, things just seem to be at a low ebb. So I've been drawn to the Psalms and in particular the last five psalms in the collection, what is known as the 'great hallelujah'. These are psalms that conclude the whole of the Psalter and bring it all together in a crescendo of *Praise the Lord!* Each of the Psalms starts and finishes with Hallelujah. Each Psalm picks up a motif that has run through the psalter and Gives praise to God for that: God's care for the psalmist, God's care for his people, God's creation and universal greatness, God's goodness finishing with a call for all people and all creation to join in worshipping God. So I'm going to comment on these psalms in the pastoral newsletter over the next few weeks (except next week when I'm on holiday) to help us focus on giving thanks to God.

Psalm 46 kicks it all off as a personal song of Praise, in which the psalmist speaks of all that God has done for us. His justice, care for the poor, his provision of food for the hungry. Then in the last stanza (7-9) we see a series of expressions of God's goodness that point us to Jesus. In particular Jesus reading from the book of Isaiah in Luke 4. We hear that God sets the prisoner free, opens the sight of the blind, lifts up those who are bowed down, the psalmist follows on to add that God lifts up the widow and the orphan, it's good news for the poor tied down to specific disadvantaged groups. The psalmist invites us to again see the goodness of God and the kingdom of God that Jesus inaugurates. For me I again am reminded of the impact of the good news of the Kingdom of God in my own life, setting me free from spiritual blindness and imprisonment to sin, of caring for me in my spiritual poverty. But also God's care and concern for those facing physical poverty. I find myself joining the psalmist with a final Hallelujah! I hope as we focus on those things that you too can join in that praise the Lord... Praise the LORD!

Here are the Notices...

Worship Sunday July 17th

We find ourselves deep into our sermon series on Revelation: *Eternal hope In Christ, Amidst Present Suffering*. It's challenging but also very encouraging as we distil what Revelation said to John's first readers and how that speaks to us today.

10:00am @ HopeTikipunga - Revelation 16 (Howard Carter) communion

9:30am @ HopeCentral - Revelation 18 (Cath Bremner)

9:30am @ HopeOnerahi - Revelation 17 (Lorne Campbell)

Zoom service July 17th

The zoom service is a streaming from the 9:30am HopeCentral service.

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.

ZOOM hosting at Central

In Term 2 at Central we are starting a Children's ministry in the morning service and we have a team of wonderful people who are going to help lead this. Kris Middendorf-Carter, has volunteered to be actively involved. However for this new venture to grow and develop we need to replace Kris as the host for the Zoom component of our service on Sunday. We are looking for volunteers to host ZOOM on Sunday. Yes there are some technical components, but it's mainly welcoming people and facilitating the fellowship time after the service. There is Training and mentoring available and we do have someone who will be alongside to help with the tech stuff. Please let Howard Carter know if you are interested phone 0277508602 or via email howard@hopewhangarei.nz

Admin staff and Sunday mornings

As the Senior Minister one of my responsibilities is the wellbeing of the administrative staff here at HopeWhangarei. So I am writing to remind people that our staff are not at work on Sunday mornings, rather they are here to worship. PLEASE respect that and direct issues to them during office hours.

Gospel and healing Services – Sunday July 31st at Onerahi and Tikipunga.

“At sunset, the people brought to Jesus all who had various kinds of sickness, and laying his hands on each one, he healed them “ Luke 4:40

So often God is neglected when it comes to healing. We are all quick to rush off to the doctor or A&E ... or look on line for a remedy... but how often do we turn to Jesus FIRST?

Both of these opportunities are times when you could reach out and invite a friend who is in need of healing to come along.

A simple invitation could be ... “hey, have you tried God for your healing? We have this healing meeting at Church this Sunday where the sick will be prayed for. Why not come with me and let’s see what God could do! You really have nothing to lose and possibly everything to gain”!!

Service times are:

- Sunday July 31st - Hope Onerahi at 9:30am
- Sunday July 31st - Hope Tikipunga at 10:00am

Lorne Campbell

There will be a service at HopeCentral on that Sunday focusing on ‘whispers of the future’ some of the challenges and possibilities that lie before us as a church.

Blessing

Psalm 146 finishes with an encouraging affirmation of God’s sovereignty throughout history, then and there, here and now and on for all generations. It fits in well with our sermon series about the message of Revelation and in all situations individually and collectively we face it is good to be reminded that God is ultimately on the throne.

The Lord reigns forever,

your God, O Zion, for all generations.

Praise the Lord.

Ko Ihowā hei kingi ake ake,

āe, ko tōu Atua, e Hiona, tae noa ki ngā whakatupuranga katoa.

Whakamoemititia a Ihowā.

Psalm/ Ngā Waiata 146:10

Howard Carter

SENIOR MINISTER
HOPEWHANGĀREI

Ps:- I haven’t been out with my camera to take photos of birds for the past few weeks. On Monday I



did go down to the town basin and get some wonderful photos of the new development around the Hundertwasser. Including a few pictures of a child playing in the new fountain. It was a cold rainy day on Monday but it didn't stop him enjoying the wonderful water spouts and chasing them around. I did ask his parent/caregivers permission before I took the photo. But for me it just sums up Joy, in particular the joy of hearing and feeling what God has done for us that comes as we read through those great hallelujah psalms.