

Dear friends,

I had an amazing day off on Monday. Over the past month apart from the rain I've been reluctant to go out with my camera and take photos of birds. I've been cautious because of my continued bouts of cellulitis to get too far off road. However it was a real blessing on Monday under a cloudless pale blue winter sky, to go out to Onerahi, at high tide, and then over to Matapouri, when the tide dropped. Everywhere there was such wonderful bird life. At Onerahi I watched a couple of kāruhiruhi (pied shags) fish and glide in tandem along the shore, Tara (White fronted terns) rest along the guard rail of the Onerahi jetty. Torea (oystercatchers) seemed to be pairing up already and staking claims to territories along the rocky coast. Then out to Matapouri, and the Tui were gathered to lunch on the flame trees just over the road from the shop (photo at the end of the pastoral email). On the beach a couple of Tuturiwhatu (New Zealand Dotterel) were quite happy to let me get quite close and take a whole lot of photos. They were just starting to develop their mating plumage and the vibrant orange was very prevalent.

I couldn't help but praise God for the wonder of his creation and thank the LORD for the beauty of where we live. Plus in the tranquillity of the seas coast it is easy for me to sense God's closeness and peace. Psalm 148 is one of the hallelujah Psalms that end the whole book of psalms with a crescendo of praise to God. It starts and finishes with 'Hallelujah Praise the LORD'. It is a creation Psalm and invites us to join the whole of creation in giving thanks to God for what he has made and the way God cares for creation. It starts in the heavens (quite relevant as we've been working our way through Revelation) with the angels and heavenly beings, then invites the sun and moon and stars, often thought of as god's by the ancient world but here just fiery members of the choir, to join in their praise. Then the Psalm moves more to the earth and invites all of creation from the monsters of the deep to the animals and birds to also sing God's Praise. Then it invites all of humanity from royalty to commoners, old and young, men and women to join in acknowledging God's goodness. Finally there is an invite for us to join in as well with the last Hallelujah Praise the Lord. The psalm of course forms the inspiration for Francis of Assisi's cantonal of creation.

In September we will be celebrating the season of creation in our services. Giving thanks to God for the created world. But also looking at creation care as part of that praise and worship of God. Creation is a partner in worshipping its and our creator and part of God's call on us is to care for what he has made. In fact in the Presbyterian Church *creation care* is one of the five faces of Mission. It is quite an important issue as we face the challenge of climate change and the impact humanity has had on the world. So I've asked our preaching team to share on an aspect of creation that they are passionate about and how creation care fits in with their Christian faith. As well as our worship leaders to help us to give God thanks for what he has made.

First of all we will be finishing off our series on Revelation with a combined service on Sunday August 21st. Then on the last Sunday of the month I've asked Lorne and Billie Portch to join me and preach on their favourite bible passage. Why it is their favourite how has it spoken to them and what does it say to us...?

Here are the notices...

Sunday Worship August 7th

After a special weekend last week with the gospel and healing services at Tikipunga and Onerahi and a look at possible ways forward at Central we return to our series Revelation: Eternal hope in Christ amidst present suffering. Lorne has the weekend off but to keep pace with the series he has recorded his message on Video for Central.

HopeTikipunga @ 10:00am Revelation 21 - (Roland Schreurs)

HopeCentral @ 9:30am Revelation 20 - (Lorne Campbell) via video

HopeOnerahi @ 9:30am Revelation 19 - (Howard Carter)

Zoom service August 7th

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

Combined service August 21st 10:00am HopeCentral

We have been working our way through the book of Revelation in a series of three sections. We looked at the initial vision of Jesus, the letters to the seven churches and the vision of heaven in chapter 4 before Christmas last year. After a break for Christmas and the January holidays a series on chapters 5-12 before Easter. Then after a break between Easter and Pentecost, where we looked at a series on The Lord's Prayer. For the last month and a half we have been finishing off chapters 13-20 of Revelation. On Sunday August 21st we will be having a combined service at HopeCentral to celebrate the final instalment of this series. To share with one another what the spirit has been encouraging us with as we've looked at this long series and to celebrate and hear from Revelation 22. Come join us.

Blessing

Let me finish with the encouragement to praise the Lord that comes from the end of psalm 148. Two reasons that this passage speaks of. The first is that God has raised up a horn for his people. This is a symbol of strength, that God has strengthened his people. The other is the wonder that we are close to God's heart.

Let them praise the name of the LORD,
for his name alone is exalted;
His splendor is above the earth and the heavens.
¹⁴ And he has raised up for his people a horn,^[b]
the praise of all his faithful servants,
of Israel, the people close to his heart.
Praise the LORD.

Kia whakamoemititia e rātou te ingoa o Ihowā:
nōna anake hoki te ingoa e nui ana;
kei runga ake i te whenua, i te rangi, tōna korōria.
14 Ko ia hoki te kaiwhakaara o te haona o tāna iwi;
e whakamoemititia ana e āna tāngata tapu katoa;
e ngā tama a Iharaira, e te iwi e tata ana ki a ia.
Whakamoemititia a Ihowā.

Blessings

Howard Carter

SENIOR MINISTER
HOPEWHANGĀREI

August 2nd 2022

Ps; - As promised a photo of a tui amidst flame tree flowers. A real symbols of God's provision and care.

