

Dear Friends,

About a year ago I received an email that was sent to the Whangarei Ministers Association, a new ministry couple were moving up to Whangarei and the wife was training as a spiritual director and was looking for someone who would be interested in Spiritual Direction to be her client. As she was training it would be a free service. The free part caught my Scottish Presbyterian eye. I'd had spiritual direction in the past and found it useful and was going through the process of looking at ways I could develop and grow in my devotional and spiritual life. So I've been doing Spiritual direction this year meeting with my spiritual director once a month. I have the opportunity to reflect on my spiritual disciplines and where I have encountered God over the preceding month. Spiritual direction may sound kind of weird and a bit strange, the old Celtic Monks used to call it having a Spiritual friend, who would care enough to focus on you and your relationship with God. Some of you maybe more familiar with the idea of a prayer partner, but in this age it's like having a prayer partner who is gifted and trained in helping you reflect on your experiences and life. If you want to read more here is a link to a pdf by Dahlia Fraser which I think is a good summary. <https://www.tyndale.ca/sites/default/files/2018-02/Tyndale-Association-of-Spiritual-Directors-Introduction-to-Spiritual-Direction.pdf>

At our last meeting I talked with her about feeling a real connection with God on my morning walks along the Hatea River loop track as well as my morning bible readings. Theologians talk about the two books that speak to us about God... the book of nature (general revelation) and the scriptures (special revelation). Of course we need the second one to really make us aware of the God who reveals himself to us. My Spiritual director asked me 'what is an image of God that really speaks to you at the moment?' (Sorry for the long intro to get to this point) and I thought for a moment and said 'alongside, the God who draws alongside'. This is a biblical image of God as the word *paraclete* that Jesus uses of the Holy Spirit, which we translate comforter or advocate actually has the core meaning of a learned friend who draws alongside. In the Old Testament we have a picture at places like the burning bush where God draws near, alongside his people, the greatest example of God drawing alongside is the incarnation where in Jesus God stepped into our world, pitched his tent at our place (to translate the word tabernacle in a very kiwi summer way). It fits as I said before with the Holy Spirit: that river of life giving water, welling up within us and alongside us.

We had a gospel and healing service on Sunday and I hope as people came for prayer as well as a member of the prayer team they felt the presence of the Holy Spirit alongside in the medical issue they were dealing with bringing the healing that only God can. Either physical healing or that sense of God in this with us that allows us to persevere, trust and have peace.

Many of you face ongoing challenges and worries and I hope you are encouraged also by the idea of a God who as well as dwelling within, draws near, alongside and is able to guide and comfort.

I'm talking with my spiritual director about possibilities for next year (when she is qualified) and if people are interested in Spiritual direction, giving it a go for a few times, let me know.

Here are some testimonies and reflection on the Combined Gospel and healing service on Sunday.

### Combined gospel and healing service – testimony

One of the striking features of our Combined gospel and healing service last Sunday was the number of people who wanted prayer for healing.

Also, the number of “new people” that came along – some by word of mouth, others who had seen the sign on the street.

It was great to have a team of at least 10 people ministering to those in need at the end of the service.

It's always good to be encouraged by hearing what God has done in someone's life as often we don't know.

Here are two texts received:

*“What a lovely service it was today ... lovely to see the church so full ... I need to tell her (the person that prayed for her) how her prayers for my knees have improved them”*

And another:

*“I thought I'd let you know that I woke up this morning after having slept 8 hours ... with no pain in my back and ribs, no pain in my toes, feeling so grateful for prayer yesterday. I have just one thumb that is yet to heal, but it's far less sore”*

Praise God for touching people's lives.

Many thanks

*Rev Lorne Campbell*

### **Here are the notices**

#### **Worship Sunday November 6<sup>th</sup>**

We will be back meeting at all three sites and continue our journey through Paul's letter to the church at Colossae Colossians: Christ and Christ alone.

10:00am @ HopeTikipunga - Colossians 3:5-17 (Chris Garland) communion

9:30am @ HopeCentral - Colossians 2:20-3:4 (Lorne Campbell) baptism

9:30am @ HopeOnerahi - Colossians 2:5-19 (Howard Carter... via video)

#### **Zoom service Sunday November 6<sup>th</sup>**

The zoom service will be at 10am on Sunday and will be the combined gospel and healing service from HopeCentral. I must apologise for having to change the link last week. Please note this is the new link for the service.

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83111922245>

If you are using an app on a mobile device the meeting ID number is: 83111922245

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.

### Hope Central Baptism this Sunday morning:

This Sunday at Central, Travis Davis will be baptised. Travis began attending our services earlier this year and more recently attended a home based Alpha Course and came into a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. He is wanting to fulfil Christs command to be baptised. Do come and celebrate this wonderful occasion!

### Congregational meeting November 20<sup>th</sup>

There will be a congregational meeting after all services on Sunday November 20<sup>th</sup>. The Church property trustees require congregational approval before property is leased. So we are moving to fulfil this requirement in retrospect for the property of 73 Hunt St, which has a lease with 155 Community Law.

### Board Wanted

Abby Armstrong Green is looking for a place to board with a willing individual, couple or family for approximately 6-12months in the Whangarei urban area. Please phone or email her to discuss pricing and dates on 0275270330 email- abbyag022@gmail.com

### Hope Tikipunga Invite you to their Community Christmas



#### **Morning Tea (provided)**

**Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> November 10am**

Come along and make new Christmas Decorations

For catering and craft numbers please RSVP to: Helen  
027 437 3016 – 4373656-[heljo@themcgregors.net]

### A service of thanksgiving for the life of Kris Batelaan November 2<sup>nd</sup>

There will be a service of thanksgiving for Kris' life at HopeCentral this Wednesday November 2<sup>nd</sup> at 2pm.

The service will be live streamed on zoom ... here is the link

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89930927197>

### Blessing

While we started off talking about the Lord coming alongside, the blessing today comes from Deuteronomy 31, where Moses is commissioning Joshua to take his place. The promise for Joshua is God's closeness and with-us-ness but this time it is that God goes before us.

“The LORD himself goes before you and will be with you; he will never leave you nor forsake you. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged.”

Ko Ihowā anō, ko ia te haere ana i tōu aroaro, hei tōu taha ia, e kore ia e whakarere i a koe, e kore hoki e mawehe atu i a koe: kua e wehi, kua hoki e pāwera.

Maybe it best summed up in the 4<sup>th</sup> century prayer of St Patrick

I arise today  
Through a mighty strength, the invocation of the Trinity,  
Through belief in the Threeness,  
Through confession of the Oneness  
of the Creator of creation.

Christ with me,  
Christ before me,  
Christ behind me,  
Christ in me,  
Christ beneath me,  
Christ above me,  
Christ on my right,  
Christ on my left,  
Christ when I lie down,  
Christ when I sit down,  
Christ when I arise,  
Christ in the heart of every man who thinks of me,  
Christ in the mouth of everyone who speaks of me,  
Christ in every eye that sees me,  
Christ in every ear that hears me.

Blessings

*Howard Carter*

**SENIOR MINISTER**

**HOPEWHANGĀREI**

November 1<sup>st</sup> 2022

PS: - An image from the Tara (white faced Terns) nesting down at the jetty by the lower Hatea River Bridge. A tern returns (play on words) from a fishing trip to care for his mate sitting on the nest. Maybe a Psalm 91:4 moment

He will cover you with his feathers,  
and under his wings you will find refuge;  
his faithfulness will be your shield and rampart.



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