

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

I am reading a book called *Be Still: A Simple Guide To Quite Times* by Brain Heasley. I am reading it as my Spiritual Health book. Which means I read a chapter a day and allow myself the luxury to reflect on that chapter during the day. To tell you the truth I was reluctant to read a book on Quite Times (or putting aside some time in the day to focus on encountering God in prayer and scripture reading). I remember from when I was a teenager what I called evangelical Guilt: Speakers and Youth group leaders would regularly ask that question... "Have you had your quite time today?"...which would be followed by a lot of squirming and discomfort. However I am appreciating this book and it's refreshing, encouraging and practical approach to simply spending time with God. I have a regular devotional routine, but it is great just to have a refresher course in spiritual disciplines for those times. Like today I read the chapter on Wonder which starts with this quote from American poet Mary Oliver... "Attention is the beginning of devotion" and it was helpful as in my morning walk this morning, I was rather frustrated in the way my walking pace has slowed, I mean I get passed by everyone on the loop track. However, as this walk is part of my devotional life and I use it to give thanks to God for the wonder of creation, I started to realize that, that slower pace allows me to see things I may ordinarily miss. Like Welcome Swallows who have found a nesting site in the Waka 'n' wave sculpture. A sculpture which speaks of surviving the storms of cultural change, here were the swallows sheltering amidst this symbol of change... God is our refuge in such times, even when the waves tower above us and we are worrying about drowning. Yes, I'm working at getting fitter and walking faster but it was good just to be reminded to slow down and pay attention and see the wonder of God's world. Maybe we can be so busy just doing stuff, filling our lives with things and activities we too need to be reminded to take some time to slow down and spend time paying attention, attention to God's world, attention to God's word and attention to God's presence with us.

In 2023 we are encouraging Connect groups to run a five week course based on the book "Be Still" as a way of just revitalizing our devotional lives as a church. If you are not part of a connect group, don't worry we will run the course during the ThyKingdomCome season of Prayer (18th- 28th May) at the church.

Pastoral matter: Sadly Dave Roke passed away over the weekend, he had been sick for most of this year. Dave has been a very faithful and active member at HopeWhangarei for many years, he faithfully chaired our Overseas Mission Task Group, Church Treasurer, and lead worship regularly. He and Marion are very much loved, please keep Marion and the family in your prayers over this time. The funeral will be held at Newberry's funeral home, Corner Kamo Road and Moody Avenue, Whau Valley on Saturday December 3rd at 10:30am

Here are the notices...

Sunday Worship December 4th the second week of Advent

Come join us as we work through the final chapter of our study of Paul's letter to the church at Colossae, Colossians: In Christ and Christ Alone. Next week we will start a short advent series called Christmas it's worth singing about' amidst all those carols and Christmas songs, both old and new, looking at the songs in Luke's account of Jesus nativity.

HopeTikipunga @ 10:00am - Colossians 4:2-6 (Lorne Campbell)

HopeCentral @ 9:30am - Colossians 4:7-18 (Catherine Bremner or Howard Carter (via video)

HopeOnerahi @ 9:30am - Colossians 4:7-18 (Howard Carter)

Zoom service Sunday December 4th

The zoom service will be the 9:30 am service from HopeCentral. The link for the service is.

<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

The Meeting ID you need when 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.

Please Note: Sunday December 18th will be the last Sunday in 2023 when we will have a zoom element to the service. Zoom services will resume in February 2023.

Christmas and Holiday Service Times

Over Christmas and the first half of January there will be a combined services at HopeCentral on January 1st, 8th and 15th which will be led by each of our sites, allowing us to start 2023 with a celebration of who we are and our different ways of doing things as well as our oneness in Christ.

December 24th @ 9:30pm - A Candlelight Christmas eve service (It'll be a real cracker)

December 25th @ 9:30am - A 45 minute Christmas celebration

January 1st, 8th & 15th @ 9:30am HopeCentral - Special Holiday Services

January 22nd - Hope Whangarei meets back at our three sites at our normal times.

Please note that there will be no zoom services over this period as we are wanting to give as many of our wonderful volunteers as possible a rest over the summer holiday period. (Last zoom service will be 18th December)

Carols on the Grass, HopeTikipunga 5pm-7pm Sunday December 18th

Come join the folk from HopeTikipunga and the wonderful young people from Holy Ground camp for a free BBQ and a time of singing carols on the grass at HopeTikipunga. Invite your neighbour, your friends, your family even that person you find it hard to get along with, to join us in this community celebration of Jesus birth. Oh, and a bouncy castle... for the kids.

Anybody willing to share turns picking up...

Stanley Sheehan from Parahaki Court Rest Home 45/47 Kamo Rd Regent on Sunday mornings for church at Central. The rest home will make sure he is ready. If so Phone Colleen at the office 438 1667. Thankyou

Blessing

In the book "Be Still" there was a chapter on scripture memorization and I was challenged about remembering bible verses. The one that Brian Heasley talked of memorizing was Romans 15:13. I've written it on a white board and have it by my desk. It is also a relevant one which is relevant for us here at Hope.

"May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit."

"Nā, mā te Atua, nāna nei te tūmanako, e whakaki koutou ki te hari katoa, ki te rangimārie, i runga i te whakapono, kia hua ai tō koutou tūmanako, i runga i te kaha o te Wairua Tapu."

Howard Carter

SENIOR MINISTER
HOPEWHANGĀREI

November 29th 2022

PS: - On Monday I was down at Kohanga Tara Iti, the jetty by the Te Matau O Pohe Bridge where the white fronted terns are nesting. Just in time for the breakfast run. I took this photo, which for me is my shot of the year. I also couldn't help but be reminded of the scripture "And my God will meet all your needs according to the riches of his glory in Christ Jesus." In Philippians 4:19.

