

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Thanks to the folk from HopeOnerahi for taking the service on Sunday. The combined services over the holiday period have been a great chance for us to all get together as one, but also celebrate our diversity. As we go back to our three separate services this week I hope it is with a renewed realisation of our belonging together and carrying a sense of joy there is in gathering together to worship and hear the word of God. It is still the holiday period and I will be prerecording the sermon for Onerahi and Tikipunga this week. I know it's not ideal, but it is a way we can ensure that each site is not closed down for too long and also not over stretch our preaching team for this part of the year.

On Sunday I mentioned that 2023 was a year of change refocusing us on our vision of being a 'flourishing Christian Community' and our mission of 'connecting people with God and each another' (if you missed the sermon or want to re listen here is the link to a recording <https://anchor.fm/hope-whangarei/episodes/Nehemiah-1-Vision-Started-in-the-Disquiet-of-Prayer-e1tg6nh>) Part of that refocus I believe is helping people grow in their personal relationship with God, in their devotional life. In preparation for that, and as a part of my personal development I've been reading some books looking at spiritual disciplines. Let me recommend one of them to you. 'Be Still: A Simple Guide to Quite Times' by Brian Heasley. I found it to be a good refresher on the daily discipline of putting aside time to be still and focus on Jesus. In prayer, in scripture reading, and in simply being aware of God's presence with us. Sometimes books on things like quite times can seem pushy, what I call 'evangelical guilt' or 'musty Christianity'...'have you had your quite time this morning... You must do it!' but I have found this book actually liberating and refreshing and inviting me deeper and deeper in to a personal daily devotional life. There are good chapters on reading scripture on prayer, on journaling (which is a discipline I have started over the past few months and find quite helpful), simply being observant and filled with wonder at God's creation all around us, and just some practical tips about finding space in a busy life.

I found it so helpful I bought a copy for all the staff here and one for the church library... so it is available for people to borrow. We also have a video study series which we will make available to connect groups and if you are not part of a connect group and want to do this course we will be running it as a series during the ThyKingdomCome season of Prayer in May this year.

Here are the notices

[Worship Sunday January 22nd](#)

Note this week we resort back to meeting at our three sites, Hope Tikipunga (10am) HopeCentral (9:30am) and Hope Onerahi (9:30am) So come and join us at one of our three sites this week for worship and as we continue our journey through the book of Nehemiah: From vision to reality... It's still the holiday season so the message will be via video (pre-recorded) at Tikipunga and Onerahi.

HopeTikipunga	10:00am	Nehemiah 2:1-10 The risk of going public (Howard Carter)
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HopeCentral 9:30am
Carter)

Nehemiah 2:1-10 The risk of going public (Howard

HopeOnerahi 9:30am
Carter)

Nehemiah 2:1-10 The risk of going public (Howard

Zoom services

Note we will not resume zoom services or live streaming till February.

Sermons online

All our HopeWhangarei Sunday sermons are available as audio recordings online. You can access them through our website (<https://hopewhangarei.nz/sermons/>) or on many podcast providers... Spotify, Apple podcast, google podcast, simply search HopeWhangarei.

Office hours

The church office at HopeCentral, 1 Hunt Street, is now open and there will be someone there from 9:00am-2:00pm Monday to Friday. Our associate Minister Rev Lorne Campbell is still on Holiday till February 1st so any pastoral matters please contact the office (09 4380016) or directly to Rev Howard Carter on 0277508602.

Te Tiriti O Waitangi Workshop 9:00-12:30 Wednesday 15th Feb 2023 HopeCentral

Citizen's advice bureau and migrant Connect are running a half day Workshop on the Treaty of Waitangi at HopeWhangarei on February 15th. We are most welcome to come and be part of this, to learn more about how the treaty, its history and how it fits into modern day Aotearoa New Zealand. It is also a great opportunity to come and meet some new migrants to the city and country as well and learn alongside them.

You'll need to register via email to whangarei@cab.org.nz or by phone on 094388046.

Combined HopeWhangarei service 10am February 19th 2023... commissioning of our Intern for 2023-24 Pauline Harrison.

One of the exciting things for 2023-24 is that we have been approached to host another national ministry Intern from KCLM (Knox Centre for Leadership and Ministry), our Presbyterian seminary. Pauline Harrison will be joining us from Ngatea, where she was part of the lay leadership in the cooperating parish there. Pauline and her husband Simon grew up in Tauranga, she completed her theological training through Carey College and was accepted from training in 2022. She comes from a background in international business and IT as well as involvement in church planting and mission in France. She came up and checked us out and met with the council in October and will be moving up here in February. Simon will be joining her later in the year.

Pauline will be commissioned at this celebration combined service on February 19th, and given licence by the Presbytery to celebrate communion and we will be joined for part of the service via zoom by Rev Dr Geoff New, principal of Knox Centre for Ministry and Leadership.

Mark this special date down in your calendar...

Devotional Insights through Nehemiah (& Ezra). Would you like a copy?

Howard has begun the series, preaching through the book of Nehemiah. Our Daily Bread have published a 60 day devotional Journal featuring both Ezra and Nehemiah. There are only 4 left and we suggest a donation of \$5 per copy

If you would like a copy, please contact Colleen on 094380016

Please note for those who prefer things online, you can access the devotional series by Robert Solomon at <https://journeythrough.org/courses/ezra-nehemiah/>

Business Block City Mission/Community Hub project

Over the past few months the church has contracted Adrian Whale to oversee the feasibility study process of our look to redevelop the business block (our commercial building along Hunt Street). Looking at how we can make the best missional use of what is an earthquake prone building. Adrian has been busy listening and speaking with the community, with groups involved in care for marginalized people in the city and looking at what are the needs and possible ways we can help meet those needs and the basics of a business plan for a way forward. Please keep Adrian and this project in your prayers, as this is important work both for the future of the Church and also the wellbeing of our City. Adrian works out of the office on Mondays and Thursdays.

Pamela Atkins

It is with sadness that we advise the passing of Pamela Atkins, wife of Max Atkins, in Geraldine. Pamela and Max were long standing member of St Andrews who shifted to Geraldine some years ago. Pamelas funeral is this coming Friday and we are expecting a ling from the funeral directors for those who wish to attend online. The address for correspondence is 3b Lewis St, Geraldine.



Blessing

Many people asked me for a copy of the prayer of St Brendon (Brendon was an Irish monk who may just have travelled to the new world a thousand years before Columbus) I used at the end of my sermon on Sunday so I leave that with you here as a blessing but also as a prayer that I hope you can make your own as we embark on the exciting journey of 2023 and beyond.



Help me to journey beyond the familiar
and into the unknown.
Give me the faith to leave old ways
and break fresh ground with You.
Christ of the mysteries, I trust You
to be stronger than each storm within me.
I will trust in the darkness and know that my times, even
now, are in Your hand. Tune my spirit to the music of heaven, ...
(I really love this line... what a prayer...)
and somehow make my obedience count for You



Blessings

Howard Carter

SENIOR MINISTER

HOPEWHANGĀREI

January 17th 2023

PS: - AS part of my devotional discipline (and physical wellness) I go for a walk along the Hatea river loop track most mornings (weather permitting). I take my camera and as part of my worship I take photos of the wonder that is God's creation... which I enjoy sharing with people.

Here is something from this morning... An adolescent Poaka or Australasian Pied Stilt wading along the river's edge... caught in a very reflective moment. These birds always remind me of grace. It seems almost an impossibility that the bird can walk and survive on those impossibly thin legs, but they do with such grace and poise.