



3 September 2017

Welcoming the Stranger – Welcoming the Christ

“Thinking allowed; thinking aloud allowed”

Minister: Robyn McPhail
Musicians: Kato Akau'ola KK Clyde Foster Kaeo
Readers: Imago Inocente KK tba Kaeo

Before I can tell my life what I want to do with it, I must listen to my life telling me who I am.

Parker J. Palmer

Plugging in

Gathering with all the Saints

Hymn *Whispering gently* [KK] Singers

Prayer Turning Aside to See

We gather now, eyes wide open to wonder.
 As Moses turned aside to see
 the bush ablaze with eternal Presence,
 so in this sacred gathering
 do we turn aside to see the world
 charged with the grandeur and the glory
 of indescribably Mystery.

We turn aside to see
 the beauty of each other,
 the goodness of this life,
 and the truth of sacred wisdom that knows:
 earth to be holy;
 all creatures to be kin;
 the universe to be One;
 and Spirit to be a flaring presence,
 for all who turn aside to see.

in If Darwin Prayed, by Bruce Sanguin

YOU KNOW US, GOD. YOU KNOW WHO WE ARE,
 PEOPLE WHO FIND IT EASIER TO HOLD ON
 TO ALL WE DO THAT IS WRONG,
 RATHER THAN CLINGING TO GOODNESS.
 YOU KNOW WHAT WE DO,
 WHEN WE IGNORE THE POOR,
 OR REFUSE TO LIVE AT PEACE WITH OTHERS.
 YOU KNOW WHY WE DO ALL THESE THINGS,
 FOR WE CONTINUE TO SET OUR MINDS
 ON ALL THOSE TEMPTATIONS
 WHICH INSINUATE THEMSELVES INTO OUR LIVES.

You do indeed know us all too well, Steadfast Love.
 Yet, you continue to be patient with us and forgiving towards us.
 Yet, you would embrace us, rather than washing your hands of us.
 Yet, you would continue to call us to follow Jesus Christ, our Lord and Saviour,
 so we might find our life with you.

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This, this is the God we adore WOV153

Symbol of God's Presence

Clarifying our Purpose

Conversation with the Word

To dwell with God is to willingly open ourselves to God's burning and seemingly dangerous love for justice. To walk in faithfulness like Moses, and ultimately like Christ, is to be open to the descending way of suffering, humility, and perseverance that is required if we are to live with compassion, with forgiveness, with the radical foolishness of loving our enemies, and with the pursuit of justice.

Enuma Okoro, *Sojourners*

Exodus 3:1-15

"Every cry, with the individual throb of suffering it expresses, is falling, cry for cry, not on deaf ears, but on the heart of God. If God is hidden, God is hidden within the suffering."

J. Gerald Janzen

"Kick off your shoes," someone says to you. Adding words like?

It's hospitality speaking, an invitation to make yourself at home.

"Take off your shoes." In contrast, those words give serious pause, something that must be done right, hesitation in the face of something we're likely not at home with. Namely, respect to the level of reverence, transcendence, or reality and power beyond our easy understanding.

Shoes are thus a point of intersection: between being comfortably at home and being awestruck by the unfathomable.

This place is another of those points of intersection. This gathering in worship. Both a people friendly, homely place and time and a spirit filled, sometimes disturbing place and time.

As a result, like Moses at the bush, it's a place where we're open, and vulnerable, to being shoulder-tapped.

Like Moses is. Drawn into what this presence – awesome and awful but at the same time inviting us to feel at home – is asking of us. One who is concerned about... people, the world, suffering. Justice for whoever and whatever is oppressed. Well-being for all.

Afraid? Yes, very afraid. Afraid for what is coming next.

It's a long line of verbs, of God-actions. Observed, heard, know, come down, deliver, bring, seen. Past tense mixed with present and future. And then the one that strikes the fear and trembling – send. No longer just reporting what's going on for God. This involves you. You are to go back to your suffering people so that we can pry them loose from the grip of Egypt.

In this place of hospitality and reverence, feeling both at home and out of one's depth, comes this bombshell. What happens next is basically a bit of an argument. God's been talking to Moses. So Moses talks back.

He has two questions:

Who am I to do this?

Who are you to ask me to?

The answer to the second is in God being identified as the ultimate mystery who is free to be whoever and whatever God chooses, in whatever situation and circumstance. I am who I am, I am what I am, I am who I am becoming, etc. etc.

The answer to Moses' first question about his qualifications and capability is simply "I will be with you."

That is, you're not just you. I'm not just me. Linked heart to heart with God, and therefore with the God spirit in all of us. Joining forces with all who share this passionate concern for well-being and justice.

This is a very personal call: a change in one person's life from simple everyday things working on his father-in-law's farm. After the dramas of Egypt, including an act of murder in anger at the cruelty of an Egyptian foreman, he's found the quiet life. But now a bush has connected him back to his origins, to the stories his mother told him in the years before he was weaned and went to live in the palace. As a result he's been called to bring together this heritage and the advantages he gained living as the adopted grandson of the Pharaoh.

It is also a larger call. A call to a real and important purpose, something we all long to have. True, the urge to keep our heads down and avoid changing what we've got ourselves settled into is pretty strong. But the longing is there, deep down, with a lingering dissatisfaction if things just stay the same. It is the longing to have our life saturated with God purpose and be drawn in as part of the healing of creation.

Here's how this gets expressed with Jesus, today's Gospel reading *The Message* version:

Then Jesus made it clear to his disciples that it was now necessary for him to go to Jerusalem, submit to an ordeal of suffering at the hands of the religious leaders, be killed, and then on the third day be raised up alive. Peter took him in hand, protesting, "Impossible, Master! That can never be!"

But Jesus didn't swerve. "Peter, get out of my way. Satan, get lost. You have no idea how God works."

Then Jesus went to work on his disciples. "Anyone who intends to come with me has to let me lead. You're not in the driver's seat; I am. Don't run from suffering; embrace it. Follow me and I'll show you how. Self-help is no help at all. Self-sacrifice is the way, my way, to finding yourself, your true self. What kind of deal is it to get everything you want but lose yourself? What could you ever trade your soul for?"

"Don't be in such a hurry to go into business for yourself. Before you know it the Son of Man will arrive with all the splendor of his Father, accompanied by an army of angels. You'll get everything you have coming to you, a personal gift. This isn't pie in the sky by and by. Some of you standing here are going to see it take place, see the Son of Man in kingdom glory."

Matthew 16:21-28, *The Message*

Conversations

Continuing the Conversation

1. How do you respond to the suggestion that "God is hidden within the suffering"?
2. What is the "larger purpose" of your life?

The World: Our Prayers

Ecumenical Prayer Cycle: Benin, Côte d'Ivoire, Togo

Our Father in heaven,
you are the God of gods, the King of kings.
We ask you to bless our governments,
our leaders, our elders
and all those who are in powerful positions.
Give them a heart which abides by your will
so they no longer favour injustice,
but act for the well-being of all,
in all things.
Give us all humble hearts
so that we have good things,
right actions,
and your blessing forever for our country.
Bless the activities of the farmer, the fisherman,
the businesswoman, the artist, and all other workers.
After the dry season, send us the blessed rain
and favour us with a plentiful harvest
so that we may glorify you.
Have pity on the poor, the soldiers, the sick.
Help those who are alone
and console those who are devastated.
Support pregnant women and mothers.
Help the widows and widowers.
Be father and mother to all orphans.
God, bless your word for Christians,
and for non-believers,
so that they may be assured
and lean on you
to obtain forgiveness for their sins
and become your children.

O Lord, have pity on us.
You are the God of mercy.
You are the strength, the glory, the honour and the holiness,
forever and ever.

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Lord's Prayer

Sent to Love the World as God Loves

Serving in the Week Ahead

Offering Hymn *I the Lord of sea and sky*

Dedication

Blessing

May the God of peace be found within you;
the God of love surround and hold you
and the God of liberation lift you and bring you life.

Dorothy McRae-McMahon

...*Mā te mārīe a te Atua*

Robyn McPhail, 03.09.2017

NOTICES FOR TODAY – 3 SEPTEMBER 2017

Parish email: admin@kkup.org.nz

Church Office at Cornerstone: 09 407 8250

Minister: Robyn McPhail (DD) 09 283 4802, 02102476280

minister@kkup.org.nz

Find us at www.kkup.org.nz and on [Facebook](#)

Notices: Jenny Phillips 09 407 8883 jenny.jane@xtra.co.nz

KK Pastoral: Jessica Scott 09 407 5555 jomscott2@gmail.com

ROSTERED FOR NEXT SUNDAY 10 SEPTEMBER 2017

Musicians: Dave Hallam KK Clyde Foster Kaeo

Readers: Ros Simpson KK tba Kaeo

Door and tea: Trevor and Bob KK

Communion Prep: Arlene and Lloyd **Flowers:** Jenny/Karen

LECTIONARY READINGS FOR THE COMING WEEK:

Exodus 12:1-14 Psalm 149 Romans 13:8-14 Matthew 18:15-20

KERIKERI SINGING GROUP will have a two week break and resume on 17 September.

WORSHIP COMMITTEE: Monday 4 September 11.00am in the Meeting Room, Cornerstone.

BIBLE STUDY: tomorrow Monday 4 September 1.15-2.45pm in the Cornerstone Meeting Room. Anyone who wishes to join can come.

PARISH ANNUAL MEETING: Sunday 15 October (date change), parish service at **10.30am** at Cornerstone, with meeting and lunch to follow.

ANNUAL REPORTS: due **Monday 4 September**. Please email to admin@kkup.org.nz. Annual meeting date now to be **15 October**.

PARISH COUNCIL NOMINATIONS: Forms available at each venue.

THE UPPER ROOM DISCIPLINES 2018: Time to order for next year. Please add your name to the list in foyer at Kerikeri if you want one, or contact Jenny.

WORKSHOP ON WORSHIP AND PASTORAL CARE: Saturday 23 September, 9.30am-3.30pm at 35 Kings Road, Paihia. Led by Ngaire Southon (styles and language of worship) and Marilyn Welch (theology of pastoral care, listening skills, and setting up teams). Register interest by 10 September (next Sunday) to Rosalie Gwilliam 09 4351779 rosaliegwilliam@gmail.com. Check also with Paula and Jessica who plan to attend.

IN CORNERSTONE THIS WEEK: Today: Ensemble pm. Monday: Chair Fitness am; Worship Committee am; Bible Study pm. Tuesday: Yoga am; Training Session pm; Tai Chi pm, Learning Hub pm, Yoga evening.

Wednesday: Pastoral Gathering am; Training Session day; Learning Hub pm. Thursday: Fellowship am; Girls' Brigade pm, A Chaired Taste evening. Friday: Food Bank Committee am. Saturday: Car Boot Sale.

AT KAEO CHURCH HALL THIS WEEK: Monday: MVCOT am; Yoga pm. Tuesday: Business Focus Group pm. Wednesday MVCOT am. Thursday: Puna Awhina am. Friday: MVCOT am. Saturday: Mural Display day (MVCOT = Ministry for Vulnerable Children Oranga Tamariki)



**MEET the CANDIDATES
KERIKERI**

SUNDAY
17 September 4pm
Frontline Church
119 Hone Heke Rd
Kerikeri

CORNERSTONE GARDEN GROUP: The Garden Group are requesting donations (\$20 or other of their choice) for shrubs to plant up the garden leading up to the Peace Garden. This is the next stage on the landscaping plan and we will continue planting along the bank between Cornerstone and the Funeral Parlour as finance permits. There is a box for donations in the foyer. Thanks for those who have donated.

CAR BOOT SALES: Next sale is this **Saturday 9 September** 7.30am-12noon at Cornerstone. Contact Mary 407 1117.

GOD'S KIDS AT CORNERSTONE: Special session for Children next Sunday, with Ngaire, in the Tamariki – Children's Room.

CHAIR FITNESS: Run by Get Active NZ. Mondays 11-11.30am in Cornerstone. \$4 per session. Get fit, have fun, open to people of all ages. Registration required 021 03446969 or info@getactivenz.co.nz