



16 December 2018
Advent 3

Minister: Rev Dr Robyn McPhail
Musicians: Marie Cannon (KK) Clyde Foster (Kaeo)
Readers: Jenny Phillips (KK) tba (Kaeo)

Here each Sunday we pray God's blessing over our buildings: thanks for the good that has happened through the week and cleansing for anything troublesome. May the Spirit touch all who come into our church home.



Being family, we watch out for, and care for, one another.

Settling in

Gathering with all the Saints

We move from vaguely welcoming the season
to definite plans, lists and deadlines,
the pace accelerates ...
concerts celebrate the season ...
break ups mark end of year.

WE CARVE OUT THIS SPACE IN WHICH TO BE THOUGHTFUL,
REFLECTIVE TO CONTEMPLATE THE MEANING OF IT ALL
AND PONDER THESE THINGS IN OUR HEARTS.

Partner Story from South Sudan: For Zero Hunger

Until last year, Joyce ran a tiny stall at a local market. She would buy a bucket each of sorghum and peanuts to sell one cup at a time. Once she sold one bucket, she would buy another. The small profit she made for a day's labour kept her three children healthy. Her husband and father were killed in 2015 when their homes were attacked, part of South Sudan's bitter war. For her Maridi Service Agency has been a lifeline. She attended a small business course last year and received money to invest. Her business has grown and she has food stored to use later when prices are higher. It is enough to pay school fees, medical expenses and live comfortably.

Be the Lifeline to families in need of food.

Lighting the Advent Candle of Joy

For those who have no joy in their hearts,
For those whose lives are full of difficulty,
For those who are anxious and have no peace,
We light the candle of joy.

We remember also the voice of God's messengers calling us to be bearers of joy in a troubled world.

Light the candle

YOU, LORD JESUS, ARE OUR JOY, BRING JOY TO THE WORLD.
MAY THIS LIGHT SIGNAL A BREAKTHROUGH, A BRIGHTER FUTURE,
A NEW ORDER AND A BETTER WAY.

Hymn *Joyful, joyful, we adore thee* tune: Ode to Joy WOV428

Isaiah 12:2-6

Symbol of God's Presence

Hymn *It is December time again* [Jenny's choice]

Clarifying our Purpose

Conversation with the Word

Love always precedes repentance. Divine love is a catalyst for our turning, our healing. Where fear and threat may gain our compliance, love captures our heart. It changes the heavy burden of the 'have-to's' of imposed obedience to the 'get-to's,' a joyful response to the genuine love of God.

Michael M. Rose

Reading and Reflection Luke 3:7-18

Vision and Action

When God is your strength, when the foundation of life and well-being has its source in taha wairua, the spiritual aspect of things...

As Isaiah 12 expressed it, when this is the case there is a simple thankfulness about life and joy, which is not mere happiness when everything's good and in our favour, but a deeper experience that's known even in the midst of pain and loss.

We saw that yesterday and through the days prior at the tangihanga for Hiwi Tauroa, known to some in the parish, as a member but one who has lived with Alzheimers for some years now so has not been actively among us. The joy in the midst of pain, joy in the stories yes but even more in the values and vision and the assurance Matua Hiwi held closest to his heart:

Ū tonu hoki tōku whakaaro,
e kore te mate, te ora rānei,
e kore ngā anahera, ngā rangatiratanga rānei,
e kore ngā mea onāianeī, e kore ngā mea e puta mai a mua,
e kore ngā mana,
e kore te tiketike, e kore te hohonu,
e kore tētahi atu mea hanga,
e kaha ki te momotu i a tātou i te aroha o te Atua,
i tērā i roto nei i a Karaiti Ihu, i tō tātou Ariki.

*For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life,
nor angels, nor rulers,
nor things present, nor things to come,
nor powers, nor height, nor depth,
nor anything else in all creation,
will be able to separate us from the love of God
in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

Romans 8:38-39

Yesterday was the last day of the tangi for this boy from a local Pupuke family, former High School teacher at Kaeo, principal of Wesley College, principal of Tuakau College, Māori All Black, Coach of Counties-Manukau, Race Relations Conciliator, pioneer in Māori-Chinese interaction, visionary and driver of vision into reality. We didn't hear so much yesterday about what you can find on Auntie Google, as son Danny put, but about his personal legacy in family and among a wide group of us who have known him and been influenced greatly by him. In the midst we heard the gospel again and again. We weren't at church, and the people speaking mostly are seen regularly as part of organized church, but it was faith and the Christian Way that, again and again, was referenced as the foundation for this person and for life that flourishes.

When John the Baptist speaks – in today's reading – the people listening are convinced immediately that their lives are not flourishing. They are not trusting God as their strength and source of well-being and they realise they need to change. I am sure that was happening for some people yesterday. Is it happening today?

So they ask John, what can we do?

John replies with specifics. He addresses specific people with ways relevant to them that put God's way into practice. Simple as.

What he says are not generalisations, general rules to follow. They relate to people that he can see are in a situation where they're not doing what they can easily do if they let go and let God take the lead.

At that time, the standard for coat ownership was one. To have a coat meant to have the full complement of clothes – not just the under layer and shirt. That's enough to get on with living. To have two coats is to have accumulated more than is essential and, if you find yourself alongside someone who has none (e.g. they're your neighbour and it's the middle of winter) give them your second coat. In a small community that makes sense.

Tax collectors at the time struggled to survive. They weren't highly paid and they had few friends among the general population. However, John says the way to sort their financial issues is not to extort from other people, not fix your problem by passing it onto someone else who has no choice. This is not a message to put up with being poor but a message of integrity and keeping the interests of others in view.

And the word to soldiers is not a message to accept whatever wages you're given, no complaint, no protest if they're inadequate. The soldiers John is speaking to were sufficiently well paid that they didn't need to do what they were in the habit of doing. Because they had power of the populace, they were taking from them at will, expecting help from them at will. Don't do it! Don't get caught up in the power game.

It's not easy taking on change of practice. It's virtually impossible without the vision of what could be, what can and will be if we capture it – the vision of God's way – and get on and live it. Holding to it often needs painful reminders. Tributes to Hiwi included the discipline and drive (imagine doing 80 scrums in a row up a hill during rugby practice) like I saw once at Whangaroa College after a pōwhiri when the kids had been a bit lacklustre in their singing. What a rark up he gave them. How much better they were next time!

The vision of livelihood and well-being for all peoples was strong in Hiwi all his days. He inspired us back in the early 80's, a man of rugby who chose not to watch any of the Springbok games during the tour of 1981. To my Dad and I, this was principle put into hard practice.

I mentioned this yesterday and also that Hiwi encouraged this Pākehā greatly in her journey of learning. Not just since I've been here – I had some great yarns and lots of good advice – but it goes back to the probably the late 90's. As I said yesterday, in the rural South Island doing te reo by Correspondence, I was looking for times to use the reo without getting the dirty looks I'd get if I did so at church. Times like a Rotary Conference coming to town. They wanted prayers to start on Sunday so I fronted up and found this famous man sitting in the front row. More nervous even than usual I proceeded and when I came to close with the grace, looking out and saying it from memory in te reo, I saw a beaming smile on Matua Hiwi's face. The pronunciation would have been terrible – I hadn't yet come under the tutelage of Whangaroa – but what encouragement he gave me.

There's something else I talked about yesterday that brings out the practice of the Christian way from the example of Hiwi's life. Hiwi and Pat's life together in fact.

We arrived first at Te Pātunga on Wednesday and it was kaumatua Chris Adams' turn to speak, he got me thinking about Dads, and about men and relationships. He was speaking about Hiwi, but then he was speaking about Pat. As we say in the south, like a pair of paradise ducks – you see one then you see the other. Like toroa as Uncle put it. Doing their work as a partnership.

I heard too (or I think I heard – I'm still learning): anyway I got thinking about how precious are those men whose love means genuine partnership, partnership of equals (especially when the man is our Dad). What an example! And it's important for us women to rise up and be equal partners, and so be real champions together.

In Hebrew there is an expression īsh hayal, often translated mighty warrior, but I prefer the direct meaning – man of worth. And issah hayal – you see her in Proverbs 31 – is a woman of worth. The two together, serving each other, but as each people of worth. Serving with mana: serving each other and serving others. The true image of Christ.

Māori Television's news item yesterday said:

How can a blade of grass acknowledge the forest, how can a drop of rain acknowledge the ocean? People of today may never be able to truly pay tribute to the esteemed leader, Edward Te Rangihwinui Tauroa.

His knowledge surpassed time and space, his prestige was from another dimension, from an ilk we may never see again. The first Māori principal in the country, a Māori All Black, the first Māori to be named Race Relations Commissioner, he accomplished many things and had a reputation that preceded him.

His biggest accomplishment and greatest legacy is his family. He leaves behind wife Pat Tauroa, six children and many mokopuna.

To the man of the people. May you rest in the arms of those gone before you as your legacy and future generations live in the beauty that you created.

"Time will not dim the memory of the special class of men of the past who braved the wide expanse of sea and land. Their sacred footprints are scattered over the surface of the land; treasured and sacred." – Sir James Henare

- How does John the Baptist help you to prepare for this Christmas?
- What needs to be turned "right-side-up" in your own life and relationships?

Reflection Hymn

Joy has dawned upon the world

Promised from creation
God's salvation now unfurled
Hope for ev'ry nation
Not with fanfares from above
Not with scenes of glory
But a humble gift of love
Jesus born of Mary

Sounds of wonder fill the sky
With the songs of angels
As the mighty Prince of life
Shelters in a stable
Hands that set each star in place
Shaped the earth in darkness
Cling now to a mother's breast
Vuln'erable and helpless

Shepherds bow before the lamb
Gazing at the glory
Gifts of men from distant lands
Prophecy the story
Gold, a King is born today
Incense, God is with us
Myrrh, His death will make a way
And by His blood He'll win us

Son of Adam, Son of heaven
Given as a ransom
Reconciling God and man
Christ, our mighty champion
What a Savior, what a Friend
What a glorious myst'ry
Once a babe in Bethlehem
Now the Lord of hist'ry

Stuart Townend

Conversations around the Table

The World: Our Prayers

Ecumenical Prayer Cycle: China, Hong Kong, Macau

God, our provider, we know the enjoyment and laughter
That can come over the sharing of a meal.
But there are households all around the world
living from day to day with nothing in reserve,
there are people who struggle to put food on the table,
there are children suffering from malnutrition.

Some have plenty and others have so little,
Yet it doesn't take a lot to lift a family from extreme poverty
To the point of being able to fend for themselves
and put a little aside for education, for medicine, for a rainy day.

We pray for the people of South Sudan,
For families where war has taken away a husband, a father, a son.
We pray for courage and strength for women raising their family on their own,
For grandparents raising their grandchildren.

We thank you for the work of Maridi Service Agency,
May what they do put a smile on the faces of those
whom they help to get back up on their feet.

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This is our prayer in the name of Jesus – the Bread of Life.

Lord's Prayer

Loving the World as God Loves

Serving in the Week Ahead

Offering Hymn *Joy to the world*

Blessing

We travel together
towards the new birth, towards the new start
We follow the signs which show us the way
TO DO WHAT IS RIGHT
TO SEEK JUSTICE
TO WALK HUMBLY WITH GOD.
WE GO IN PEACE. AMEN.

NOTICES FOR TODAY – 16 DECEMBER 2018

Parish email: admin@kkup.org.nz Church Office: 09 407 8250

Find us at www.kkup.org.nz and on Facebook

Minister: Robyn McPhail (DD) 09 283 4802, 021 0247 6280
minister@kkup.org.nz

Ministry Leadership Team: Bev Tayler, Alan Robinson, and Robyn

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

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

Bookings for the buildings (hire or church use): phone office or cornerstone@kkup.org.nz or
wesleydale@kkup.org.nz

NEXT SUNDAY 23 DECEMBER 2018

Musicians: Kato Akau'ola (KK) Clyde Foster (Kaeo)

Readers: Helen Norman (KK) tba (Kaeo)

Door and Tea: Bev and Christina

LECTIONARY READINGS FOR THE COMING WEEK:

Micah 5:2-5a Psalm 80:1-7 Hebrews 10:5-10 Luke 1:39-45(46-55)

TED ROBINSON CHAPEL SERVICE: Today at 4pm led by Jan Gough. Helpers Welcome.

BIBLE STUDY: No study tomorrow. Restart in February.

STUDY LEAVE: Robyn's study leave is interspersed with parish work, so she is available at times, at other times not. Contact Bev and Alan (Ministry Leadership Group 4016625, 4050688) with initial inquiries.

CAR BOOT SALES: Next sale **this** Saturday 22 December 7.30am-12noon at Cornerstone. Contact person: Mary 407 1117.

COMMUNION SERVICE: Sunday 23 December at 4.00pm led by Union Church at Ted Robinson Chapel.

CAROLS IN THE CHURCHYARD

Kaeo Union Church

Friday 21 December

7pm

Come and join the fun and community fellowship singing along with the Accordion Revivalists and the Whangaroa Ukelele Group