

26 May 2019
Easter 6

Minister: Rev Dr Robyn McPhail

Musician: Clyde Foster (KK and Kaeo)

Readers: Ros Simpson (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 and our into our homes.



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

Settling in

Gathering with all the Saints

God calls us to this place, a haven for healing and hope.

WE COME, WITH THE PAIN OF OUR BURDENS,

WE COME TO HEAR GOD'S WORD OF HOPE FOR US.

Together, we will sing songs of joy;

each of us will hear God whisper our name,
'Beloved of my heart.'

WE JOIN OUR VOICES IN PRAYER AND PRAISE;

WE SING OF OUR LONGING FOR NEW LIVES.

Here, our shadowed corners are filled with Light;

here we discover that God dwells in us.

AND NOT JUST US, FOR GOD WOULD TEACH ALL TO LOVE;

GOD'S SPIRIT WOULD LEAD ALL PEOPLES IN PEACE.

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Hymn *Christians are all kinds of people*

Prayer

Vision-Giving God,
when you put bandages
on skinned knees;
when you hold the hand
of a teenager
grieving unrequited love;
when you wipe away the tears
of grandparents
at the birth of new child:
you show us
your new creation.

Brother to little children,
when you hang out
with the world's outcasts;
when you stay a little longer

with those we rush past;
when you will not take sides
in our petty little games:
you show us
the new earth.

Holy Spirit,
when you turn on the
'no vacancy' sign
as death comes our way;
when mourning becomes
a distant memory;
when pain is found
only in dusty history books:
you show us
the new heaven.

We show others who we are by the lives we lead, the words we speak, the actions we undertake. Let us confess how we have not been God's little children, when we fail to love as we have been loved.

WHO ARE WE TO GET IN YOUR WAY, HOLY GOD?
WE PUT PEOPLE INTO NEAT, LITTLE BOXES,
BUT YOU RIP THEM OPEN,
SO FOLKS CAN DANCE IN YOUR JOY.
WE IMPRISON OTHERS WITH OUR UNMET EXPECTATIONS,
AND YOU SET THEM FREE WITH A WORD.
WE BUILD WALLS AROUND THOSE WE DON'T KNOW,
AND YOU TEAR THEM DOWN,
SO THEY CAN RUN WILD IN THE KINGDOM.

WHO ARE WE TO GET IN YOUR WAY, SAVING POWER,
ESPECIALLY IN THE WAY OF YOUR FORGIVENESS
OFFERED TO ALL!
GIVE US YOUR VISION THAT SEES EVERYONE AS EQUAL –
FORGIVEN, GRACED, LOVED - EVEN AS WE SEEK TO FOLLOW
OUR LORD AND SAVIOUR, JESUS CHRIST.

Silence is kept

We know who God is by the love shown to us in Christ Jesus.
WE WILL SHOW OTHERS WHO WE ARE - AND WHOSE WE ARE –
BY THE LOVED POURED OUT BY OUR LIVES.
THANKS BE TO GOD, WE ARE FORGIVEN! AMEN.

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Symbol of God's Presence

Hymn *Our life has its seasons* [Ros' choice]

Clarifying our Purpose

Conversation with the Word

Acts 11:1-8

Peter had an experience. This is Peter, and the church, post Easter, sure that the essential Jesus they knew is alive among them, in spirit and in action. Sure that their task is to continue to follow his way and be Christ in the world around them.

Following the way and living the good news all made sense when they were with him. It made sense during their experiences of his presence post Easter that they needed to keep living the good news and be Christ to for the good of everyone. But it's not always straightforward to put sense into right practice.

Here's an example of what Jesus had said to them, preparing them for stepping up and living the good news as he did – it's just after the foot-washing episode:

Jesus said,

³³“Children, I am with you for only a short time longer. You are going to look high and low for me. But just as I told the Jews, I'm telling you: 'Where I go, you are not able to come.'”

³⁴⁻³⁵“Let me give you a new command: Love one another. In the same way I loved you, you love one another. This is how everyone will recognize that you are my disciples—when they see the love you have for one another.”

And yet, loving, accepting, including all “one anothers”?

That's the key lesson in Peter's dream – God's way is open inclusion, no “yes, buts”, no conditions, no rules blocking the love.

Can you bring to mind a time when you have felt “other”. That is, finding yourself thinking, I don't feel part of this. I'm different. They all seem to fit in. Everyone else, but not me. And they don't really know me. They don't understand me.

My mum was a city girl who moved to a country district when she married in 1947. 59 years later when we had her funeral in that same district, we wished she could have seen and heard how much the people loved

her. But it didn't feel like it at the time. When the kids on the bus saw her driving the tractor one day, that helped a bit. But what sticks in my mind is what she told us about church and the cuppa time after services or at fellowship events. She couldn't drink tea – it simply didn't agree with her stomach – so she'd discovered coffee. When she was first offered tea and asked if they had coffee, the response was, no, everyone drinks tea. No "sorry", let alone, "we could get some for next time". So she always took her own coffee and continued to be seen as strange. No problem about coffee now, but there are still other ways the needs of newcomers can be fobbed off as not important.

The comments of different ones at Dargaville, Dutch newcomers in 1950s, from South Africa more recently...

Come back now to yourself and your feelings of belonging and not belonging. Whether it's as part of church, part of the community, part of a family even. Part of New Zealand – the really topical issue in our time.

It's worth realising that everyone has these feelings, at some time or other. And for some it's often.

We know what it is like to be "other".

Peter would have known what it is like, particularly now that, putting all his cock ups behind him (e.g. the denial and the cock crowing), he is frontline in public, a leader among the followers of Christ. What's more "other" than that in his time? (Also in ours?)

This dream speaks to his own sense of being excluded. He knows what it is like. He can appreciate the voice of God that says no exclusion – it's saved his life, it's made him the person he is now. So he hears clearly in the dream: don't let anything get in the way of love one another, all one anothers.

In recent times to this episode, Peter had often been seen sitting at table with people whose food customs were different than his, and the old laws said he shouldn't. His fellow Christians have challenged him on this. How can you do that when our faith says we shouldn't?

Think for a moment of the things that fit that category for us who are Methodist, or Presbyterian, or similar kinds of flavour of Christ's way here and now. Are you aware of the subtle rules we as church hold each other to? The kind of rules that risk making us more a club than a movement sharing God's love. We know them best when they are used against oneself.

It niggled with Peter, that teaching of his Lord that said love one another as I love you. Love others as I love them – eating with them, not judging, not condemning, not walking away and staying with just his own kind. But loving as is. He couldn't ignore his Lord's words.

When does church speak or act in ways that effectively tell different kinds of people that they are not okay. They can't belong. They're not loved?

When do we do that, each of us, unintentionally perhaps, not realising how we're heard or seen?

When we see this happen, or it's happening to us, we can speak up. Speak gently but clearly when something is in fact hurtful, insensitive, be it cultural, gender-wise, age related, disability related, etc. etc. If speaking is hard, we can do it through our actions. Getting alongside someone who is being treated badly. As Jesus did, sitting at table with the people being hurt by exclusion.

And we can be like Peter when we're challenged to conform to the comfort of our usual ways and usual rules. We can say, "Who am I to hinder God?"

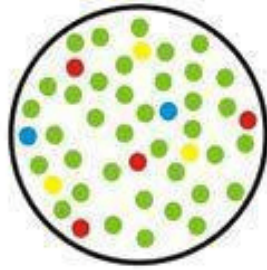
"I remember one night at Muzdalifa with nothing but the sky overhead I lay awake amid sleeping Muslim brothers and I learned that pilgrims from every land--every color, and class, and rank; high officials and the beggar alike--all snored in the same language."

Malcolm X, 20th century human rights activist

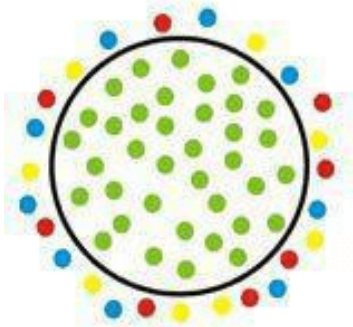
Hymn *E te Atua, aroha mai* tune: Kumbayah AA31

Continuing the Conversation

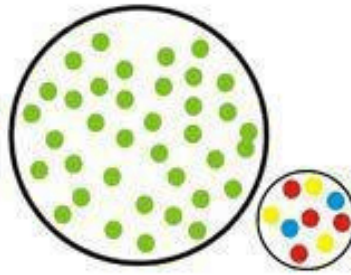
Take a look at the images...



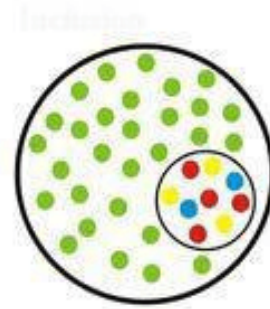
Inclusion



Exclusion

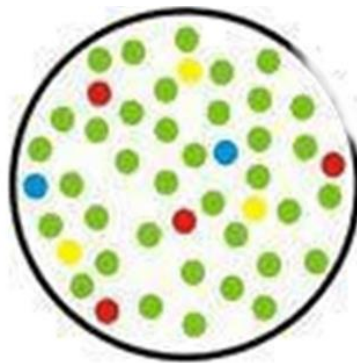


Segregation

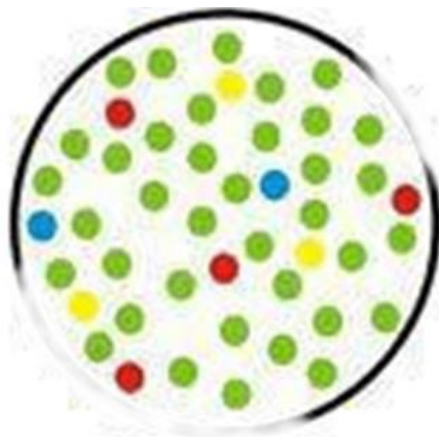


Integration

The inclusion images makes good steps but it doesn't quite cut it for me. Here's what I see as our work in progress, loving as Jesus loved:



Inclusion



The World: Our Prayers

Ecumenical Prayer Cycle: Angola, Mozambique

...prayer book prayers...

Prayer of an African Christian

God,
enlarge my heart
that it may be big enough
to receive the greatness of your love.
Stretch my heart
that it may take into it
all those around the world
who, with me, believe in Jesus Christ.
Stretch it
that it may take into it
all those who are not lovely in my eyes,
and whose hands I do not want to touch;
through Jesus Christ, my saviour.

<https://www.oikoumene.org/en/resources/prayer-cycle/angola-mozambique>

Lord's Prayer

Loving the World as God Loves

Serving in the Week Ahead

Offering Hymn *We are many, we are one*

You bless us in so many ways and with so many gifts, Loving God. As we praise you, may we offer our gifts so those who have so little may be fed, clothed, healed, restored, and graced. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

Sending and Blessing

Kia tau/The grace...

Robyn McPhail, 26.05.2019

NOTICES FOR TODAY – 26 MAY 2019

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 2 JUNE 2019 Leaders: Kerikeri Home Group

Musicians: Dave Hallam (KK) Clyde Foster (Kaeo)

Readers: Diane Paterson (KK) tba (Kaeo)

Door and Tea: Michelle and Akisi **Flowers:** Joan

LECTIONARY READINGS FOR THE COMING WEEK:

Acts 9:36-43, Psalm 23, Revelation 7:9-17, John 10:22-30

COMMUNION SERVICE: Ted Robinson Chapel today at 4.00pm led by Robyn. All welcome

BIBLE STUDY: Monday 27 May at 1.15-2.45pm at Cornerstone

MORNING TEA AT CORNERSTONE: The Pastoral Team will be putting on a special morning tea at 10.30am on Wednesday 29th May **ALL WELCOME** to come along and please bring a friend or anyone whom you wish.

TECHNOLOGY CAN BE FUN – and it can be a breeze to get going. Step-by-step instructions on plugging in to Cornerstone's technology (in the instruction pamphlet) do work. After meeting the impressive team at Wesley Dargaville (both elderly gentlemen, one using a walker) Robyn is keen for us to match their skill

level. You can have a quick and easy training session – she just hovers in the background and points to the right place in the pamphlet. Let her know if you're happy to try.

DONATIONS FOR VICTIMS OF CHRISTCHURCH SHOOTINGS: There is a container in the foyer each Sunday at Kerikeri or donations may be put in an envelope and put in the offering bag. Please label envelope with your name if you require a receipt and what it is for.

CAR BOOT SALE: Saturday 8 June 2019 7.30am-12noon at Cornerstone. Enquiries: Mary 021 722 938

STUDY LEAVE: Robyn's study leave continues in the midst of parish work. She is still available most of the time, so don't hesitate to call. You can also contact Bev and Alan (Ministry Leadership Group 4016625, 4050688) if need be.

BIBLE IN SCHOOLS AT RIVERVIEW PRIMARY (Kerikeri): desperately in need of helpers to relieve and also to take over (or job share) classes with current leaders going away for a period. Have a chat to Robyn. This parish has provided volunteers over the years but we'll soon have no involvement as there is now only Robyn on the job, at Kaeo through this year and relieving occasionally at Riverview.