



17 September 2017

Welcoming the Stranger – Welcoming the Christ

“Thinking allowed; thinking aloud allowed”

Minister: Robyn McPhail

Musician: Diane Paterson KK **Reader:** Ngaire Allwood KK

The Kaeo congregation will be joining All Saints, St Paul's, and the Māori Pastorate for All Saints regular monthly service, which will also be in remembrance of their priest Rev Margaret Williams.

GOLDEN HARVEST

Today we celebrate the golden harvest that for many years has been an important part of the local Kerikeri economy and way of life.

It is also time to give thanks for the promises of a new springtime.

PARISH COUNCIL NOMINATIONS: A short Congregational Meeting will be held prior to the service, to receive the congregation's nominations for forwarding to the AGM.



Plugging in

Gathering with all the Saints

Hymn *For the fruit of all creation*

Prayer

Liberating God:
 you set us free from our loneliness
 by the touch of another's hand;
 you deliver us from our selfishness,
 so we may be of service to others;
 you break the chains of our pride,
 so we might walk with you in humility.

Christ of love,
 when we would cling to our anger,
 you send forgiveness to take us by the hand;
 when we would snack on our bitterness,
 you share the Bread of heaven;
 when we would drink from sin's fountain,
 you pour out the Cup of salvation.

Spirit of new life:
 you gather us together in God's school
 to teach us how
 to live together,
 to love together,
 to serve together,
 so that those around us might know
 that you are in their midst.

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Symbol of God's Presence

Hymn *I, the Lord of sea and sky* [Ngaire's choice]

Clarifying our Purpose

Conversation with the Word

Reading Matthew 18:15-20

I want to talk about something called “Slow Peace”. It means talking about how we work together as church: how we deal with differences, how we deal with conflict, how we decide things together including the full variety in our midst because the full variety of voice is allowed to be heard.

Of course, our context is important when we read Bible texts. What’s happening for us who read this? What’s happening in the community, the nation, the church?

Plenty in relation to this reading, particularly in our nation.

Matthew’s church needed to learn how to be responsible together for how they related one to another. Some expected Jesus would return much as he was before and be their dear leader again, sort things out for them. But that had not happened and the years, the decades, were passing. How do we take responsibility for ourselves, in the spirit of the Lord in whose name we gather?

Let’s look at the text.

The English word “church” translates the original Greek word *ecclesia*, which means an assembly formed to decide or judge a particular case. It’s a word that connects with the beginnings of democracy, with the totally innovative way of deciding matters together. So Matthew’s church, and our church from its inherited traditions, is a community which works things out together, no relying on authorities to rule by decree.

And another word that could benefit from a closer look is the word “sin”. Its Greek points to an offense against another person in the community. It is a relationship matter. Something has caused a rift between two people. And in a community when anything happens between people it can eventually affect the whole community.

What is suggested for dealing with things between people – issues, hurts, disagreements, misunderstandings – is a procedure to avoid coming to hasty conclusions. When there is a rift, even small, we want to get it sorted. We want to get it out of the way. But that’s a recipe for no good result, often in fact for escalation. Bowl on in to get satisfaction. Or call in the cavalry (the presumed authorities) to rule on who is right and who is wrong.

In fact, figuring what is right and what is wrong is not the primary concern of Jesus’ words here. What’s of concern is the tear in the fabric of people’s relationships. The crack in the relationship between two people, or between two groups of people, which can affect the whole community: that’s the issue. The upset relationship, not the right and wrong of the particular people’s views or positions.

It will mean looking for what has triggered the rift – and often that is someone doing or saying something, which maybe was misunderstood, maybe was downright unwise or hurtful. That will come clear as the conversation takes place. Why are we at odds with each other? And not he said, she said, I said or whatever.

More often than not, that will be the end of it. Two people listen to each other, misunderstandings are sorted, apologies given and received, the importance of maintaining a good relationship affirmed as the thing that matters most. Matters most because we are community formed in Christ and through Christ.

But sometimes, quite a number of sometimes, it’s hard to work through just one on one. The dynamics between often have a power difference, based on personality, or role, or history. One person can feel a bit intimidated by the other, or think that the other person’s view is more likely to be listened to. I do know what it’s like to feel silenced. (I have to remind myself of that as my confidence has grown over years and I can be at times hard to silence!)

So we bring in another person or two that we trust, to help as fellow listeners. They contribute to the conversation that wants to heal the rift, and restore mana (it really is the best word) to both people.

If a complete resolution is not possible by these means, says Matthew’s Jesus, then it needs the wisdom and input of the community as a whole. How does this matter at issue relate to our values as a community, as people of the Way of Christ? The choice then rests with the people involved: to remain with us you must do sits right with our ethos and with the spirit of reconciliation. Otherwise you’re best to part from us.

And become “as a Gentile and a tax collector”.

Now, be very careful. Remember I said *slow peace*. No hasty conclusions. For what does it mean to be a Gentile or a tax collector? What does it mean in the eyes of Jesus?

If you take a closer look at what’s preceded this in the Matthew 18 you’ll be given pause to the idea this

means the person is now to be excluded and no longer of interest. In fact these are the ones Jesus and his Father in heaven is most interested in. To be as a Gentile or a tax collector is to be, without doubt, loved by God.

It's as if this is saying, we're to start again with the person or people. Love them, respect them, pray for them, seek well-being for them, simply as they are, and see where that leads. Ask in the name of Christ and somehow somewhere it will happen.

For where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them.

The heart of being church is that together, gathered as community, Jesus is present. It is in our being community together that Jesus is most clearly experienced and known, by us and by others. The voice of authority is the voice of Christ that is heard when we listen well to one another; when each of us feels safe and respected that we find our voice to speak respectfully the truth as we understand it; when our focus is on right relationships, on loving one another.

Right behaviour, and truth which only God knows in completeness, will follow.

Hymn *We are many, we are one*

Conversations

Continuing the Conversation

The creed of the pilgrim God

We believe in a pilgrim God,
who crosses frontiers, boundaries and barriers,
who leaves his greatness behind and meets us on the way
and comes to us holding out his hand.
'I am the Lord, your God, I care for you, I am coming with you.'

We believe in Jesus Christ, who walked on our earth,
who was born homeless, who found no place to lay his head,
wandering, journeying, even when a child pursued.
He revealed justice, brought people peace,
and played out his life even unto death itself.

We believe in the Spirit, who shapes and polishes us,
with blasts of wind and sand,
who gives us courage to witness
to the boundless grace of God.

Margarita Ouwerkerk, Argentina

The World: Our Prayers

Ecumenical Prayer Cycle: Argentina, Paraguay, Uruguay

O God, Lord of the wind and the sea,
of the mountains and the valleys,
of the world and of the church:
in the midst of fear and insecurity
give us trust and hope in you.

We live in a world
where the gales of power
blow strong enough to shake life itself,
where from the arrogant and the interests of the powerful
roll the waves of injustice and violence.

We pray for those suffering
because of their poverty, their ignorance,
their limitations,
because of their colour or status, social or sexual.
We think of your church sailing on a sea
where the waves of racism, militarism, sexism
and economic marginalization hurt human life.

Take care of your church and put in it
a sincere love for those who suffer,
a clear vision of your will,
healing, pastoral words for the needy,
and a valiant, prophetic proclamation
against those who create violence and pain.

O God, rebuke the uncontrolled wind of terrorism and war.
Turn it towards peace and human development
so that in place of lies, truth is strengthened,
in place of weapons, there are schools for all children,
in place of luxury, the world adorns itself
with bread for the hungry
and life blossoms everywhere.

O God, Lord of the wind and the sea,
may your strong mercy calm the whole earth.
In the name of Jesus Christ.

© Bishop Aldo M. Etchegoyen, Evangelical, Methodist Church of Argentina.

Lord's Prayer

Sent to Love the World as God Loves

Serving in the Week Ahead

Blessing

Go now to the people who are overwhelmed by despair,
to take the hope which has been given to us and share it with all.
Go now to those who are at odds with neighbours,
to offer the peace and reconciliation which God has poured into our lives.
Go now to those who are the most vulnerable in our world,
to bring the healing, the grace, the love of our God.

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Kia tau...

A-men, a-men, a---men

Robyn McPhail, 17.09.2017

NOTICES FOR TODAY – 17 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 24 SEPTEMBER 2017

Musicians: Marie Cannon KK Clyde Foster Kaeo

Readers: Diane Paterson KK tba Kaeo

Door and tea: Elaine and Ian KK

Short service at Kaeo to join celebration lunch at Cornerstone.

LECTIONARY READINGS FOR THE COMING WEEK:

Exodus 16:2-15 Psalm 105:1-6,37-45

Philippians 1:21-30 Matthew 20:1-16

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

KERIKERI SINGING GROUP resumes today.

BIBLE STUDY: no study tomorrow, next on Monday 25 September 1.15-2.45pm in the Cornerstone Meeting Room.

PARISH COUNCIL: Tuesday 19 Sept at 7.00pm meets in the Cornerstone Meeting Room, Kerikeri.

COMMUNION SERVICES: Friday 22 Sept at 11.00am at Kauri Lodge. Sunday 24 Sept at 4.00pm in Ted Robinson Chapel.

ANNUAL MEETING: Sunday 15 October at Kerikeri. Following a Parish Service with Communion starting at 10.30am.

IN CORNERSTONE THIS WEEK: Today: Ensemble pm. Monday: Funeral am, Counsellor pm, Scottish Country Dancing evening. Tuesday: Yoga am; Tai Chi pm, Learning Hub pm, Yoga evening, Parish Council evening. Wednesday: Learning Hub pm; Emotions and Essential Oils Workshop evening. Thursday: Girls' Brigade pm, A Chaired Taste evening. Friday: Saturday: Car Boot Sale

AT KAEO CHURCH HALL THIS WEEK: Monday: Yoga evening. Wednesday: Boyd committee meeting evening. Thursday: Puna Awhina am. Friday: Women's Group am; Papakāinga workshop day

CAR BOOT SALES: Next sale is on Saturday 23 September 7.30am-12noon at Cornerstone. Contact Mary 407 1117.



**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.

BIBLE IN SCHOOL needs two teachers for six sessions on Monday afternoons in term 4, Oct/Nov. (Small groups of New Entrants, and 6yr olds.) Come and observe/help in the classrooms for the last 2 weeks of this term, 18 and 25 Sept (no binding commitment!) All lessons and materials are provided, ph Heather Hackett for more info, 4077265

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.

INVITATION: Bob Tayler and Bev Barke wish to invite members of the church family to a shared celebration lunch at Cornerstone **next Sunday** 24 September prior to their wedding the following week.

Bev and Bob will provide meat, desert and drink. If you wish you may bring salad, nibbles or fresh fruit. Starting time 12.30 pm. Looking forward to seeing you there. Regards, Bob and Bev.