



PLAINS PRESBYTERIAN

19TH APRIL 2020



A Message from the Moderator of Alpine Presbytery

To the people of our churches in Alpine Presbytery
Greetings in the name of Jesus Christ!

I do hope and pray that you and your family are coping with these strange times we find ourselves in. Hopefully too, you are finding ways to stay connected both with your family and friends as well as with your church community. Although many things are restricted at present, there are still opportunities to renew old connections or maybe meet your neighbours – from a safe distance, perhaps, even, for the first time – and I hope you are finding ways to do this. Reaching out, in whatever ways we can, is especially important as we go through this time, in order to protect those among us who have vulnerable health, but also to build appropriate bridges once the Covid-19 levels are lifted.

During this time when we cannot physically meet and activities that might have previously helped support the church are suspended, all of our churches will be feeling the strain financially. I want to humbly put a suggestion to you that I would like you to give your careful and prayerful consideration to. I wonder if you would, if you do not do so already, consider redirecting any tax rebate that you receive from donations through the last year, back to your church. The Government is, currently, kind enough to encourage this generosity by paying us back one third of the donated amounts if our churches are registered as charities. It seems to me to be reasonable to make that third, which was initially given to the church, back to the church. This would provide at least some initial help to your parish over what is likely to be time of considerable struggle with cashflow. Martin and I have practiced this discipline for the past thirteen years, and of course, it follows that each year our donations grow without any noticeable pain to our own living!

Secondly, there is a bit of talk around about remembering to be missional in this time of hunkering down. I think this is timely in that when we are under threat we tend to want to tighten up and withdraw, believing that survival is paramount. Can I encourage you in these times to do the opposite; to be more open to your community, braver in our call to be generous, and remembering always that relationships are missional in their very core. Don't be afraid to offer care and kindness to others, be confident that there is enough of these things to go around when God is at work among us! While we are unable to start, or continue, new programmes or activities, we can chat with a neighbour, over the fence or down a drive on your daily walks, or on the phone. The most common thing I hear in talking around our parish is 'I have great neighbours!' That is such a good thing to be hearing. May I also encourage you in the holy art of being great neighbours! Go well in Christ, and please stay well!!

Rev Anne Stewart

Alpine Presbytery Moderator



Be Kind

Unite
against
COVID-19

Dorothy Knight has been featured in April 2020's issue of Spirit Magazine. She is this month's *Unsung Hero*. Like mentioned in the article ***"We can't imagine why she hasn't been given an award already!"***

Below is the article from Spirit Magazine.

"Dorothy is like the matriarch of Rakaia. She tends to the elderly, sick, and young. You name it – if someone is in need Dorothy will sort it. She's into everything. She leads the Fit Kids group every Tuesday... but on the second Tuesday of the month it is moved to Wednesday as Dorothy also leads the Rakaia Friendship group monthly gathering. She is a real trooper and has been in control of the Beautifying Committee in Rakaia for ages! She's so dedicated, always at the Village Green weeding and watering. She's also a leader of the Rakaia Presbyterian Church. If there's someone in need of a meal, Dorothy knows, and it just happens. She's always preserving produce into her freezer for the Friendship Group. If she takes a holiday, it will be to the North Island to look after her grandchildren. Dorothy is a wonderful asset to our community – she deserves a whole page written about her."

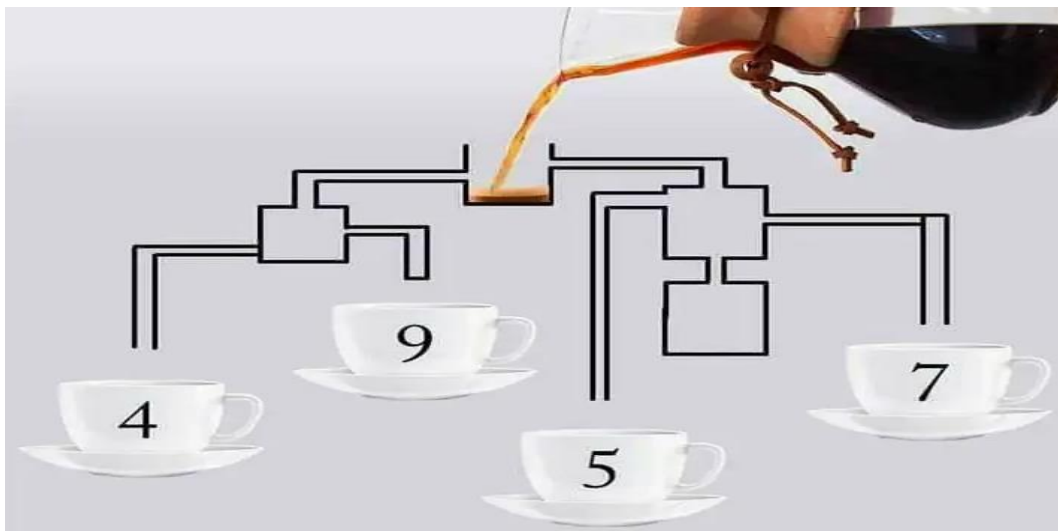


Some fun for your lockdown, and a great activity for children and adults.

Here are a few quick brain teasers to exercise your attention and your working memory – the ability to keep information in your mind while manipulating multiple units of information at the same time. Give them a try... they are not as easy as they may seem

1. Say the days of the week backwards, then in alphabetical order.
2. Say the months of the year in alphabetical order. Easy? Well, why don't you try doing so backwards, in reverse alphabetical order.
3. Find the sum of your date of birth, dd/mm/yyyy. Want a tougher mind teaser? Do the same with your spouse's or friend's date of birth (without looking it up...)
4. Name two objects for every letter in your first name. Work up to five objects, trying to use different items each time.
5. Look around you, wherever you are, and, within two minutes, try to find 5 red things that will fit in your pockets, and 5 blue objects that are too big to fit.

Which cup will fill up with coffee first?



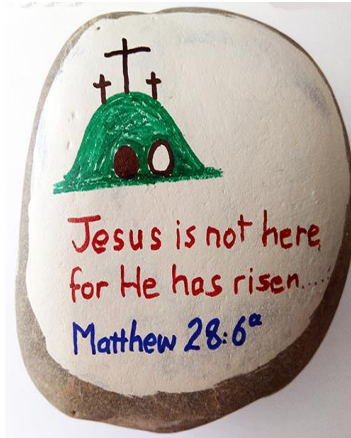
Good Friday and Easter Sunday Photos that I would like to share with you.



Photos sent by Jayne Clark



Photos sent by Miranda Addis



Hallelujah!
 Jesus is not in lockdown!
 He is alive where we are.
 With our love,
 John and Bee



Photos sent by Arii Taimataora

“How the Virus Stole Easter” by Kristi Bothur with a nod to Dr. Seuss.

Twas late in ‘19 when the virus began, bringing chaos and fear to all people, each land. People were sick, hospitals full, doctors overwhelmed, no one in school. As winter gave way to the promise of spring, the virus raged on, touching peasant and king. People hid in their homes from the enemy unseen. They YouTubed and Zoomed, social-distanced, and cleaned. April approached and churches were closed. “There won’t be an Easter,” the world supposed... “There won’t be church services, and egg hunts are out. No reason for new dresses when we can’t go about.” Holy Week started, as bleak as the rest. The world was focused on masks and on tests. “Easter can’t happen this year,” it proclaimed. “Online and at home, it just won’t be the same.”

Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, the days came and went. The virus pressed on; it just would not relent. The world woke Sunday, and nothing had changed. The virus still menaced, the people, estranged. “Pooh pooh to the saints,” the world was grumbling. “They’re finding out now that no Easter is coming. “They’re just waking up! We know just what they’ll do! Their mouths will hang open a minute or two, and then all the saints will all cry boo-hoo. “That noise,” said the world, “will be something to hear.”

So, it paused, and the world put a hand to its ear. And it did hear a sound coming through all the skies. It started down low, then it started to rise. But the sound wasn’t depressed. Why, this sound was triumphant! It couldn’t be so! But it grew with abundance! The world stared around, popping its eyes. Then it shook! What it saw was a shocking surprise! Every saint in every nation, the tall and the small, was celebrating Jesus in spite of it all! It hadn’t stopped Easter from coming! It came! Somehow or other, it came just the same! And the world with its life quite stuck in quarantine Stood puzzling and puzzling. “Just how can it be?” “It came without bonnets, it came without bunnies, It came without egg hunts, cantatas, or money.” Then the world thought of something it hadn’t before. “Maybe Easter,” it thought, “doesn’t come from a store. Maybe Easter, perhaps, means a little bit more.” And what happened then? Well....the story’s not done. What will YOU do? Will you share with that one or two or more people needing hope in this night? Will you share the source of your life in this fight? The churches are empty - but so is the tomb, and Jesus is victor over death, doom, and gloom.

So, this year at Easter, let this be our prayer, as the virus still rages all around, everywhere. May the world see hope when it looks at God’s people. May the world see the church is not a building or steeple. May the world find Faith in Jesus’ death and resurrection, May the world find Joy in a time of dejection. May 2020 be known as the year of survival, but not only that - Let it start a revival.

Bless your Neighbours

Write down the names of 5 people, whom you know or who live near you.

Pray for each person each day, five days a week.

Blessing: May the Lord bless you and protect you. May the Lord smile on you and be gracious to you. May the Lord show you his favour and give you peace. Numbers 6: 24 - 26. NLT

Gracious God, we are reminded today that thanksgiving must be more than simply words, that it involves the stewardship of your gifts and the generosity of our giving, commitment both to you and to others. Help us, as we celebrate another harvest, we recognise that challenge and act upon it. For the poverty of our response to your great goodness. In the name of Christ. Amen

Sunday 19th April, at St. Andrew's was the day when we were to give thanks to God for the Harvest of Farm, Produce, Garden and Life. We know that many families are having problems meeting their budget and the demand for food parcels has increased greatly. Perhaps this can be an opportunity where we can donate some money to a Charitable Organization so as they can fill the shelves once again. St. Andrew's Harvest Thanksgiving goods were to be donated to Ashburton's Presbyterian Support. Maybe in September can celebrate with a "Spring into Harvest" festival.

Plants 4 U at Rakaia

Planning is under way for this annual fund raising, 3rd October 2020. Perhaps we may have to look at a different way on selling this year. But in the meantime, still pot up. Any plants that need dividing now is the time to lift and divide.



Keeping Connected

Sunday Morning Devotions with the Moderator
Rev Arii and Tai's Weekly Video

Podcast and Zoom Bible study/ Sunday morning church service with Dr Rev Tokerau Joseph.
Mairangia - Castor Bay Parish. A link through Arii.

Timaru Parish Sunday Services with the rev Brent and Rory. Link through Dorothy.

'I Will Never Be Shaken'



Psalm 30:6-12

When I felt secure, I said, "I will never be shaken." Lord, when you favored me, you made my royal mountain stand firm; but when you hid your face, I was dismayed. To you, Lord, I called; to the Lord I cried for mercy: "What is gained if I am silenced, if I go down to the pit? Will the dust praise you? Will it proclaim your faithfulness? Hear, Lord, and be merciful to me; Lord, be my help" You turned my wailing into dancing; you removed my sackcloth and clothed me with joy, that my heart may sing your praises and not be silent. Lord my God, I will praise you forever.