



PLAINS PRESBYTERIAN

5TH APRIL 2020



“Living on a Prayer”

It's been several days into Lock down and I tried to do some sort of workout in a home makeshift gym one early morning. The music playing in the background for motivation. My thoughts wondered pondering all that has unfolded upon our nation and the world these recent weeks and how we are coping. The lockdown has forced us to stop and retreat behind the four walls of our home for safety and security from a deadly killer virus that has no respect for age, gender or colour.

Like you, inundated with media coverage and level alerts pinging our phones has brought those pandemic movies we watch into reality and so surreal. We are reminded to, “keep safe”, look out for another and check on our elderly folk within the community. There are many who are terrified of what is taking place while others are trying to make sense of it and others who are trying to work out a new kind of norm behind the walls but, there are others who over the next coming weeks will be restless and anxious of being confined.

As the music plays during my little workout Bon Jovi's (American Rock band of the 80's) lyrics comes on, “Living on a Prayer” Some of the lyrics from the song goes like this, “we've got to hold onto what we got. It doesn't make a difference if we make it or not. We've got each other and that's a lot for love.”

Although this song is focused a different context, I think about these words, in some way, they are true for us today. Many are trying to hold on to what they've got, many are trying to take control of an out of control situation, many are worried for their loved ones near and far. But there are many others across the nation and the world who, as Bon Jovi puts it, “Living on a Prayer” pinning what we are going through, to something bigger than ourselves, or, should I say someone bigger than ourselves who is the source of hope, light and love and that is, God. God holds us together during this time of uncertainty and hopelessness. God is with us even when we feel isolated or alone, God is the peace that can calm the fear and storm that rages within us. God is our refuge and strength that we can run to, call upon, to find solace and comfort. God is here and is hearing our prayers.

Bon Jovi carries on with, “.....take my hand and we will make it I swear. livin' on a prayer” There are many out there right now, are “Living on a Prayer” looking to a higher power for comfort and security. Looking to a higher power to bring healing and hope. I imagine God, taking our hands and leading us through. I imagine God saying, “wait here for a while.” I imagine God saying, “don't be afraid.” I imagine God saying, “I am with you.” In a time like this, we are “Living on a Prayer.” Praying that God is ever before us, behind us, above and below who will see us through. Let me leave you with these words from Psalm. Words of hope and assurance.

Psalm 121

Assurance of God's Protection

A Song of Ascents.

¹ I lift up my eyes to the hills—
from where will my help come?
² My help comes from the LORD,
who made heaven and earth.
³ He will not let your foot be moved;
he who keeps you will not slumber
⁴ He who keeps Israel
will neither slumber nor sleep.

⁵ The LORD is your keeper;
the LORD is your shade at your right hand.
⁶ The sun shall not strike you by day,
nor the moon by night.
⁷ The LORD will keep you from all evil;
he will keep your life.
⁸ The LORD will keep
your going out and you're coming in
from this time on and forevermore.

-Rev Aarii Taimataora

Community Prayer

Margaret Reeson has written this prayer for the community at this time. There are a lot of changes, most happening very quickly, and it may take some time for us to adjust. You are invited to carry this prayer with you today, and into the week, perhaps you can find a time every day this week to pray it.

Know we're praying for you all and that we are each praying for each other.

Lord, I have never travelled this way before.

I don't recognise this track at all.

Road signs are twisted and unreadable. I have no idea where it is leading.

Please shine some light on my path and if that is not possible just now, please hold my hand in the dark.

Lord, my friends have never travelled this way before.

They are stumbling along just as I am.

They ask a neighbour for directions,

but 'Sorry, I am a stranger here myself', they say.

Please hold my friends and this community in your safe embrace,

Even when I cannot offer a hug.

Lord, our church leaders have never travelled this way before.

There is no simple roadmap, no precedent to follow.

They long to give reassurance and a word from you

But the familiar ways of connecting are being taken away each day.

Please give our church leaders hearts of love, spirits of grace and minds of deep wisdom.

Lord, our national leaders and decision makers have never travelled this way before.

Crushing responsibilities have suddenly landed on them without warning.

Everywhere they turn they are faced with another crisis, another catastrophe.

They are isolated from international support as every nation is struggling.

Please give all those in authority the wisdom to listen to the very best advice and to act responsibly for the wellbeing of this whole besieged nation.

Lord, as we all blunder along in uncertainty and anxiety,

We give thanks for beautiful autumn weather, for clean air,

for water in our taps, a roof over our head, the benefits of electricity, telephones and the internet, for food on our table.

We give thanks for time to read, and listen to music, and create craft and quilts and books and photography, and to make art.

Speak to our hearts in this strangest Lenten period we have ever lived.

Amen



Peace, Strength, Unity, Hope Reflections.

Peace: Do not be afraid - I am with you! I am God - let nothing terrify you! I will make you strong and help you. Isaiah 41; 10

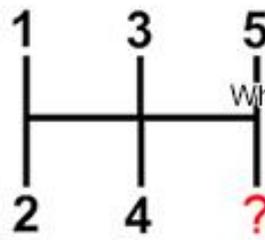
Strength: depend on the Lord and his strength; always go to him for help. 1 Chronicles 16;11

Unity: Let's see how inventive we can be in encouraging love and helping out. Hebrews 10;24

Hope: Come nearer to God, and he will come near to you.



You are a participant in a race.
You pass the person in second place.
What position are you in?



What is represented by the question mark in the image at the left?
Note that the answer is not 6.



Which came first?
The chicken or the egg?



Good Friday

Just because we are physically not able to meet, does not mean we can't do anything. There are other ways to express our faith particularly as Good Friday is approaching. We can still do something to remind ourselves and others of what Jesus has done for us and the world.

On Good Friday at 7am I invite you to display something either on your letterbox or tree that reflects our understanding of Jesus death.



Some suggestions: Be creative. you might like to make a red cross out of wood, paper, cardboard, ribbons or any material. Make it visible. Add a note with it that might say, "Today is Good Friday. We remember Jesus died on the cross for you and me or for the world or to save us."

You might like to add your own note of what Jesus has done.



Come Sunday you might want to change the red cross for a white one and the words, "Today! Jesus rose from the dead!".

At 7am we are invited to come together to celebrate and remember these monumental moments of our faith history.

This Sundays Readings

Matthew 21; 1 - 11. The Triumphant Entry into Jerusalem. Known as Palm Sunday because the people spread their cloaks on the road and others cut palm branches and shouted as Jesus walked by "Praise to David's Son! God bless him who comes in the name of the Lord! Praise be to God!
Good News Bible. Psalm 18. Verses 1, 2 & 19 - 29. A Prayer of Thanks for Victory.

Palm Sunday is this Sunday.

We celebrate Jesus entering into our lives. Renewing and restoring our relationship with him. We too lay our cloaks down and praise him for all that he has done and is about to do. Take the time today to welcome Jesus into your Jerusalem. Take the time today to lay whatever is worrying you and making you anxious. Take the time today to be filled with God's joy and thanksgiving even in this time of uncertainty. God is our peace and fortress in whom we trust.



Looking for Time of Reflection

9:00 am on Sunday Mornings devotions with the Moderator of PCANZ,
click on <https://www.facebook.com/modpcanz/> Rev Fakaofu Kaio
Weekly Podcasts with Rev Arii and Tai.

Everyday prayers with Rev John Titlow. Email Dorothy if required dottsknights@gmail.com

A message for our People

There's a Little Piece of God in Everyone.

There's a Little piece of God in everyone and it's easy to see it in you.

It's easy to hear it your words that you speak and by the kindhearted things that you do.

It shines in your smile and makes life worthwhile - it gives me a lift when I'm blue,

And your sincere ways always brighten dark days - your radiance always shine through.

There's a little piece of God in everyone and each of us has truly been blessed.

**ANSWERS - 1.) SECOND - YOU PASS 2ND POSITION WHICH MEANS YOU ARE NOW IN 2ND PLACE
2.) R - COMMON LAYOUT OF A GEAR STICK
3.) THE EGG, DINOSAURS LAID EGGS LONG BEFORE CHICKENS EXISTED.**