



PLAINS PRESBYTERIAN

21ST JUNE 2020



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Familiar Paths

Open my eyes that I may see wonderful things in your law.

Psalm 119:18, NIV

During the lockdown I have been enjoying much longer walks in the countryside than I previously found time for. This has been of great benefit to me, and my dog seems to appreciate it too! Initially we were discouraged from driving the car to places for exercise, so I would walk on familiar paths from my house. One day, however, I thought it would be good to have a change, so I decided to browse a map of the area to see if I could find a new route. When I did this, I discovered footpaths that I never knew existed. I planned a wonderful long walk, which took me through beautiful countryside with interesting flora and fauna to see along the way. If I had continued on the old familiar paths without looking for anything else, I would have missed out, not knowing that there was so much more to be enjoyed in the area.

It made me wonder if we are sometimes like this in our walk with the Lord. We can be quite content with our routine and with what we already know about Him. However, I believe there is so much more that we can discover about Him if we seek Him in a deeper way, and He wants to reveal more of Himself to each one of us.

The main way that He shows us more of Himself is through His word. Do we read it with expectancy, asking God to open our eyes so that we can see new and wonderful things about Him? Today's verse encourages us to do this. As we draw near to Him, He promises to draw near to us (James 4:8), and that is especially true as we read His word. In Jeremiah 33:3 He promises that if we call to Him, He will answer us and tell us great and unsearchable things that we do not know.

Are we hungry for more of Him in our lives? Let's draw near to Him today, with expectancy that He will not only draw near to us, but He will also reveal wonderful things about Himself to us. I believe there is so much more for each one of us.

-Jilly Lyon Taylor Seeds of the Kingdom

Kia ora

My name is Gianna Butler, I am a Year 10 pupil from Ashburton Christian School. Later on this year, the Year 9-10 class is traveling to Wellington for a school trip. As one of our fundraisers, we are holding an auction and entertainment night. This will be held at the Ashburton Baptist Church, and we would love to have as many of the community attend as possible.

Ashburton Christian School Auction of Promises
Friday, 31st July 6:45 pm Entry, 7:00 pm Start
At Ashburton Church 67 Cass Street
Come along and enjoy a night full of fun, auctioning and entertainment.

Kind regards,
Gianna Butler



ACS YEAR 9-10 ARE HOSTING A FUNDRAISER AUCTION

ASHBURTON CHRISTIAN SCHOOL AUCTION OF PROMISES

FRIDAY 31ST JULY 6.45 ENTRY, 7PM START
ASHBURTON BAPTIST CHURCH 67 CASS STREET

COME ALONG AND ENJOY A NIGHT FULL OF
FUN AUCTIONING AND ENTERTAINMENT!

"A lot of people like snow. I find it to be an unnecessary freezing of water." - Carl Reiner

‘RESPONDING AS MOTHERS TO RACISM’

Lydia Johnson-Nokise

I find myself in a very strange place these days. I am an American, a female pastor and theological educator who has spent most of my adult life in cross-cultural theological education, in places as diverse as Jamaica, South Africa, Fiji and New Zealand. After supposedly retiring, I returned from New Zealand to my native United States in 2008; however (because God is full of surprises!), I returned to New Zealand last year and became the wife of Rev. Dr. Fele Nokise, minister of Newtown PIPC.

Not only is my own personal journey – living ‘betwixt and between’ diverse cultures – strange, but the times we are now living in are strange in the extreme. The global pandemic introduced new realities that in many ways seem to negate what it means to be fully human – ‘social distancing,’ ‘lockdown,’ ‘quarantine.’ The worldwide suffering caused by the pandemic has, in turn, unleashed widespread economic upheaval. And in the midst of this turning-upside-down of life as we have known it, the sin of racism recently reached a tipping point in the United States. The latest incident in a long history of police brutality against African Americans has unleashed wave after wave of protest and unrest, not seen since the days I came of age during the civil rights and anti-war movements of the 1960s. African Americans, and their allies, have had enough, and their struggle has now spilled over to other countries around the world, whose citizens are being pushed to revisit their own racism. How do we respond as Christian women to this crisis in our New Zealand context?

During the nearly nine minutes that George Floyd lay on a Minneapolis street gasping for breath, dying from a policeman’s knee on his neck, he not only repeatedly gasped ‘I can’t breathe!’ He also, as he neared death, called out ‘Mama!’ He called for his mother. Whether or not we women are biological mothers, we are, in a sense, all mothers for those who are crying out from every kind of mistreatment and disrespect. How can we be mothers in the face of the racism in our own society?

I am immersed now in Pacific Islander communities within the PCANZ, and our Pacific Islander ministers, spouses and session clerks in the Wellington region have just begun an intentional dialogue about the Pacific Islander experience of racism – in New Zealand, and specifically in the PCANZ. This is a fruitful, if potentially painful, dialogue, as we search for Christ-like responses to the reality of racism in our midst. What do we have to offer as women to this quest for wholeness?

In a recent Newtown PIPC online service, where I have been leading the weekly ‘Children’s Time’ during our online worship while in lockdown, I showed pictures of mother hens sheltering their chicks under their wings, just as Jesus described himself as being like a mother hen in Matthew 23:39, when he wept over the state of Jerusalem: “How often would I have gathered your children together as a hen gathers her young under her wings.” I pointed out to the children that God too is compared to a mother bird several times in scripture, as in Isaiah 31, which says, “Like a bird hovering over its young, so the Lord will protect and rescue Jerusalem.” And Psalm 36 says, “How precious is your steadfast love, o God. All people may take refuge in the shadow of your wings.”

As women, as mothers, we seek to protect, to ‘gather people in’. In this mothering care, we cannot discriminate, caring for some while pushing others aside. It is in our motherly DNA to welcome and care for all. As George Webb lay dying at the hands of an uncaring police officer and called for his mother, I hope that he knew she loved him unconditionally. But, as more and more American women have said in recent days, “We are all George’s mama.” That is our calling as well, in our own context here in New Zealand. We must honestly ask where and how the scourge of racism continues to rear its ugly head in our own communities, and even in our church. And then we must respond with acts of caring, protecting, welcoming and loving the most vulnerable by sheltering them under our wings with Christ’s love in our hearts.



Lydia Nokise & Ola
(at Newtown PIC Women’s Fellowship event)

Reflection

Have you been caught out in the rain. Gone out for a walk, perhaps with the pet dog, doing the fitness thing, light rain falling, just wearing a light jacket over your clothes. All of a sudden, down comes the rain, the heavens opened, drenching you in a matter of seconds with what felt like several days of rain. The dog loved the experience of water, danced around in the puddles with great enjoyment. but you didnt, arrived home drenched.

A quote "There is no such thing as bad weather, only incorrect clothing. The right clothing would have made the difference between misery and enjoyment."

St Paul urges us to "clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, meekness and patience.

He knew that when any group of people gathered together, there would be a universal tendency for arguments and misunderstandings - even in church fellowships! Egos and personal ambition begin to get in the way, damaging relationships and making the healthy growth of a united fellowship difficult to achieve. And so, Paul urges his readers to "put on" the caring attitudes of love, compassion, and forgiveness, in much the same way as they put on their clothes each day for the protection of their body. So, as we go about our daily lives, let's give some thought and attention to wearing the correct clothing. Whether it's dressing appropriately and seeking the most enjoyment we can from a walk in the rain, or in "putting on" attitudes of compassion and patience, understanding and forgiveness when relating to our fellow human beings. Let's face the days ahead knowing that we are prepared for any eventuality. It could make the difference between a happy day or a miserable one!.

With this reflection in mind, so a big thank you for the wonderful collection of groceries, given last Sunday for Presbyterian Support. Each church Sunday there will be an opportunity to give a grocery item into the "BOX" in the foyer, to be donated to the Rakaia School. Thank you.

St. John's Methven

Tuesday 23rd June

2:00 pm Parish council Monthly Meeting | Please bring your feedback regarding the 'priority discerning discussion

St. Andrew's Rakaia

Tuesday 23rd June

10.30 am Fit Kids | Music and movement for preschoolers, friendship for adults.

1.00 pm Steady As You Go | Balance, strengthening and gentle exercises for senior folk's health and well-being.

Tuesday 14th July

11.30 am Rakaia Friendship Gathering | Dinner and afternoon entertainment

Ashburton Organ Club, skiffle group.. Afternoon tea.

Saturday 3rd October

9.00am PLANTS 4 U @ RAKAIA

*Jams, Marmalade and Pickles are available again, for sale in the foyer @ St Andrews.

Keeping Connected

Sunday 9.00 am with the Moderator Right Rev Fakaifo Kaio.

A time of Devotion reflecting the Lectionary reading for the day

<https://www.facebook.com/modpcanz/>

Video service and podcast with Rev Arii and Tai <https://www.youtube.com/user/sweetvene/videos>

Sunday Services for June

21 st	9:30 am 10:30 am	St. Andrew's Rakaia St. John's Methven	Rev. Arii Taimataora Rev. Neville Burns
28 th	9:30 am 10:00 am 10:30 am	St. Andrew's Rakaia Trinity Mayfield St. John's Methven	Rev. Neville Burns Rev. Arii Taimataora Tai Taimataora



Lord, I am sorry if I have become stuck in a routine in my walk with You, without expectation of anything more. Please open my eyes today, so that I may see new and wonderful things about You, and will come to know You better.

In Jesus' name, Amen.