



Plains Speaking

**Newsletter for Plains Presbyterian Parish
Covering the Mayfield, Methven and Rakaia
Presbyterian Communities
June, July, and August 2020**

Finding Joy in life during Isolation

In a movie scene two question was given to a character.

Have you found joy in your life? Has your life brought joy to others?

Do you know how the term "bucket list" became popular? It was the given name to a 2007 movie, "The Bucket List," starring Morgan Freeman and Jack Nicholson. The two main characters, elderly strangers become unlikely friends who formed a joint bucket list. They go on this venture ticking off their list as they achieved them.

The idea of the "Bucket list" a phrase referring to a list of things you must do before you, "kick the bucket" (die). These things can be several experiences or achievements that a person hopes to have or accomplish during their lifetime. On a lighter scale for some of us a "to do list" is just as important for our everyday living.

During the movie, (Carter) played by Morgan Freeman ask (Edward) Jack Nicholson "Have you found Joy in your Life?" and "has your life brought joy to others?" Edward goes on to share his story of finding the "Joy" in life, unfortunately you will have to watch the movie to find out what that "Joy" was.

Throughout the Isolation, I had my own list of things to do, not so much a bucket list, but undertaking simple jobs and tasks that were overlooked many times. As I compile my list of "to do's" It quickly increased with some reminders from Arii of other chores that needed to be done. Day by day and tick by tick, did accomplishing this list bring Joy to my life? Yes of course! big, or small, the delight to finish or complete something gave-out this feeling of happiness and satisfaction. As I was ticking off my list it also produced new and exciting ideas of "to do's". I've always wanted to do podcasting, and I started doing the "Wodcast" which is sharing the gospel to others through podcasting, this new excitement led to video streaming of humorous clips on FB, a way in which Arii and I can stay connected with our "Mokos" grandchildren, uplifting them while locked down at home. (Continue to page 8)

From Parish Clerk

We have been through and continue to some degree to be in a time of unexpected turmoil. Pandemics are not new to the world, but this covid-19 we are in the midst of is a little different, I guess this is the first pandemic that has spread worldwide in such a rapid manner. The populations of this world are very mobile, it has become common practice to travel great distances to far off lands, which is great, that is until there is an outbreak of a pandemic. It happened and it spread to every nation and all continents with the exception of Antarctica. It was a great credit to all the way that the closing of borders, and going into lock-down was so readily accepted, all in the interests of saving lives. The plan has so far proved successful, there are now very few corona virus cases in New Zealand and none in the South Island, but, we must remember that it is not finished, the virus is still here we must be cautious as no one wants a second wave of this deadly virus.

The parish worship committee and the various mission groups have been meeting to assess just when traditional worship can resume. With no services the podcasts as prepared by Rev Arii and Tia have been great and a huge credit to them. In this lockdown the electronic world has come into its own. The live podcasts are good but hardly a substitute for live worship. The Question is where is the fellowship? With Zoom there is a degree of fellowship but is it the same as meeting in person, and then what of those who do not have the equipment to tune into podcasts or zoom.

Our Parish is exceptionally scattered, I feel certain we could benefit from serious use of electronic communication. Having said that I am convinced that meeting in person is the real ideal, meeting physically in person having fellowship together, being a church family in the real sense is the way our parish can develop and grow, we need to meet, to sing, and pray and meditate the message of Christ together.

We are now allowed to meet as a Faith based gathering; there are a few rules and the gathering is not to exceed 100. It is up to the leaders in our Parish as to when we commence with what we can call public worship. We will however follow the guidance from the PCANZ Compliance Director Matthew Hague. The most recent update was received on 29th May.

On Sunday the 31st of May we mark Pentecost, the coming of the Holy Spirit among the apostles and followers of Jesus. Celebrated 50 days after Easter (including the day of Easter itself), the name of the holiday comes from the Greek Pentēkostē, which literally means "the 50th day." The events of the day are foretold by Jesus in the first chapter of the Acts of the Apostles, just before his Ascension. While his followers were with the risen Christ, he tells them, "John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now" (Acts 1:5, NRSV).

Pentecost is a very important time in the Christian calendar; the presence of the Holy Spirit has been questioned by sceptics and non believers time and time again. I referred to a commentary for more information on this interesting subject; a text: 'The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him.' John 14: v17

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Just what is Jesus telling us here? Would it be that Jesus is telling the world the reason why the world does not know the Holy Spirit is because it cannot see Him. But then what does he say to his followers, 'But you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you.' The word 'know' signifies a true and close relationship between the person knowing and the person known, it is all about knowing in a deep and intimate way. When the Holy Spirit is received He is also perceived.

To know Him is to be persuaded by his truth, inspired by His love, kept by His grace, led by His hand, sustained by his presence, lifted by His promise and used in His service. There is something missing in the life of a Christian if he or she is not aware of the Spirit at work within, prompting, pleading, guiding and motivating.

A sceptic once said to a Christian: "I do not believe there is a Holy Spirit. No one has ever seen him. I do not believe in anything I cannot see." The Christian replied: "Allow me to ask you three questions: Have you ever seen a pain?" 'No' said the sceptic. 'Have you ever tasted a pain?' Again the answer was 'No'. 'Have you ever felt a pain?' "Oh yes admitted the sceptic many time." 'That's how it is with me and the Holy Spirit,' said the Christian. 'I have never seen Him, never tasted Him, but I have felt Him at work deep within my soul, many times.

I leave those thoughts with you. It was suggested to me that I write of my experiences of 'lockdown.' That I think would be very boring! I chose to read and to a degree study! But study, really nothing happened. One thing I have learnt is that to be alone, is a time to be closer to God, we all should spend some time alone. Perhaps it is easy for me as I live alone except for the company of a cat and dog. Like many others I spent extended time walking the dog, in the park and at the river, this was more often than not a time or a part time for reflection. I started the lock down with a sort of a plan, but then wondered far from it. I read stories or accounts of others in lockdown. Perhaps the greatest book I read was "The Diary of Anne Frank." Well worth reading, available at libraries and on 'kindle' which I read from. I fossicked about in some of the old boxes of books stacked in the shed. My mind was on a book I thought I had, stowed away to read on some future occasion. It was a book by the German theologian Dietrich Bonhoeffer I believed was in my possession. That was his well known book 'The Cost of Discipleship' I have not located it. Bonhoeffer was locked away in prison during the war years as his thoughts and teachings were not compatible with that of the Nazi regime, he was executed in 1945. He did state that during his confinement he felt the presence of the Holy Spirit as never before, his time of confinement drew him closer to God.

The lockdown we have just experienced is really a non event, It goes nowhere to comparing with that of the Frank family and their friends or with the imprisonment of the German theologian Dietrich Bonhoeffer. They were held very much against their will, we were in lockdown only in the interests of our health and well being. We can be very grateful for the good advice given to our political leaders, and we can also be very grateful that they heeded this advice. It has been a huge cost to the commercial world, but in the interests of the general population it appears to date to have been a huge success.

Denis Brown

Covid-19 & Spiritually
By: Dorothy Knight

"Discerning our Priorities as we move forward". The World has changed. We are changed. How will we respond.

A discussion page presented to us at the recent Governance parish meeting. Containing 7 key questions, which we as the Plains Presbyterian Parish have been asked to consider at our forthcoming local church meetings.

The one question that spoke to me, was pastoral care, because during lockdown 4 there were lots of wonderful pastoral care opportunities and they did happen during those 5 weeks. Phone calls, emails, waving to people, picking up groceries, chatting at a distance, plus others.

The Village green project in Rakaia, [down towards the river], which I have been involved with for 4 years, provided me with a lot of exercise and the opportunity to be out and about, but also observing the distancing rules. This walking track has a huge planting of native plants, also a variety of "whatever" people wish to plant. "Your are nearer to God's heart in the garden than anywhere else on earth is a well known quote. Certainly the people of Rakaia discovered this and with many sunny days, several family walking groups, dogs, Charlie the ginger cat, bikers, fitness runners, seniors, even a couple of horses ventured along the track. Great opportunities to meet with many, well we all had time to chat at a distance. I must admit, some days very little gardening was achieved but good pastoral connections happened. Interestingly, painted stones, animal and bird ornaments appeared in the gardens, Harry and James were inspired to start native garden. Jan our local plant grower was only too happy to provide the plants to these two young boys.

For all of us, gardens can be not just places of infinite beauty, but places of perfect peace, where we can feel God's presence very close to us, as was the experience of Jesus when he took solace in the Garden of Gethsemane. Spiritually may be seen as the discovery of God in the every day events of our lives and I would like to think in some small way in this quite and peaceful setting, folk received strength to face the experiences of Covid-19.

A few days ago Barbara and I took a giant leap for mankind when we turned our backs on Leeston and ventured over the border, through Rakaia and down to Ashburton, for me to have a long-awaited hair-cut. When I arrived at the barber's shop there were three barbers waiting and not a single customer in sight apart from me. Who would have thought, four months ago, that a routine trip to have my hair cut would entail such a sense of adventure – and that an empty barber's shop would bring such a profound sense of relief? It's no surprise that the letter of James (chapter 4, verse 14) warns us not to be too certain of the outcome of the plans we make.

Lockdown has been very kind to us, once we discovered that Fresh Choice, Countdown and our local grocer would deliver the food we needed – and Barbara's foresight in stocking our freezer with what appeared to be an entire herd of cows - was vindicated. Our workload did not diminish much and we spent hours at a time attending meetings, including prayer meetings, on Zoom on the computer.

We did notice, however, that without having to dash out of the house at (for us) early hours in order to get places, we spent much more time in praying and reading the Bible. There was a national, and international, mood of restrained desperation as we watched the spread of the Covid 19 virus around the world. Here, in New Zealand, a national week of prayer was held and this has been followed by weekly prayer on Monday evenings, from 8 to 9pm, again on Zoom. Participants come from all over the country, and from all sorts of church backgrounds. The new sense of unity, born of concern for the dangers facing our world, is surely a very positive outcome.

Apart from the wonderful ways in which people have looked after each other, perhaps the most important outcome so far has been the rediscovery of an aspect of life that has been overshadowed by all our busyness. There is a spiritual (Jesus shaped) hole at the heart of everyone and we ignore it at our peril. The extra time many people have spent in praying together – but apart – is a sign that we, as a nation and, hopefully, as a world, have begun to recognize that we can't do without God.

By: Rev. John Titlow

BibleWise

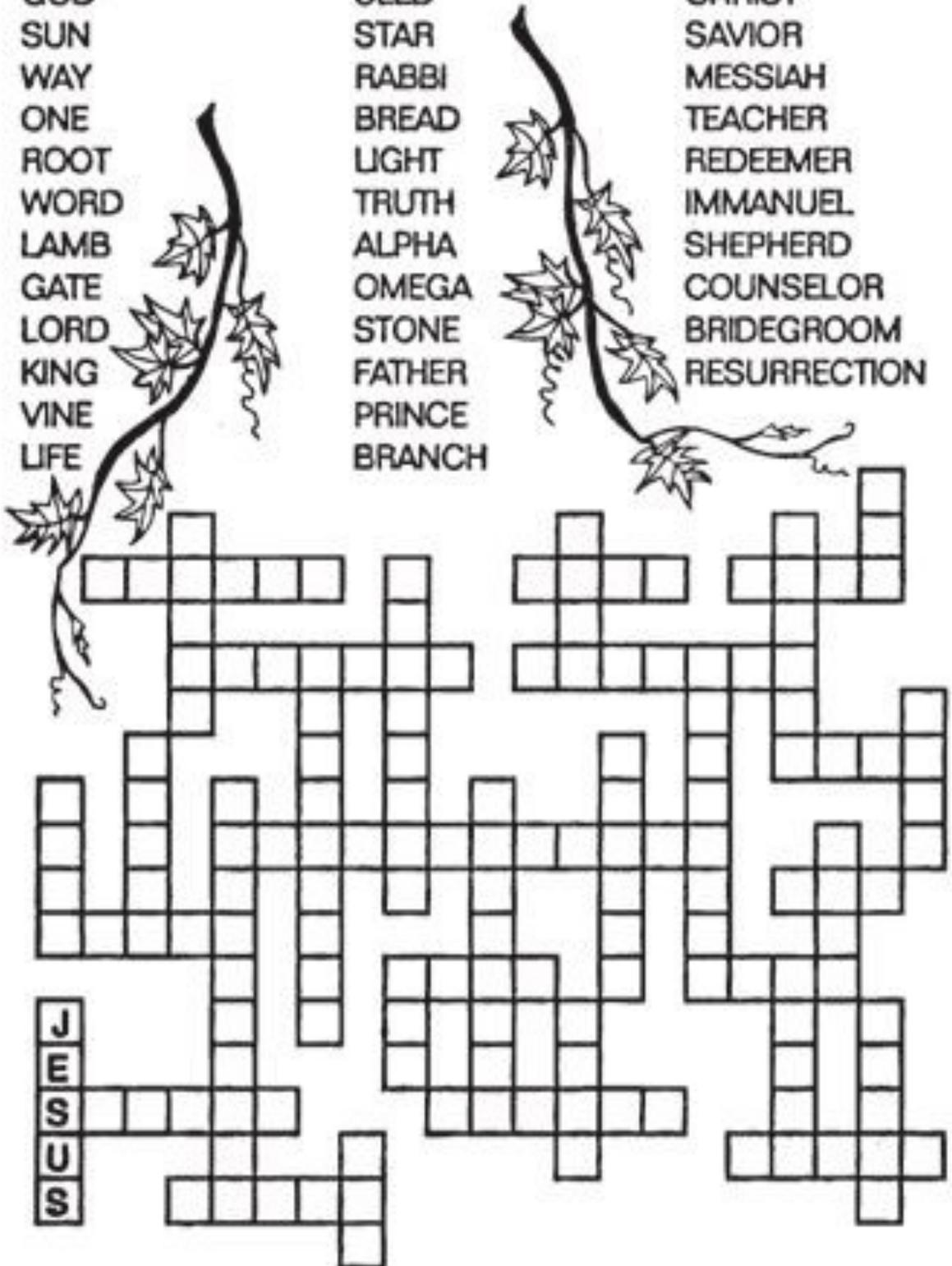
And His Name Shall Be Called . . .

Jesus had many names. All the words below were used to refer to Jesus in the Bible. Fit the names into the puzzle. (Hint: Start with the longest names.)

GOD
SUN
WAY
ONE
ROOT
WORD
LAMB
GATE
LORD
KING
VINE
LIFE

SEED
STAR
RABBI
BREAD
LIGHT
TRUTH
ALPHA
OMEGA
STONE
FATHER
PRINCE
BRANCH

CHRIST
SAVIOR
MESSIAH
TEACHER
REDEEMER
IMMANUEL
SHEPHERD
COUNSELOR
BRIDEGROOM
RESURRECTION



Lockdown 2020

Well when it was Lockdown was announced I was all ‘we will do this and this and this’ with the time, in my head. In reality with all the rushing about getting ready, groceries, creative supplies, school books and farm needs and the fact we had been in contact with a family who had been nearest to those with Covid I was too tense and tired to pull anything off but afternoon naps for the first 3 or so days. We were still harvesting so hubby was still up at 6.30am and in anywhere from 10pm -2am in the morning once it was finished the task of getting the next crops in meant the hours were still much the same for the first month. I was a bit jealous of all the families who got to spend intense ‘quality’ and creative time with both parents. For quality time with David we would go and sit in the combine or tractor or all have a picnic in the paddock at lunch time which also made the most of the simply gorgeous weather we had over the time.

I enjoyed sleeping in’s and initiated a few exploratory walks to areas of our property the children were less familiar with for the first few weeks and set up a treasure hunt for another family on farm by numbering jar lids and placing them around a scruffy area of vegetation for an activity for both households but these petered out as I realised my children were actually happy entertaining themselves and the days went quickly enough.

I was a much less stressed teacher I felt before we started home schooling. The boys all had to make a meal or bake and vacuum one day every week. We sorted games, clothes and cupboards -this is a life skill and not everyone can do it! Thank fully we eliminated quite a bit (for us) and discovered other entertainment (distraction) ideas in the process.

I thought I would be ok at home schooling as I had done correspondence Kindy with the boys however this seemed to take all day as #3 got sooo distracted. I would set him up with a task on the computer and whip out to get some washing on the line come back in and he would be on his tummy twirling on the office chair or a friend would have sent him a message, he just had to answer or he was exploring all uses of the information icons on his homework - Very frustrating. The older 2 were always diverting to games, in the end I just left them to any consequences that might occur.

Our #3 usually comes home from school quite content to entertain himself but with his friend play quota empty he wanted my company for all manner of things like jumping on the trampoline, art and craft and Lego which was a precious privilege, good for my fitness and I am comforted that lots of people who hadn’t others to look after didn’t get lots of the things on their lists done either!

We celebrated 2 birthdays at home, 3 for extended family, and our wedding anniversary whilst in lockdown levels, Presents were not stunning so mostly it was about food in fact food played a big part ‘What is for lunch, afternoon tea, dinner.... were questions asked all the time. Whilst we were still eating, they asked what the next meal was. Fortunately, they helped with many of them and we tried out new flavours like custard square, Dukkah, Cashew cheese, Aubergine steaks and swede recipes as we have a paddock of them next to the house. Still not a hot item on the menu but I can utilise them to bulk out a casserole or soup.

Memorable mornings were April Fools as it demised into anarchy by 7.30am. The Jokes had become more and more revengeful and there were tears. April fools was then cancelled as jokes must be fun, clever and not hurt anyone from now on in our household.

Mother’s day came early by a whole week and the boys blessed me with a 4 course breakfast but because someone looked at the calendar and realised we had the wrong day I had the privilege of doing most of the clean up when I finally arose!

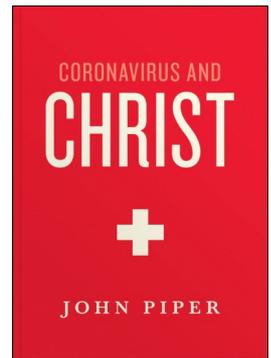
Easter Sunday was one of my worst days as I struggled with how to celebrate it meaning fully with my family. No one wanted to help me paint the red crosses at the end of our drive, white, so I had some time to myself contemplating our faith as a family and missing being able to get together with my sisters or church families. (Continue to page 7)

Looking something to read?

Coronavirus & CHRIST

By: John Piper

In *Coronavirus and Christ*, John Piper invites readers around the world to stand on the solid Rock, who is Jesus Christ, in whom our souls can be sustained by the sovereign God who ordains, governs, and reigns over all things to accomplish his wise and good purposes for those who trust in him. Piper offers six biblical answers to the question, *What is God doing through the coronavirus?*—reminding us that God is at work in this moment in history.



<https://www.desiringgod.org/books/coronavirus-and-christ>

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The Easter Egg hunt ended up upsetting at least one child and us parents wished we had thought about the hiding places a bit better.

Overall that it was mostly like a very intense school holidays at home. We were not bored, finished good friends and were very grateful for the blessings of fabulous weather, good health and financial security over this time.

Yes, we could easily do it again if we had to.

Jayne Clark

PS:

Our 'Bubble' was an elongated one with 13 in it as the 3 families overlapped where the working husbands were in contact on the farm. This meant that we did not include the grandparents on either side for some time. We did do their supermarket shopping, though keeping 3 households groceries separated in one shopping trolley without looking like a hoarder was a challenge to do.

Schweiten

She's a lovely old lady. I've known her for nearly 60 years, in that time she hasn't changed much, just got older and more precious to me. I was about eight years old when she came to live with me and she's been with me ever since. She's moved house with me many times and fitted into her new environments quite happily. She even stayed in a sleep out on a farm for a year while I was between houses. That wasn't so good for her though and she was pleased to be back inside the next house I moved to and where she continues to reside.

My lovely old lady is a piano. Her name is Schweiter. She was built in Berlin in 1890 and is made of walnut, the best wood available at that time. When she was built she would have cost the equivalent of a year and a quarter wages so she had to have been purchased by a very rich person. She is exclusive now, not many of her character remain as most of them were destroyed in the Berlin bombings during World War II.

What fun it is to imagine her in her prime, her music echoing through the dance halls of Vienna, Austria and Germany, playing for the Waltz, the dance made popular by the famous composer Johann Strauss, which was at first thought to be immoral and scandalous, when the ladies did away with their bustles and enjoyed the new found freedom of the Polka, the Scottische and the Two Step.

Did she come to New Zealand during the second half of her life or did she come as a young new immigrant to grace the house of a rich landowner newly arrived, or to entertain at the country halls when dancing was so fashionable. The Quickstep, the Charleston, the Rumba and then the Boogie Woogie of the 1930's and 40's. Those celebratory dances at the end of both wars, welcoming peacetime. Whether she was in Germany or New Zealand, she would have enjoyed giving those war ravaged soldiers and shattered citizens some much needed pleasure. Oh the stories she could tell!!

-Anonymous-

(Continue from Page 1)

Did it bring Joy to others, yes it did, not just to our mokos but to family and friends, especially to those we haven't heard from for many years.

On the "downside" of the Covid – Isolation, it restricted our movement, caused stress, stretched our finances, defied our shopping for the basic necessities, cancelled our travelling and completely changed our lifestyle. However, there was also a momentum of positiveness on the "Upside" of the Isolation. Doors of opportunities opened into explorations of other meaningful things to do and even chances to tick the box on that written "to do" list.

In an article column, I read how the Upside of the Isolation have brought families together, working parents with children's spending more times together, older family members that don't often have the time to spend with their love ones, finally having the chance to do so. It created new ideas that people would not normally do. A new way of learning through home schooling where parents becomes the teacher, and online educations are developed. A change of working environment from pressure to comfort. Home fun ideas created to keep the family entertained. Home cooks becomes master chefs and eating together and conversations in the household was revived.

A new age of online communal activities to stay fit and healthy, a significant increase in the holistic of our well-being, mental health support becoming top priority.

The unlimited sharing on social media to help and care for others showed the love we have for each other as human beings. The least becomes the important, the recognition of our essential workers from zero to heroes. Our moral and ethical values are challenged but sharpened. Our lifestyle rewritten all over again for the sake of a changed world.

In the midst of these disruptions, confusion, anxiety, a mustard seed of Joy becomes a tree of hope.

Have you found joy in your life? Yes.

Has your life brought joy to others? Yes.

Here are links below to bring joy to your heart of what Aarii and I have been up to. May it sprinkle a little joy and laughter in yours.

<https://youtu.be/4nE5bXiQm-E>

<https://youtu.be/1QkJ8WsscNE>

Aroanui

Tai Taimataora

PLAINS PRESBYTERIAN WORSHIP SERVICES FOR PLAINS

FOR THE MONTHS OF June, July, & August 2020

June 2020

Sunday	7th	10.30am	St John's	Rev. Aarii (Parish Service)
Sunday	14th	9.30 am	St Andrew's	Rev. John Titlow
		10.30am	St John's	Rev. Aarii
Sunday	21st	9.30am	St Andrew's	Rev. Aarii
		10.30am	St John's	Rev. Neville Burn
Sunday	28th	9.30am	St. Andrew's	Rev. Neville Burn
		10.00am	Trinity Mayfield	Rev. Aarii (Carew & Staveley)
		10.30am	St. John's	Tai Tamaimataora



July 2020

Sunday	5th	10.30am	St. John's	Rev. John Titlow - Parish Service (Shared lunch if permitted)
Sunday	12th	9.30am	St Andrew's	Rev. John Titlow
		10.30am	St. John's	Pastor Paul Eden & Worship Team
Sunday	19th	9.30am	St. Andrew's	Pastor Paul Eden & Worship Team
		10.30am	St. John's	Rev. Neville Burns
Sunday	26th	9.30am	St. Andrew's	Rev. Neville Burns
		10.30am	St. John's	Rev. Aarii - combined with Staveley

August 2020

Sunday	2nd	10.30am	St. John's	Rev. Aarii - Parish Service (Shared Lunch if permitted)
Sunday	9th	9.30am	St. Andrew's	Rev. John Titlow
		10.30am	St. John's	Rev. Aarii
Sunday	16th	9.30am	St. Andrew's	Rev. Aarii.
		10.30am	St. John's	Rev. Neville Burns
Sunday	23rd	9.30am	St. Andrew's	Rev. Neville Burns
		10.00am	Trinity Mayfield	Rev. Aarii (Carew & Staveley)
		10.30am	St. John's	Tai Tamaimataora
Sunday	30rd	10.30am	St. Andrew's	Parish 5th Sunday - TBA All Age service (Shared lunch if permitted)

If you would like a ride to Sunday Worship at St John's we are happy to arrange transport. Please phone Allen Redmond 3028567 or Brian Blackwell 3028476.

PLAINS PRESBYTERIAN PARISH CONTACTS

Minister: Rev Arii Taimataora: 027 284 2173, 03 302-8835; arii.tai@xtra.co.nz

Postal Address: Plains Presbyterian P O Box 49, Methven 7745

Parish Clerk: Denis Brown 03 975-8200; brown.dc@slingshot.co.nz

Parish Administrator: 302-8835 (Church Office Phone – please leave a message)

Email: plainsoffice@gmail.com

Treasurer: Gill James 302-9400 gjandpi@xtra.co.nz

Postal address: The Treasurer, Plains Presbyterian, P O Box 49, Methven 7745.

Account name: PLAINS PRESBYTERIAN

Account Number: 02 0868 0091269 00

Pastoral Care Contacts:

Kay King 303-6033 (Mayfield)

Adrienne Ayers 302-4779 (Methven)

Dorothy Knight 302-7595 (Rakaia)



Finance & Property (convener):

Graeme Mangin 302-8150

Venue Bookings:

Carew: Robert Jones 03 696-3585

Mayfield: Kay King 3036033 & Kevin Taylor 303-6392

Methven: Elsa Hydes 302-9316

Rakaia: Dorothy Knight 302-7595

Staveley: Annette Syme 303-0803

Methven Envelope Secretary:

Valerie Glass 302-8387

Governance Councilors contacts:

Mayfield: Kay King 303-6033 kingmk@farmside.co.nz

Denis Brown 975-8200 brown.dc@slingshot.co.nz

Kevin Taylor 303-6392 val.hyburn@xtra.co.nz

Methven: Allen Redmond 302-8567

Alan Ayers 302-4779 aj.am.ayers@gmail.com

Alex Wright 302-8668 jmacw5442@gmail.com

Rakaia: Jenny Logan 302-4834

Fay Cuttriss 302-7473

Governance Council meets monthly on the 4th Tuesday

PLAINS SPEAKING is now published every 3 months

Contributions are welcome—next Deadline for contributions **15th August 2020.**