



PLAINS PRESBYTERIAN

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When Life Gives You Lemons.....

The pandemic has served up distress, horror, illness, and death. And, we are not finished, unknown social and health consequences of this disruption await.

Level 4! The environmental benefits were soon apparent in clean air, birdsong and quietness, whole families out walking and biking. The period of lockdown was an opportunity for creativity at home, if only a new focus on cooking and cleaning. The internet was a boon in widening our horizons in conversation and culture, bringing on family Zoom meetings and film nights. Of course, the fringe benefits have been uneven. Farmers, for whom working in relative isolation is not new, contending with the everyday demands of work coupled with the closure of killing houses and sale yards. While some households revelled in the solitude, other experienced the pressure as imprisonment. Overall, it has been a tremendous social experiment that no one intended but has achieved outcomes said to be unrealistic. Benefit levels are raised, working from home has been re-evaluated, and leisure activities have been recalibrated as well as kept local.

Politicians can no longer hide behind sayings like, "It can't be done" or "It will destroy the economy". At last we have seen there is something more important than the economy: the people. Perhaps the Maori proverb will spread beyond these shores:

He aha te mea nui o te ao What is the most important thing in the world?
He tangata, he tangata, he tangata It is the people, it is the people, it is the people

Humans are resilient but also given to ploughing the same furrow over and over again: we do not easily or willingly change our ways. Now that we have experienced mandated change in our lives – and seen both bane and blessing – we ought to exercise choice over future patterns of behaviour, based on good practise, not dogma.
"The reason to change is not that we won't survive. The reason to change is from a choice of what world we want to live in." Charles Eisenstein, author of *The More Beautiful World Our Hearts Know Is Possible* (2013).

Churches especially must learn from the forced experiment. Good Friday was forlorn, and Easter Sunday was surreal. But we have made it to Pentecost and a new beginning, with new ways of congregating already trialed.

When Life gives you lemons there is lemonade and more.



At St. John's Methven, Jayne has been teaching Sunday School about Creativity and here are some photos showing their hard work. If there is anyone who has spare Legos in the cupboard Jayne would like to extend her collection.

An Afternoon In The Park A story told by Ruby Martin.

There was once a little boy who wanted to meet God. He knew it was a long trip to where God lived, so he packed his bag with chippies and some Coca-Cola and started his journey. When he had gone about three blocks he met an old woman. She was sitting in the park staring at some pigeons. The boy sat down next to her and opened his bag. he was about to take a drink when he noticed that the old lady looked hungry, so he offered her a chippie. She accepted it gratefully and smiled at him. Her smile was so pretty that the boy wanted to see it again, so he offered her a drink. Once more she smiled. The boy was delighted.

They sat there all afternoon eating and smiling but they never said a word. As it grew dark the boy realised how tired he was and got up to leave but before he had taken no more than a few steps he ran back and gave her a hug. She gave him the biggest smile ever.

When the boy opened the door to his own house a short time later, his mother was surprised by the look of joy on his face. She asked him, "What did you do today that made you so happy?" He replied, I had lunch with God. But before his mother could respond he added, You know what? She has the most beautiful smile I've ever seen.

Meantime, the old woman, also radiant with joy returned to her home. Her son was stunned by the look of peace on her face and he asked, Mother, what did you do today that made you so happy? She replied, I ate chippies in the park with God. But before her son responded, she added, You know, he's a lot younger than I expected.

People will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel.
- Maya Angelou.



St. Andrew's Outreach

Tuesday 7th July and Wednesday 15th July at 10:30 AM | Rakaia Fit Kids with Miranda

An all age programme so bring the older children along over the school holidays. Fun, dancing, and Morning tea.

Tuesday 7th July and Wednesday 15th July at 1:00 PM | Steady As You Go

Balance, strengthening and gentle exercises for senior folk's health and well-being.

Tuesday 14th July at 11:30 AM | 'Welcome Back Friendship Club Gathering'

Stall, raffle, hot meal and entertainment from the Ashburton Organ club skiffle Group. Welcome to all.

Thursday 16th July at 12:00 - 2.00 PM | 'End of Holiday Shout'

Community Meal for all followed by with some entertainment. A free meal but if able a grocery item would be welcomed. Thank you. - Dorothy and Sina.

Plains Parish Communication Committee

The parish would like to review our way of connecting with the people. Items to be discussed are Plains Speaking, The Bulletin, Emails, Facebook, and the different ways of "Keeping touch with folk", plus other concerns.

If you wish to be part of this discussion group please contact Miranda, Elsa, or Dorothy.

Opportunities to Share God's Love in Rakaia

The Community Shed based at St Mark's Church | Take what you need and give what you can

St Andrew's Grocery box in the Foyer (given to the Rakaia School)

St Marks Goodwill through the "OP Shop" contact Sina Mead

During the School Holidays, goods can be left at Dorothy's home.

Rev. Aarii Taimataora is on holiday until the 23rd July. Any pastoral concerns please contact Denis, or one of the governance team Rev. Henry Mbambo and Jim Young, from St David's Ashburton are also available.

Sunday Services for July

July 5 th	10:00 am 10:30 am	St. Mark's Rakaia St. John's Methven With A Shared Lunch	Rev. Michael Holdaway Rev. John Titlow
12 th	9:30 am 10:30 am	St. Andrew's Rakaia St. John's Methven	Rev. John Titlow Pastor Paul Eden & Worship Team

*Join us at St. John's Methven this Sunday for a shared lunch!

PRAYER

Merciful Father, in each of whose children there is nothing unseen by you and nothing unknown, help us to cast off, to shed, to discard. Peel away our many worries and fears, our jealousies and hatreds, our obligations, and duties. Show us ourselves as you designed us to be, humble and repentant, but cleansed and forgiven, may we rise up to run the race that you set before us. Through Jesus Christ our Lord and master. Amen.