



PLAINS PRESBYTERIAN

9TH AUGUST 2020



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Positive Living

This is what the LORD Almighty, the God of Israel, says to those I carried into exile from Jerusalem to Babylon: **“Build houses and settle down; plant gardens and eat what they produce. Marry and have sons and daughters ... Seek the prosperity of the city to which I have carried you into exile. Pray to the LORD for it for if it prospers, you too will prosper”**. Jeremiah 29: 4-8, NIV

These words are sent by Jeremiah as God’s message to His people in exile. They had been through trauma. They had lost everything: homes, belongings, livelihood, loved ones, their land. Everything was gone. They were now refugees in hostile territory. But Jeremiah’s letter is all about positive living in a situation that looks like disaster. What’s the advice? Get on with life! Start again with work, your family, your home! Don’t be moping around with regret. Make relationships, contribute energetically to your community, look to the future of your children, and work and pray for the land and the people where you are.

Then it goes on, ‘Don’t listen to those who say differently! God says, “I have plans for you – as a nation and as a people – plans for good and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope. Seventy years of exile are coming first. I haven’t forgotten you. It will happen. In the meantime, live positively where I’ve put you”’ (Jeremiah 29:8-11, my paraphrase). How can God’s people live positively in Babylon, in exile? They can do it because God has declared He has a purpose for them, and He has not forgotten them. They are God’s people, living on His promises. And they can be confident that God is in control and will bless them if they do as He commands.

We have the same God. He has made great promises to us. He promises us a future and a hope. We can be confident in our all-knowing and loving Father. We can take hold of His Word to us. We can live with the kind of deep-down peace He gives us as we trust Him. God spoke words of hope to the exiles. It was a word to cause them to lift their heads up high. I bet it wasn’t easy. But it would have been life changing. Here we are, right now, experiencing an international pandemic. All of us are affected by this. There has been tragedy and disappointment. For some it has been disaster, agonising loss, heartache, and pain. I believe that, in this situation, where we are, God would still speak to us those words of hope.

-Sue Griffiths [Seeds of the Kingdom](#)

Upcoming Church in Action

Bible Study



A three series group study will once again take place during the week of the 16th August to the 1st week of September.

Study notes will be sent out next week for your reflection. Studying God’s word helps us to navigate through the ups and downs of our journey but also reminds us of God’s ongoing engagement in the world. Study will be done via zoom and face to face for those who prefer.

Please indicate your interest by sending an email to Arii.
All are welcome to fellowship and participate.

Alpine Presbytery

Theological Education and Leadership Training (TELT) Report

Council of Assembly established the Theological Education and Leadership Training Task Group in March 2019. This is a significant wide-ranging report looking at leadership formation across the PCANZ and has some significant recommendations for us to consider. The report is open to everyone to read and consider. Presbytery Council will be in touch regarding engaging people in this review process. Feedback should be sent to Presbytery by 21st August.

You are requested to constructively frame your response in three ways:

- Comments about the five streams identified in the executive summary and the direction outlined.
- Note any areas where the report is missing key information or omitted important material
- Detailed comments about the report

The report can be downloaded here: [Theological Education and Leadership Training](#), and there are additional resources to assist with your considerations here: <https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1CmslYffIOv-2WKcr-GNQOXqj9ocoKhZi?usp=sharing>

This is a major report with significant and far reaching implications for the formation of ministry practitioners and leaders in our church in the years ahead and as such deserves our close attention and critique.

To this end, we are proposing 3 ZOOM meetings focusing our attention on key themes of the report. Feedback from these meetings will be collated into a report to be presented at the forth-coming Presbytery gathering in September.

ZOOM meetings will be Wed 29th July, 5th Aug, 12th Aug 1pm. If there is sufficient demand we can also do evening meetings. <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85350703633?pwd=aB1bUQyU1VzNXpJbHE4Uk9tOEM3UT09>

Meeting ID: 853 5070 3633

Password: 3TAPPd

Please ensure you have read the report, which can be found on the [PCANZ website here](#), prior to the meeting.

Notice from Ashburton Christian School

Class Grandmas/Grandpas

We would like to start a new initiative in Term 4 called 'Class Grandma/Class Grandpa'.

We are looking for Senior Citizens who are Christians within our community to come and be a Class Grandma/Grandpa.

This would involve coming in once a week/fortnightly to hear children read or help with a specific task. You would be based with that class for the rest of year. It is a chance for you to share your wisdom and for the children to build relationships over time. We would love to welcome you in to our school community and make you part of our class family.

If you are interested please call or email me to find out more.

l.bowen@acs.school.nz

(03) 3076340

A Powerful Message by the Rev David Bryant. (an adapted Scottish resource but helpful advice to all)

It was one of those cold days when all you want to do is to huddle in front of the fire or heater. An icy wind and cold rain is coming in from the south, with long waves breaking on the beach. Well wrapped up, the writer decided to go out for a walk. "There won't be anybody out on a day like this". Wrong, right at the end were two fishermen sitting on chairs, drinking mugs of tea, warmly clothed, they seem to be thoroughly enjoying themselves, battling the elements. "How long have you been here?" "Since five o'clock this morning. if you want a good catch you're got to be patient", they replied.

It reminded the writer of an incident in St Matthew's gospel where the disciple Peter was having a discussion with Jesus about payment of taxes. Peter was clearly not very enthusiastic in paying the customary half shekel, looking for ways of avoiding paying. Then Jesus made a curious remark. "Go to the sea and cast a hook, and take the first fish that comes up, and when you open its mouth you will find a shekel. Take that and give it to them for Me and for yourself"

So what did Jesus mean? Some commentators think that Jesus was explaining to His disciples that the best way to pay tax was not to sit about dreaming, but to go and cast your net again and keep working until you reap your rewards. It was another way of saying, if you don't put something into life you won't get anything back. This is the same way with spiritual life. If we want to find peace and comfort we must spend time each week in quietness before God, even if only five minutes are set aside each day from our busy lives. Coming to church on a Sunday, gives us that opportunity, to share in a worship time with fellow parishioners.

What the writer believes Jesus was saying to Peter was; give generously of yourself in life and you will receive back love, friendship, happiness, and contentment. To put it another way, be kind, caring and compassionate and you may catch a fish with a gold coin in its mouth. A Powerful Message indeed.

As we think about this message, we are reminded about the needs of our communities. At St. Andrew's in Rakaia we have our Goodwill box in the Foyer. Welcome to place a grocery item.

St. Andrew's Rakaia

Tuesday 11th August

11:30 AM | Rakaia Friendship Monthly Gathering | Programme. Social time. Bring and buy stall, raffle followed by mealtime. Entertainment with Shirley and Lorraine. Afternoon tea.

Wednesday 12th August

10:30 AM | Rakaia Fit Kids | with Miranda A time for friendship, fun, and support. Welcome to all pre-school children.

1:00 PM | Steady As You Go | Balance, strengthening and gentle exercises for senior folk's health and well-being.

Saturday 3rd October

Plants 4 U @ Rakaia | Lots of interesting plants. Jam, produce, baking, white elephant.

All morning fair, no need to be there at 9 specials throughout the morning... Donations of all goods welcomed.

St. John's Methven

On August 4th At St. John's a Focus Group meeting was held and discussed some important topics.

Pastoral Care: Joan McKay now living at Terrace View in Ashburton. She loves a visit!

Annual Shop Day: Postponed due to Lockdown. Now will be held in the Mall from 9.30 a.m. on Friday 23rd October (Labour weekend)

We will be having a ring around looking for support for our Annual Fund Raiser.

Property: Some maintenance due on Hall. Engineer due to make contact.

Foot Clinic: Usually around 25 attend clinics at St John's. Contact Sue Lumsden for bookings

Thanksgiving Service: As we missed Harvest Thanksgiving this year we have decided to have a "Thanksgiving" Service as a way of supporting Presbyterian Support in Ashburton. The Service to be held on 6th September and donations of nonperishable goods are welcome. These can also be left at Graeme Mangins prior to the Service.

Technology: The Finance group and Governance Council are looking at the purchase of a video camera and microphone setup so that Aarii and Tai can more easily record services.

There has been good feedback from around the parish from the woccasts and facebook clips that we had during Lockdown.

There are many possibilities for the use of this more up to date equipment and ways of financing this are being considered.

Young People: Jayne brought some good ideas to the meeting. It is suggested that a fund raiser be held as a school holiday programme in September using the "House of Bricks"

More details to come. Following this, a Lego club is proposed on a regular basis. Any donations of Lego are welcome.

Quiz Night: Friday 16th October.

Parish Annual Meeting: Will be held on Sunday 11th October at Rakaia

Trinity Mayfield

Thursday 20th August

1:30 PM | Mayfield Mission Group | Held at Mayfield Supperoom

All welcome come for a chat ,coffee, tea and cake

Sunday Services for August

9 th	9:30 am	St. Andrew's Rakaia This Sunday's service with Rev. John Titlow will feature the children's prayer time, led by Shieh.	Rev. John Titlow
	10:30 am	St. John's Methven	Rev. Aarii
16 th	9:30 am	St. Andrew's Rakaia	Rev. Aarii
	10:30 am	St. John's Methven	Rev. Neville Burns

Thank You, God, that You know everything about my situation. Thank You that You have good plans for my life, to give me a future and a hope. I choose today to turn towards You and to live with thanksgiving in my heart today, trusting Your promises, Your faithfulness, and Your love. Amen.

-Sue Griffiths [Seeds of the Kingdom](#)

