



PLAINS PRESBYTERIAN

13TH SEPTEMBER 2020



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Lazarus Had to Wait

Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live, and everyone who lives and believes in me shall never die. Do you believe this?"

John 11:25,26, ESV

Lazarus was in the tomb for four days.

Mary said to Jesus, "Lord, if you had been here my brother would not have died." She and her sister Martha were weeping as they told the Master. Jesus, stirred with compassion, stood with them and shared their grief.

We too can be grieving when we call upon Jesus. He stands with us and comforts us. But He takes us on from there. He knows where we are and where we're going. Let's walk with Him and trust Him as He walks with us, because 'we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love Him' (Romans 8:28).

Mary and Martha had sent word to Jesus to tell Him that Lazarus their brother was sick. He loved Lazarus as a dear friend, yet he stayed where He was for two more days.

God won't be rushed. He is patient and compassionate. He knows our every need but wants us to look to Him for who He is, not for what He can do. Jesus assured Martha that her brother would rise again. Martha had faith. "Yes Lord, I believe you are the Christ, the Son of God." This is fundamental. We need to know who He is before we approach Him. He's not a qualified doctor, or a learned professor, but Jesus, Son of the most high God. His ways are deeper than our ways, and always in accordance with the will of the Father.

Jesus could easily have gone to Lazarus before he died and restored Him. But He had a better way. For Lazarus, His dear friend, He had something special. Healing was not enough. Jesus came to restore life, so that people would know He had come from God; that all may see and believe. Lazarus had to wait.

Jesus said, "Open the grave." Martha was concerned there would be a bad odour, the stench of death, and there would have been. There was no mistake. Lazarus was dead. Jesus Himself was soon to know this experience, but death would not hold Him. He called out in a loud voice, "Lazarus, come out." The chains of death fell off and Lazarus emerged from the tomb.

For what reasons do we call upon God? Is it for our benefit and peace of mind? Or do we come to Him as we would approach the throne of the King, with humility and reverence? Yes, we already have permission: 'Let us then approach God's throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need' (Hebrews 4:16).

Jesus came that we may have fullness of life, to complete that which began on the cross. The Apostle Paul said, "I no longer live, but Christ lives in me" (Galatians 2:20). Eternal life is not living forever, just as we are. Eternal life begins with the source of life Himself, Jesus.

- Ron Scurfield *Seeds of the Kingdom*

SPRING REFLECTIONS

Spring Warmth

May the light of your love, O God, be as the sunlight that warms the earth and encourages grass growth and newly planted crops. May the warmth of spring bring health to our livestock, and the assurance that you sustain us and all creation.

Spring Weather

Sometimes, O God, it's a guessing game: will the weather fine up just enough to get that urgent job done?

Will the unseasonal spring rain or frosty chill ease for a few days and let the sun and wind dry out the ground a little?

Or will there be just enough moisture to prepare the soil for planting?

God of every season, we can be very demanding.

We want fine weather while our neighbour needs rain!

We listen to the weather forecasts, and then with rural wisdom make our own judgements about things.

help us, God, make the best of whatever comes our way.

Thank you for that resilience to extremes that all living creatures possess.

- From The Shepherd's Call by Bill Bennett.



Notices

***All Annual Reports are due in by the 12th September 2020. Please send in as it is important that we have them on time.**

All reports can be sent to Miranda. Email: Plainsoffice@gmail.com

St. Andrew's Rakaia

Tuesday 15th September

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.

2:00 pm | Mission meeting | In the lounge.

Sunday 20th September

Spring Flower Service at St. Andrew's. Welcome to bring a posy of flowers to church for our spring display.

Saturday 3rd October

Plants 4 U @ Rakaia | All morning fair starting at 9 am. This year there will be lots of bargains throughout the morning.

Plants galore, white elephant, produce, jams and baking.

St. John's Methven

Sunday 13th September

Spring Service this Sunday **at St. John's**. I invite to wear something or bring something that represents 'Spring' or new beginnings.

Friday 16th October

7:30 pm | Family Quiz Night | Questions for all the family with supper provided. Teams 5 or 6 | Adults \$5, School Children \$3. Come along, great fun for all. For more info contact Joan Wright 30286668 or Graham Marr 3028682

Services for September

13 th	9:30 am	St. Andrew's Rakaia	Rev. John Titlow
	10:30 am	St. John's Methven	Rev. Arii
16 th	7:00 pm	Carew	Spring Flower Service Rev. Arii
20 th	9:30 am	St. Andrew's Rakaia	Rev. Arii, Communion; Spring Flower Service
	10:30 am	St. John's Methven	Rev. Neville Burns

I thank You, Lord, that You broke the chains of death so I may have life. Please help me to live by Your presence as You guide me every day. But so often it's all about me, and what I want. Help me to look to You always, so that I am able to say, "Your will be done in my life, day by day." In Jesus' name. Amen.

- Ron Scurfield *Seeds of the Kingdom*

