



PLAINS PRESBYTERIAN

13TH DECEMBER 2020



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The Greatest Gift of All

For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him.

John 3:16-17, NIV

They say that it is better to give than to receive, and I truly feel this to be so. In this season, I hate that rush to a shop or supermarket in a panic to get that last minute or forgotten present. How much better it is to be able to give someone a carefully chosen present, something that is just right for them. Doesn't it give you great pleasure when you have found the perfect gift that delights, and even surprises, the receiver?

I would suggest that God feels that way too. He loves to give that perfect gift. He is a generous and lavish God. Creation is full of evidence for this. Did you know that there are over 100,000 species of bird or that there are probably more stars in the universe than grains of sand on a beach? And don't get me started on the intricacies of the eyeball or the mechanism of our hearing. My heart too has been beating non-stop for fifty-eight years. That is pretty miraculous.

Isaiah 40:26 says *'Lift up your eyes and look to the heavens. Who created all these?'*

In numerous instances, the bible points to God's generosity and to His extravagance. The wine at Cana was not your average plonk (more like Château de Heaven) and the father's welcome to his son in the story of the prodigal son (representing how God our Father is towards us) exudes overflowing love and generosity in His forgiveness.

Why is God so very generous? I would suggest that He really can't help Himself, for that is His nature. It is good, then, at this time of year to ponder God's greatest gift of all time, that of his one and only beloved Son. What is there left to say? Have we ever received a greater gift?

- Graham Slattery [Seeds of the Kingdom](#)



Christian World Service | [Christmasappeal.org.nz](https://christmasappeal.org.nz)

Joy Advent Three (15 December)

I have survived hurricanes and I will defeat Covid-19 Here the land is flat but in other parts of Haiti it is steep and barren. Growing food is hard work, especially when the land is tired. Covid-19 has been a new challenge in a long list that includes earthquakes, hurricanes, and cholera. This mother is delighted with the food she can now grow for her family. With good food, they will be healthier and able to make the most of the few opportunities they have to celebrate the good things of life before the next storm comes. We are hungry for joy.

Matthew 1:18-25

Now the birth of Jesus Christ was as follows: when His mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together she was found to be with child by the Holy Spirit. And Joseph her husband, being a righteous man and not wanting to disgrace her, planned to send her away secretly. But when he has considered this, behold an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife; for the Child who has been conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit. She will bear a Son; and you shall call His name Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins." Now all this took place to fulfill what was spoken by the Lord through the prophet: "Behold, the virgin shall be with child and shall bear a Son, and they shall call His name Immanuel," which translated means, "God with us." And Joseph awoke from his sleep and did as the angel of the Lord commanded him, and took Mary as his wife, but kept her a virgin until she gave birth to a Son; and he called His name Jesus.

- 'Parish Newsletter'



Notice: 20th December Plains Presbyterian Newsletter will be our last issue for the year. The first issue of the year will be 24th January. I have had such a joy this last year, keeping you all connected through Covid, Lockdown and just in general. Have a fun and blessed summer. - Miranda

St. Andrew's Rakaia

Tuesday 15th December

10:30 am | Rakaia Fit Kids | with Miranda Christmas Programme

Last Fit Kids for the year, we will see you again in February 2021!

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

IT'S CHRISTMAS | Friday 18th December 4:30 pm – 7:30 pm | Come and Join us @ St Andrew's Rakaia. Crafts, baking, cookie decorating. Free community meal for all at 6:00 pm. Christmas music with the All Nations Band at 6:45. Welcome to ALL. A time of friendship and the Joy of Christmas. For information contact Dorothy or Miranda.

St Andrews has been busy this past week on outreach projects. Marty and Al from Saint Paul's Church have been involved with the Christmas Message programmes in Rakaia Chertsey and Dorie Schools. A real fun programme centered around the Christmas story. Dorothy attended at Rakaia. Funded by Plains and St Paul's. Thankyou.

Rakaia Friendship Gathering, A Christmas Meal brought to 26 folk, food, fellowship, and fun with the musical programme provided by Shirley and Lorraine. Rakaia Fit Kids hosted the Rakaia Play Centre at St Andrews while sharing lots of Christmas music plus good action songs. Also a big thankyou to Tyrone from Rakaia Mobil for printing the Plains Speaking Newsletter. Will be delivered this week and available at St Andrews this Sunday.

Congratulations to Tyrone for being awarded the 25-year Gold Star and Brigade Life Honorary Medal, a momentous achievement for his service to the Rakaia Volunteer Fire Brigade.

St. John's Methven

Reminder for Christmas Workshop, 17th December 9:00 am -12:00 pm the Christmas story telling, crafts and singing for age 5-6yrs, 7-9yrs, and 10-11yrs. Sharing on Friday 18th 10:00 am -11:00 am at St John's Methven. All welcome! Just let Gill know gjapcm@gmail.com either day and give her the children's names and ages and how many more for the share session.

December Services			
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	Rev. Arii; Christmas Carols

To view all services for December, visit our [website](#).

Father, we are lost for words, when we consider Your love for us and Your wonderful gift of Jesus, on top of all the other amazing gifts You have given us, including healing, protection, talents, to name but a few.

Thank You, my Father. We love You. Amen. - Graham Slattery [Seeds of the Kingdom](#)

