



PLAINS PRESBYTERIAN

24TH JANUARY 2021



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Happy New Year! Everyone!

We have made it to 2021 and Goodbye to 2020! What a year that has been for the globe. Our little nation managed to come away from last year with little losses compared to other countries who are still having to fight and protect their people from the virus. I'm sure that you agree, we are so fortunate and blessed to count our blessings that our government have been very vigilant and strict regarding our health and wellbeing being safeguarded from the world. We thank God for the wisdom exercised by our governance in this way to care for us. Looking back at the Christmas season, we have had great gatherings! Christmas service at Mayfield, Carol service at Staveley, Kids Christmas program at St John and Rakaia Community Christmas program! (shown in last newsletter).



Kid's Christmas Program at St. John's



Christmas Service at Mayfield



IT'S CHRISTMAS at St. Andrew's



Christmas Carols at Staveley

"It's been wonderful to see the Spirit of joy and love in our churches, community, and family."



Sharing our gathering with you. Moko's ripping into their presents and had a feast with the ham gifted from the church. From my whanau, thank you for the ham it was delicious! And it was more than enough to go around! Thank you also to St Andrew Rakaia for the chicken hamper that my whanau also enjoyed.

What are your plans for the year? Have you been thinking about it? Some people find it difficult to plan a whole year! and can only do short term planning i.e., daily, weekly, or monthly. Some, find that going with the flow is a plan, see where it takes you. Either way, I pray that God will show and guide you personally in your endeavours to do what you were not able to do previous year. If it is to do more, smile more, laugh more, rest more, care more, love more, serve more. Whatever the challenge or encouragement is, I say to you, with God, anything is possible. As a church anything is possible to trust more, to grow in ministry more, to grow in mission more, to grow in faith more, to work together more, to connect with the community more. With God, all things are possible. "Nothing is impossible if we put your trust in **GOD**." This is well-known hymn by Eugene Clark.

"Nothing is impossible if you put your trust in God.

Nothing is impossible when you're trusting in his word.

Harken to the voice of God to thee is there anything too hard for me.

Then put your trust in God alone and rest upon his word.

For everything, oh everything, yes everything is possible with God"

Thank you for embracing me into your homes during the Christmas season when I visited. Thank you for the cup of coffees and treats. I am truly blessed to be part of the life of Plains Presbyterian. I am hopeful for a positive year. A year of possibilities with God at the forefront of our moving forward into 2021.

Shalom

Arii Taimataora

A story I found about how God has so much more in store for you.

Hey, God. Something happened today, & I felt like I understood Your heart a little better.

Today, at a traffic light my daughter was screaming in her car seat because a friend gave her a paper clip during preschool and she snuck it home in her clothes, and then accidentally dropped it into the abyss that is my car's floorboard. Then, despite her desperate pleas, I wouldn't pull over so she could get said paper clip. This made her really mad. Now, if she had known that I couldn't pull over because I was hurrying to take her somewhere special before soccer practice, maybe she wouldn't have minded. But she was screaming too loudly about her paper clip for me to explain. So, I let her mourn and scream. There was no reasoning with her, anyways. She wanted what she wanted. To my daughter, that paper clip was the most valuable thing she'd ever owned. *But I couldn't stop thinking: If only she knew what was coming. If only she knew why I wouldn't pull over. If only she knew that I wanted to take her out*

for ice cream—just the two of us—maybe she would have gotten excited. Maybe she would have forgotten about that paper clip. I had something in store for her that was so much better. But that bent wire was her heart's desire. I

was contemplating this to myself and I realized, holy cow, God. I'm no better than my toddler. I am essentially riding around in life's car seat, clutching tight to my precious paper clips, and raging at you when one falls out of my hands. My job changes, but I liked my job. A big gig falls between my fingers, but it's the one I was most excited about. My husband changes as a human, but I was comfortable with who he was. "My paper clips, God! Pull over and let me collect them! PULL OVER GOD!" All the while you are watching my tears from the front seat, waiting for the wailing to stop so you can tell me 'Let go of that trinket. Stop your crying. I have something better just up ahead.'

So, God. I just want you to know that, in this one small way, my heart understood a little more about Your heart today. To be honest, I don't want to lose any of the things I hold unto so tightly. My youth, my career, my children being little, my marriage being comfortable. But, if change must happen, I pray you comfort my heart and remind me that Your plans are for my good. And remind me that for goodness sake, if I can just stop wailing over lost paper clips for one stinking minute, You've been trying to take me out for ice cream. I feel a little closer to you today, God. And I think that deserves an "Amen". – Mary Backstrom



Hold Fast! By the Rev. W F Hamilton

I remember reading, some time ago, a story in which the minister encouraged children's participation in a morning service. Like all ministers, he was anxious that the children should get to know their bibles, so he invited them to bring along to church an everyday object which would illustrate a bible text they knew or learned at Sunday School.

The great day arrived and armed with a variety of peculiar objects, the children took their places in the pews, eager to challenge the minister. Some had rather obvious things with them, such as; slices of bread - the Bread of Life; packets of salt; -- the Salt of the Earth, electric light bulb; - the Light of the World. An old egg timer caused an on the spot searching. Watch and Pray. A twelve inch measuring stick that a small boy excitedly held up - it stood for Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews.

However, the one that really stumped the poor minister, was a little girl holding fast and licking a big raspberry lollipop. No one could guess. With great solemnity Jane rose to her feet and bellowed out the answer. "First Thessalonians, chapter 5, verse 21" "Hold fast that which is good."

New Year is a time for new beginnings, the new promises, new resolutions, it's a time for starting afresh, but there are some things to which it would be wise to hold fast.

We are well through the first month of 2021 and have been giving thanks to God for this new year. Despite all the times when we fell short and the hard times of COVID-19, which still continue today, there were many experiences of the pass year and many lessons we learned which were of immense value to us.

Undoubtedly, we should want to hold on to these things which were good and take them with us into the year ahead, because they are sure to help us through this new year, and indeed all the years which God gives us.

Every year that has gone leaves behind for each on of us a legacy of new and rich experiences which we must grasp firmly in our hand and treasure and hold fast.

And, for now, have a very happy 2021.

St. Andrew's Rakaia

Tuesday 2nd February

10:30 am | Rakaia Fit Kids | Welcome Back! First Fit Kids of 2021. New songs, but same support and fun for preschoolers, new mums, caregivers, dads, and grandparents.

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

 10 Burgess Road, Staveley 7771



Staveley

Sunday 31st January

10:00 am | Plains Parish Service followed by Shared Lunch.

Map for reference;
Staveley Church
10 Burgess Road, Staveley 7771

JANUARY 2021 SERVICES

24 th	9:30 am	St. Andrew's Rakaia	Rev. Neville Burns
	10:00 am	All Saints	Rev. Holdaways;
			Combined with St. John's
31 st	10:00 am	Staveley	Pastor Paul Eden

Please note * NO services on 31st at St. Andrew's or St. John's

Heavenly Father,

We reflect on the year 2020, what year that has been. Receive our hearts of humble gratitude and thankfulness for your steadfast love that has brought us through. We think about your love and goodness and we say, "how great is the measure of our Fathers love to all creation." We look ahead oh God, and know, that we cannot move forward without acknowledgement of your grace and mercy in our lives. Teach us to trust in your Spirit and Word, as we once again, journey through another year. A year that will reveal your possibilities, in our lives, and calling to live in your presence remembering Jesus Christ the Son, born so that we may receive salvation. We give this year to you, knowing and believing that your word made flesh is the only way, truth, and life for 2021 and onwards. We ask this, In Jesus the light of the world. Amen

