



PLAINS PRESBYTERIAN

14TH MARCH 2021



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Changing the Battleground



I recently watched a YouTube video about an eagle and a banded sea snake. This particular sea snake is highly poisonous, and one bite can kill a human being swimming or diving in their waters. The eagle recognises that it can't fight the snake on its own terms or battleground, the sea. So, it snatches the snake from the water and takes it high into the sky. There, the snake has no power or balance in the air. It is useless, weak, and vulnerable, as opposed to where it is powerful, wise, and deadly. The snake may do everything it can to win the battle, but it is soon defeated.

An interesting story, you might think, but it is one that has a spiritual element to it as well. The enemy comes at us in different ways and he is very cunning. He wants to inject us with the poison of fear, shame, despair, depression, loneliness, rejection and much more, especially, in these difficult and challenging times. We each have to fight our own individual battles with the one who tempted Adam and Eve in the garden in the form of a serpent. His tactics haven't changed that much since then.

Our mistake is that we try and fight our battles with the enemy of our souls on his terms and on his battleground. Instead, let's take a lesson from the eagle and move our battle into the spiritual realms, in prayer. In that heavenly battleground, invite God to join you and fight the enemy on His terms. Let God take charge, as you earnestly pray to Him for His help, His authority, and His power to defeat our mutual enemy.

Today you can change the battleground from the one which favours the enemy to the place of your victory in Christ. The heavenly realm where God reigns supreme. It is the place where you have God-given authority to stand and fight, clothed in the full armour of God. It is the place of your victory, and your enemy's defeat!

- Philip Asselin | [Seeds of the Kingdom](#)

Alpine Presbytery Gathering 19-21 March, at St David's in Ashburton Registrations are now open for the Gathering. Please follow this link to access the registration form: <https://forms.gle/4Gi8BtEXCP4W5qrA7>

The theme is Being Present in our Local Communities.

In our Presbytery aspirations we declare this: 'Be present in our local communities, deeply listening to, and learning from others, and being alongside humbly loving and serving. We want to reflect on this together and see what we can do to enhance our theology of community through sharing and talking together.'

Billets wanted: We have a few people wanting to be billeted, if possible. If you are able to offer accommodation to someone — even if you are not attending the Gathering yourself - please let Gail know - (gail@alpinepresbytery.org)

St. Andrew's were fortunate to have volunteers from Rakaia Fire Brigade to shift a piano donated by the Lamont family. This was a job that needed a bit of muscle power! The piano has an interesting history, once belonging to the Mayor of Sumner. It is a lovely piece of furniture and used to have candelabras attached, with evidence still of wax deposits. The piano will be used in the Church Hall on Friendship Club days and also during Café Services. Our thanks to the Lamont family for their gift – given, received, and delivered in true community spirit.

We've had a few musicians try it out and tell us what they thought –

- Karen played, she said she is tone deaf, but loved it
- Irene thought it was a treasure and we are very lucky to have it gifted
- Marie, 89, rattled off a good tune and was impressed.
- Natalie, played very well on it, thought it was great.

Karen played at the end of the Friendship Club meal, just nice to have background music.

- Liz Depree



Rev John's Bible readings for this Sunday 14th March at St. Andrew's Theme; (William H. Willimon) Saved by the Snake.

Jesus is the Saviour of the world, but his manner and mode of salvation may not always be what the world wants or expects. His sacrificial love both judges us and embraces us. In Jesus Christ, God confronts the depth of our sin and rebellion, and makes us look at the ugliness of our evil. In Jesus Christ, God heals us, deals with our sin, and restores us to relationship with our maker.

Numbers 21; 4-9. "Why have you brought us up out of Egypt to die?" the people complain to Moses.

A bronze serpent is placed upon a pole as a sign of God's forgiveness and healing.

John 3; 14-21. John compares the forgiveness of God in the wilderness,

when Moses lifted up the snake to heal the Israelites, to the forgiveness of God in Christ.

I Will Lean In; a daily prayer to say during Lent.

I will lean in, retreat from the pressures I face, and move closer and deeper into your love. I will breathe out, refrain from the distractions I seek, and become open and receiving of your grace. I will linger, encircled by the depth of your care, and receive the endless nature of your mercy I will whisper, in the quiet of this sanctuary, and be honest and real in your presence. I will listen, awaken all my senses to your voice, and become expectant and hopeful of your kingdom work in my life.

St. Andrew's Rakaia

Tuesday 16th March

10:30 am | Rakaia Fit Kids | 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 | **St. Andrew's Mission Meeting** in the lounge.

Thankyou. Much appreciation and thanks to Ratu, Dawn and friends for giving up your time to clean up a large fallen cedar branch at St Andrews. Good job done, very grateful.

Alpine Gathering @ St David's Church, Ashburton 19-21 March.

Theme "Being Present In Our Local Communities"

Need a return Ride into Ashburton Rakaia; Wednesday Run; Picks passengers up from Rakaia, Chertsey, Fairton / Hakatere Marae, Wakanui, down to Hinds and drops you off in town for 2-3 hours

Phone 03 308 1395 ext 225 by 2pm Tuesday. Mid Canterbury Connector.

Trinity Mayfield

MISSION GROUP MEETING | Thursday March 18th at 1:30 pm.

This is not so much a meeting as a get together over a cuppa for anyone interested in the Mayfield, Mt. Somers, Stavely, and Carew area of the Plains Parish.

Everyone is welcome and we would love some new ideas for the church. - Kay

		March Services	
14 th	9:30 am	St. Andrew's Rakaia	Rev. John Titlow
	10:30 am	St. John's Methven	Rev. Arii
17 th	7:00 pm	Carew	Rev. Arii
21 st	9:30 am	St. Andrew's Rakaia	Rev. Arii
	10:30 am	St. John's Methven	Rev. Neville Burns
	TBC	St. David's Ashburton	Alpine Presbytery Service

Dear Lord, please help me today to change the battleground I am fighting the enemy in. Help me move it to the heavenly realms where in You I am more than a conqueror. I am fed up with being bullied and beaten by the enemy on his terms. Right now, I am choosing to lift this into the prayer realms, where You will fight for me and I will gain the victory for Your glory. Amen.

- Philip Asselin | [Seeds of the Kingdom](#)

