



PLAINS PRESBYTERIAN

18TH JULY 2021



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God is my strong salvation; What foe have I to fear?

Water of Life

Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life, as clear as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb. Revelation 22:1, NIV

I love watching waterfalls. They're so majestic and powerful, and sometimes awesome. Each one is different. They speak of many things, and cause me to wonder about God, time, and eternity. As water cascades over the ledges and bounces on to the rocks below in a perpetual display of life and energy, I wonder about their beginnings. For thousands of years, they have been cascading down the hillside or mountain slope, leaping and tumbling into space. They talk about the eternity of God. His timelessness. His eternal presence.

They tell me that, even before they came into being, He was there. He was their creator. A creator cannot be created. He always was, and is, and is to come. Majestic. Powerful. Ageless. This is just a snapshot in time. This is the moment, now. Tomorrow there will be another moment. And so, it continues, into eternity, or until a time of God's choosing, when all things will change. Then there will be a new heaven and a new earth, as the promise is fulfilled.

Sometimes a pool forms at the foot of the waterfall, off to the side away from the strong current. It's a place of rest. The water gently swirls around, taking time to gather itself together, before it rejoins the momentum of the current to take another leap into the unknown. Then it continues on its journey, steadfast and sure to its final destination, wherever that might be. It has a long way to go, with many obstacles to overcome. Day and night, it continues, unceasing. Sometimes it's strong and powerful, sometimes weak, and tired.

Sometimes it cascades with a vengeance. Then it becomes a stream again, bubbling over the hillside on its way to join the larger river and on to the sea. The journey may be short or long, but nothing can hinder its determination to reach the sea.

Life's journey is full of the unknown. It can meander through the valleys, and it can negotiate its way around the obstacles. But its direction is sure, and its destination is clear. The Holy Spirit is our guide and will direct our path.

On reaching the sea the river surrenders itself to merge and be swallowed up by the power and majesty of the ocean. It stretches further than the eye can see. Its depths are a mystery, containing life in countless forms. Who can fathom these depths? Who can understand the depths of God or discover the limits of the Almighty? 'They are higher than the heavens—what can you do? They are deeper than Sheol—what can you know? Their measure is longer than the earth and wider than the sea' (Job 11:7-9).

Who knows what surprises might be revealed? Is this the ultimate destination? We look to the horizon where heaven and earth appear to meet. It seems but a short leap from sea to sky, from earth to heaven. Yet only the Holy Spirit can cross that divide, to lift us from earth to heaven, with Jesus Christ showing the way.



Reflection on one Lectionary reading for Sunday 18th July;
Selected Reading. Mark 6; 30-34, 55-56.

Theme; Jesus commands his disciples to, from time to time, take sabbath rest. In withdrawing from activity - in disengaging from our everyday routine and the cares and concerns of daily life - we show our faith in the work of God. We demonstrate that the future of the world is not left entirely up to us. We are not gods; we are human beings who need times of rest and renovation. Thanks be to God, Jesus commands us to rest. Encountering Mark. This Sunday's reading is our third in a row from Mark's sixth chapter.

It is linked with our Old Testament lesson from Samuel 7; 1-14a, no doubt, because both lessons refer to the compassionate shepherd Jesus.

Jesus withdraws with his disciples to a deserted place, hoping to find rest. Yet the crowds follow him, crowds who are like sheep without a shepherd.

Prayer; Lord Jesus, you called your disciples away from the busy labours in order to rest with you in the wilderness. You pulled your followers out of the tug and pull of the demands of ministry and led them into a remote place where they might find rest and restoration.

Help us Lord, to realise that we do not run the world, that it is not within our power to make history turn out right, or fix all that is wrong with ourselves and other people. help us, Lord, to remember that you are God, and we are not. Give us grace to enjoy your promised rest, this day and always. Amen.

{resources by William H. Willimon}

This Sunday 18th at 9.30am, St. Andrew's Rakaia, Rev. Silvia Purdie will be reflecting on the Bible Readings 2 Corinthians 6: 1-13 and Mark 4: 35-41.

Peace, Be Still - overcoming anxiety, focusing on Jesus as Lord of anxiety.

Also some helpful tools in easing that tension. All Welcome. Morning tea in the lounge following the service.

St. Andrew's Rakaia

Tuesday 20th July

10:30 am | Rakaia Fit Kids | A time for friendships, fun & support.

Welcome to children all ages over the holidays.

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

Monday 26th July

1:00 pm | Garden Working Bee

*Good health prayers to Rev Neville and Thelma.

At St John's Methven, this Sunday, 10:30 am Rev. John will lead the service. Thankyou John.

Contacts for the Parish

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Sunday Services

18 th July	9:30 am	St. Andrew's Rakaia	Rev. Silvia Purdie
	10:30 am	St. John's Methven	Rev. John Titlow
25 th July	9:30 am	St. Andrew's Rakaia	Rev. Neville Burns
	10:30 am	St. John's Methven with Staveley Combined	Pastor Paul Eden
1 st Aug.	10:30 am	St. John's Methven	Rev. Silvia Purdie
8 th Aug.	9:30 am	St. Andrew's Rakaia	Rev. John Titlow
	10:30 am	St. John's Methven	Worship Team

Prayer

Father, as I meander through the uncertain pathway of life, let the current of Your Holy Spirit be my guide. As I put my trust in You, I know You will keep me safe. Please help me to remain steadfast over all the obstacles and know Your guiding hand upon me all the days of my life. In Jesus' name, Amen.

- Ron Scurfield | Seeds of the Kingdom