



# Little Acorns



May – July 2019

The Quarterly Newsletter of  
Holy Trinity Anglican Parish, Woodville

## **Salt of the earth and light to the world: An incomplete reflection on why we're here...**

What does it mean to be a church? Why are we here? Do the numbers in the pews matter? The following is a longer message than usual that was written after Synod last year and has been something I've been reflecting on. It is intended as some thoughts to hopefully start a conversation about our role as a wider church.

At the 2018 Diocesan Synod the Rev. Alex Czerwonka tabled his latest report analysing the Diocesan statistics of the last 30 years. Shows declining attendance at services and numbers of baptisms. The report notes some potential factors for these longer-term changes, including factor, factor, factor and factor. There was no discussion about the report itself, however Bishop Andrew in his opening speech talked of the changing world that the Church has to respond to, and the discussions that he hopes to facilitate over the next year on what it means to be Church in the 21st century.

For those of us who have grey in our hair this is the latest version of discussions that have been had for the past 30-40 years, but which are becoming increasingly urgent as congregations continue to shrink. I think the situation demands that we step back and ask ourselves what is the Church here for, and therefore what do we need to do. This musing is a short consideration of the matter, and poses some thoughts and questions – it's not meant to offer conclusive answers, but just help stimulate different conversations.

We live in a country where attending church stopped being a part of social expectations more than 50 years ago. It was part of the broader social movements that saw power structures and social assumptions challenged in all kinds of ways. Our situation is much more like the early church (in its first 400 years, before Christianity became the official religion of the Roman Empire) than the powerful institution of the 19th century when many of our ideas about the

church seem to have been fixed. Being powerful was corrupting, we can see that most starkly in the Catholic Church in Ireland and the horrors of the Maudlin Laundries, orphanages and the terrible abuse of children. Not to say that there weren't good people doing useful service, but the risk is there that a powerful church becomes home to the Pharisees that Jesus spoke so cuttingly about.

I believe our role or description includes: humility; calling the powerful to account; fighting materialism, greed, fear and hatred – fighting anything which undermines the sanctity of life and the wellbeing of the community and natural world; a community of faithful witness rather than a marker of social status/acceptability. We are a refuge, and support, encouraging and sustaining each of us on our faith journey – looking both inward to our spiritual health, and outward to the health of the world.

Prayer, scripture, and the sacraments all combine to nurture us. They don't have to always be public things but can often occur in the privacy of our own homes. Prayer is many different things, we can do it in all kinds of ways; similarly, I know that many people read the Bible in daily reading programmes – and we must value private expressions of faith as well as public worship. We must offer different programmes and spaces. I have a vision of a church that brings people in as a base congregation to then go out to minister to the community – it would be wonderful to have full pews, but it is not the goal in and of itself, and the church needs to accept a more modest level of active parishioners.

Out in the world we are serving God, communities and all creation in whatever forms and ways suit our particular location. However, we need the people to be effective servants – it is important to offer welcoming spaces for people of all ages. There has been a big focus on young people and young families, and it is important to give children and young people a safe space where they can encounter the divine in ways that speak to them. But it's equally important to

give spaces and time to older people, whose families are grown and have more time to commit to community activities, and who are faced with different challenges and needs. Older people can offer their time and talents, and have been the backbone of most of our church activities over the decades.

The Book of James in the New Testament speaks strongly to me, calling us to faith that is expressed in actions as well as words. At Synod I am always impressed and moved hearing from the folks of the Anglican Missions Board and the Christian World Service. They are passionate, committed people helping in the local context in many parts of the world, particularly those troubled or in need in various ways. I would like to highlight this work more. We should be proud of the money we raise that helps Waiapu meet its giving targets year on year, and makes a difference to the physical, social and spiritual lives of so many across the Pacific and around the world.

Woodville is blessed, we are a small town with the difficulties that being small and rural brings in the modern world, but we have a rich tradition of community spirit, of service, and being welcoming. Our church family has its disagreements at times, like any family, but we are always there for one another. We do welcome strangers and newcomers – I have had personal experience of visiting other parishes that don't live that out, and where no one has made the effort to greet me as an unfamiliar face. We can build on our strengths, continuing to be outward looking while seeking to welcome all who would like to join in with worship.

I would love to see our mission and roles discussed more creatively at parish, diocese and national level, and some more definite plans or approaches put in place. I'd love to hear what everyone in our Holy Trinity family thinks.

Arohanui, Rosie



### St James' Plaque

As part of the Palm Sunday service on Sunday 14 April, a new plaque recording key dates for St James was unveiled and blessed. The unveiling came one year after the decommissioning of St James. The plaque can be found on the northern wall of Holy Trinity along with a photograph of the first parish council and a St James banner, and near the St James' altar cross and candlesticks. It is lovely to have this lasting reminder of St James in a prominent place, which will be a handy prompt for future historians.

### Monthly Prayer Meetings

Prayer meetings are held at 9.30am on the last Friday of the month in Holy Trinity, all are welcome to come along!



## In Memoriam

The last few months have seen the deaths of a number of Woodville and former Woodville folk. Our sympathy and prayers go out to the families and friends of the departed. We remember:

- ⊕ Jack August
- ⊕ Kevin Hanks
- ⊕ Bonnie Squires



## Young at Heart, Older Folks' Social Afternoons

2pm, the fourth Thursday of each month

Holy Trinity Hall

Please contact Rosie McMillan if you'd like help with transportation.



## Pink Ribbon High Tea

A high tea is being held in the Holy Trinity Hall at

2pm on Saturday 25 May

to raise money for the Breast Cancer Foundation. For \$5 you'll get delicious sweet and savoury treats, and plenty of cups of tea!

## Correction

In the item on the restoration of St Andrews in the last edition of Little Acorns we unfortunately included the wrong name when talking about the builder who has been doing most of the work – it should have said that “Neil Algie has done an amazing job!”

## Hawke’s Bay Regional Conference

The Diocese’s Hawke’s Bay Regional Conference is being held on Saturday 6 July. Please let Rosie McMillan know if there is anything you would like raised, or any motions that you would like tabled to seek to take forward to Synod (being held on 21/22 September).



## Mid-Winter Dinner

Deep space comes to the Holy Trinity Hall on  
**6pm Saturday 20 July 2019.**

The theme for this year’s dinner is ***Outer Space Adventures.***  
There’ll be a tasty themed dinner, games, music, and  
spot prizes for creative costumes.

Tickets are \$20 per head.

Please contact Rosie McMillan to secure yours.



## **An Autumn Prayer**

God of the seasons, there is a time for everything; there is a time for dying and a time for rising. We need courage to enter into the transformation process.

God of autumn, the trees are saying goodbye to their green, letting go of what has been. We, too, have our moments of surrender, with all their insecurity and risk. Help us to let go when we need to do so.

God of fallen leaves lying in coloured patterns on the ground, our lives have their own patterns. As we see the patterns of our own growth, may we learn from them.

God of misty days and harvest moon nights, there is always the dimension of mystery and wonder in our lives. We always need to recognize your power-filled presence. May we gain strength from this.

God of fruit ripe for harvest, many gifts of growth lie within the season of our surrender. We must wait for harvest in faith and hope. Grant us patience when we do not see the blessings.

God of birds flying north for another season, your wisdom enables us to know what needs to be left behind and what needs to be carried into the future. We yearn for insight and vision.

God of flowers touched with frost, may your love keep our hearts from growing cold in the empty seasons.

God of life, you believe in us, you enrich us, you entrust us with the freedom to choose life. For all this, we are grateful.

Amen.



## July, a Month of Sundays

In July nearly every Sunday has a particular theme.



### ***Refugee Sunday (7 July)***

When we remembered that Jesus and his family fled danger in their homeland and lived as refugees in Egypt. Welcoming the stranger and the outsider remains a vital practice of Christian communities today and is lived out in the support we give to refugees seeking to rebuild their lives in New Zealand.



### ***Sea Sunday (14 July)***

When we celebrated the work of the Mission to Seafarers, and pray for both their endeavours and all those who sail upon the world's oceans.



### ***Bible Sunday (21 July)***

When we prayed for all the groups and agencies – especially the Bible Society – working to translate the Bible into different languages so that people around the world may hear and read God's word in their own tongue.



### ***Social Services' Sunday (28 July)***

When we gave thanks and pray for all those involved, whether as volunteers or paid professionals, in helping others – be it social workers, doctors, teachers, care assistants, counsellors, or meals on wheels.



## **Harvest Festival**

We held our Harvest Festival on Sunday 3 March which, along with giving thanks for the labours of all who work to produce our food and God's bountiful creation, saw a significant collection of food items and money for the Woodville Foodbank. Thank you to everyone who provided donations – the Foodbank provides an essential service to the community!



## **Holy Trinity AGM**

Holy Trinity held its Annual General Meeting after the service on Sunday 10 March. The financial and ministry reports were presented. Judy Harding, Merril Hoare, Rosie McMillan, Nell Mountfort, Rozel Pharazyn, Ian Riley, Sandra Riley, Rona Squires, Vicky Tomlinson, James Uren and Janice Wiri were elected Vestry members. Janice and Rona were confirmed as Parish Wardens.

It was agreed that there will be work organised later in the year to remove the tree stumps and have a general grounds' tidy up.



## **Gumboot Sunday**

Having depression is like walking through mud. So the Key to Life Trust asked people to put on their gumboots on Friday 5 April and give a gold coin. Holy Trinity thought we would make 7 April an unofficial gumboot Sunday. The cash giving in that Sunday's collection, of \$200, went to the Trust.

Last year in New Zealand 137 young people died by suicide and it is estimated another 3,500 attempted to take their own lives. While agencies are doing their best, some kids are stuck waiting up to six months to receive the counselling they urgently need. 100% of the money raised by gumboot wearers went to registered health professionals to make sure kids get the help they need, when they need it most!



## **AMB Lenten Appeal**

During Lent the 'bring and buy' table at the back of Holy Trinity raised \$91.30 for the Anglican Missions Board's annual Lenten Appeal. The Vestry then put the April parish tithe of \$100 towards the appeal, meaning Holy Trinity contributed \$191.30 to Water for All in Fiji.



## **Advance Notice – Bazaar and Flower Show**

Saturday 31 August 2019

Holy Trinity Hall

### **Pastoral Visits**

As disciples we are constantly called to be the hands and feet of Christ. Please let Rosie McMillan know if you would like a visit, or you're aware of someone who would appreciate a visit.



## Events

### May 2019

- Friday 17<sup>th</sup> 9.45am Anglican Women's Group meets at the Hall for a visit to Waireka Home
- Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> 2.00pm Young at Heart social afternoon in the Hall
- Friday 31<sup>st</sup> 9.30am Monthly prayer meeting in Holy Trinity

### June 2019

- Friday 21<sup>st</sup> 1.00pm Anglican Women's Group meets in the Hall (making cloth bags for the bazaar)
- Thursday 27<sup>th</sup> 2.00pm Young at Heart social afternoon in the Hall
- Friday 28<sup>th</sup> 9.30am Monthly prayer meeting in Holy Trinity

### July 2019

- Friday 19<sup>th</sup> 2.00pm Anglican Women's Group meets in the Hall
- Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> 6.00pm Mid-Winter Dinner in the Hall
- Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> 2.00pm Young at Heart social afternoon in the Hall
- Friday 26<sup>th</sup> 9.30am Monthly prayer meeting in Holy Trinity



## Church Services

### May 2019

Sunday 5 <sup>th</sup>	9.30am	Eucharist
Sunday 12 <sup>th</sup>	9.30am	Family Service
Sunday 19 <sup>th</sup>	9.30am	Eucharist
Sunday 26 <sup>th</sup>	9.30am	Eucharist

### June 2019

Sunday 2 <sup>nd</sup>	9.30am	Family Service
Sunday 9 <sup>th</sup>	9.30am	Eucharist
Sunday 16 <sup>th</sup>	9.30am	Eucharist
Sunday 23 <sup>rd</sup>	9.30am	Eucharist
Sunday 30 <sup>th</sup>	9.30am	Union Service

### July 2019

Sunday 7 <sup>th</sup>	9.30am	Eucharist
Sunday 14 <sup>th</sup>	9.30am	Eucharist
Sunday 21 <sup>st</sup>	9.30am	Eucharist
Sunday 28 <sup>th</sup>	9.30am	Family Service

## Key contacts

Parish website: [www.htwoodville.org](http://www.htwoodville.org)

Role	Person	Telephone
Local Priest	Rev. Rosie McMillan	06 376 5972
Parish Wardens	Janice Wiri	06 376 4838
	Rona Squires	06 376 5076
Vestry Chair	Vicky Tomlinson	022 643 9419
Parish Treasurer	Janice Wiri	06 376 4838
Parish Secretary	Rona Squires	06 376 5076
Anglican Women's Group	Rev. Rosie McMillan	06 376 5972
Foodbank Coordinator	Jim Worboys	06 376 4023