

HALO

ST COLUMBA'S PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, TARADALE

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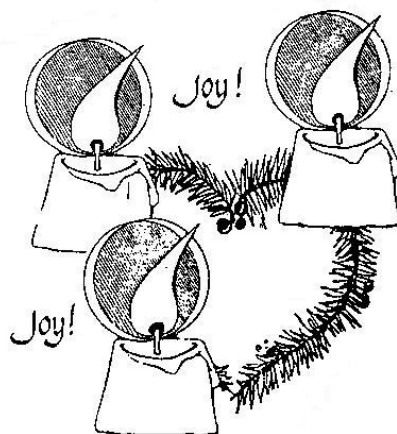


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For unto us a child is born...



Material for February Halo in by 11 a.m. Wednesday 26th January 2011 please

From the Minister

Last week I participated in a parish review at Tamatea Co-operating. They are a happy little group (around 15) with no financial worries – more than breaking even financially each year and having well over \$100,000 in the bank. I mentioned this to someone who said that that was more than we have. Then I thought – they have no mission to engage the community, they have no youth, they have no children, and while they have plenty of money, they do not have much of a future unless they get some new members soon. Most of us would like financial security and a comfortable bank balance but sometimes it is worth taking some risks in order to achieve something significant.

I am sure that Jesus could have stayed safe in Heaven and enjoyed the pleasures and security he had. However, the Christmas message is that Jesus left that, and entered human life as a baby – weak and vulnerable.

Philippians 2 puts it like this:

'Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others. Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but made himself nothing, taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of humanity and being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.'

It seems to me therefore that the church is called to be always taking the path of the cross, to give up comfort and security for ourselves in order to bring life and hope to others. It is challenging. I was discussing Christmas lunch with someone - and whether we would join the community meal being hosted by All Saints. They thought it was on Christmas Eve and were very keen for them and our family to join in, and volunteer to help. When I said it was on Christmas day, the enthusiasm quickly waned.

What gives Christmas its significance in the life of our community is two fold. One is the historic reality – Jesus Christ was born in Bethlehem about 2000 years ago – and he is the most important person in history because he has shown us true love and the way of God (as God incarnate) and destroyed sin and death.

The other is the demonstration of his example of self-giving. He is the reason we give gifts, he is the reason we reconnect with friends and family we have not seen in a long time. He is the reason we choose others over self. He is the reason we look, not only after our own interests, but also after the interests of others.

May you have a blessed Christmas,

Brett

Reading and Prayer

Reading: "I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. Today in the town of David a Saviour has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord." **Luke 2:10-11**



Prayer: Thank you God for the Christmas season; may we show love, hope, joy and peace to all we see at this Christmas time, and always give thanks for the Spirit's guiding us day by day. Amen

Session

Another year over and what have we done?? We have thanked Wim for his work with the youth and welcomed Mark and Jeni as they take over their roles as Youth Co-ordinator and KFC Assistant Co-ordinator. We have officially become a Kids Friendly Church, where we welcome, encourage and embrace children of all ages, teaching them of the love of our Lord Jesus Christ. There is so much that goes on at St Columba's that is positive. Many people reach out to those who are sick, to people who have lost loved ones and to those who are just lonely. They are the backbone of a Church family. Caring, loving, and supporting each other, in the name of our Lord.

The Creative Family Services have become a time for children, young people and parents to join in and worship together in a more relaxed and informal service. It is exciting to see the confidence growing in the children as they take part. Thank you to Brett who embraces change and allows others to participate and to assist him with ideas.

This is just a little of what we have done this year.

Summer holidays are just around the corner for many of us, and people are already planning their break. The first Sunday in Advent was on Sunday 28th November and there is a lot to be done in the life of the Church as we look forward to, and celebrate, the event that changed the world, the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ.

It is a privilege to be an Elder in this wonderful Parish of St Columba. However, we are a small group, and without the help of all the people who assist with visiting in the pastoral area and delivering the Communion invitations, it would be an impossible task for the Elders and Brett to cover the whole Parish. We are very grateful to you all and thank you for your commitment.

Nancye Munro has been an Elder in this Church for the past 37 years. She now thinks she has done her apprenticeship and so has made the decision to retire! We will miss Nancye's wisdom and experience on Session, and we pray for good health and for many blessings in her retirement.

Our thoughts and prayers go out to all our Church members and their families who have lost loved ones this year. Several dedicated, loyal and very committed people have passed away this year and we know Christmas will be a difficult time for their loved ones as they face their first Christmas with out them.

In the Christmas rush, in your parties and celebrations, in the shopping and preparations, I pray that you make room for our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. Let Christ be a part of your every moment as you celebrate Christmas with family or friends for He is the reason for the Christmas season.

Session met for the last time this year on Wednesday, 24th November. Brett and some of the Elders will be away on holiday in January, so if you are requiring help in any form please contact me (Pam Thrupp) 835 5785 or Robin Arnold (844 7808) and we will endeavour to assist you or put you onto some one who can.

We wish you all a very happy and safe Christmas.

Peace and Grace be with you all.

Pam Thrupp

Session Clerk

The Little Star



Writing a new story about Christmas is close to impossible. It is a story told and retold for over 2,000 years. Because of that, I am repeating a story I have told before, one that covers 2,000 years.

I am only a small star. If you looked forever at the night sky, you would not see me. On the fourth day of creation, God made me. My name does not matter, but God knows it. When He made me, He said that He made and placed me in the heavens for a special reason. At that time, I did not know the reason, but from where I was, I could see all that happened in the world. I watched animals and big creatures roam the earth. I saw dinosaurs and leviathans. I watched Adam and Eve eat from the tree of knowledge and leave the Garden of Eden. I watched Abraham leave Ur and travel to the Holy Land. I watched the trials and troubles of the Jewish race. I saw God talking with Moses and giving him the Ten Commandments written on stone tablets. While all this happened, I stayed in the sky wondering what task God had for me. Then, one day, God sent an angel to tell me to get ready for an important job. I can tell you that I was excited. I guessed it probably meant something was going to happen on earth. I knew that if it were to do with earth then it would be with the Jewish people because they were God's chosen race. I started to take a bit more interest in what was going on in the Holy Lands. Then I saw Gabriel, one of God's angels, heading down to earth. He went to a priest by the name of Zechariah and told him that he and his wife Elizabeth was going to have a baby son and that they were to call him John. Gabriel also told Zechariah that his son John would get people ready for the coming of the Lord. Zechariah did not believe Gabriel so Gabriel made him unable to speak until his son was born and named John. A month later, I saw Gabriel go back down to earth to a place called Nazareth. He spoke to a virgin girl named Mary who was engaged to Joseph. He told her that she would have a baby son and that his name would be Jesus. Mary told Gabriel that she was not married but he told her that the baby would be born with God as the father. When Mary told Joseph what had happened he married her. I knew immediately that this was important and that it was what I was going to have something to do with. For all those years, I had stayed in the sky waiting for this moment, and now it was near. Then I saw that something else was happening. The Roman Emperor gave orders that everyone had to return to their hometowns for counting so that the Romans would know exactly how many people were living in the Holy Lands. Mary and Joseph had to go to Bethlehem because that is where Joseph had been born. Then Gabriel came to me. You can imagine how excited I was. He told me that my job was to move closer to earth and start to shine brighter than all the other stars in the sky. I was to approach Bethlehem from the east, and that as I went; I was to watch for Wise Men who would follow me. I was to lead them to the place where Jesus was with his Mother Mary. Immediately I started towards earth. As I got closer, I started to shine brighter and brighter. Then, one night, I saw Jesus born in a manger surrounded by animals. It was then that a big group of angels went past me and told some shepherds that Jesus had been born. I watched the shepherds as they went to see Jesus. Down on earth, behind me, I noticed men on camels following me. It was all happening just as Gabriel had said it would. I shone even brighter, and led the men on their camels to where Jesus was. They knelt down and worshipped Jesus as the son of God. They gave him presents of gold, frankincense and myrrh. They then left. God then spoke to me. He said, "Thank you little star. You have done well." I then went back to where I had been since the fourth day of creation. As I went, my brightness returned to normal. I now stay where I began all those years ago. I thank God every day for my chance to have been able to serve him. I do not know if he has another job for me, but if he does then I will do it. From where I am, I can see Jesus in heaven with his father, God, and I can see people on earth doing what Jesus wanted them to do. I love to see the children, at Christmas, getting presents, and giving presents, and remembering as they do that I was part of giving them the greatest gift of all - Jesus.

by Jim Payton

Greetings from Gary King

Back in February, after losing his beloved Di to cancer, Gary decided to take up a new challenge. His application to do VSA (Voluntary Service Abroad) was approved. His new 'job' is to care for, and train, the local residents on how to protect the Hawksbill turtles, which are becoming extinct. So far, we have not heard a lot about that part of his life.

Gary is only able to email when he gets to a place where there is enough electricity to run his computer.

The first email we had described his life in Kia, which is the area on the Island of Santa Isabel, where he lives. He said, "I am getting to love Kia more and more. It has all the conditions of an extremely poor village - lots of litter and rubbish and poor sanitation etc but the people are lovely and friendly and they are so good to me. They, like the rest of the Solomons, have a very strong Wontak (one -talk= same language = extended family) system whereby every thing you have is shared around the extended family, no questions asked. It has its drawbacks, of course, and if you have capitalist blood in your veins, it has major drawbacks, as it stifles enterprise largely. I guess there is very little incentive to work hard and make staka (heaps) of money if you have to hand it around to others who may not be so energetic. If you are like me, and not a capitalist at heart (or maybe are at the stage of your life where you have no huge pressures to make money to pay for the kids' clothes and school fees) Kia is a wonderful way of life. The people spend most of their time sitting about smoking, chewing betel nut and 'storying' and there are always plenty of people to join in. About the only means for getting cash for the Kia people is by selling fish. They dive, mainly at night, when the fish are asleep and easier to spear - but what about the sharks and the saltwater crocs I say!! I bought a whole snapper for \$7 one day when I couldn't spear one for myself. The staple diet is rice and it is a shame really, as they show very little interest in growing fresh vegetables. There is an aid-based project to revive the home growing of vegetables, but I am very sceptical at how much appeal that will have."

Gary's adopted Wontak in Kia is the Toga family. They run the local store and you can count the variety of goods on two hands! They are in their mid forties and have two pikininis (children). Mareta, the wife, speaks quite good English. She is helping him with his pijin.

Gary's house is on Putua Island, about 10 minutes across the water in his boat. The boat has a 5hp motor. With his own transport, he can putter across whenever he feels the need to talk to someone, otherwise he can keep to himself if he needs peace and quiet to do his work. He is getting quite a few visitors dropping in, mainly fishermen on their way out or back in from fishing down the channel. During the last school holidays, he had various dugouts of children paddling across the inlet to talk to the 'funny white man'.

Gary's house is 100mx50m built on poles and is about ½ metre above sea level at high tide. It is next to a deep channel where he dives for fish. He has been assured they do not have tsunamis!

Church on Sundays is very interesting. He goes to the United Church of Melanesia, which is an Anglican based Church. He is the only white-faced person there and so felt self-conscious to start with. The congregation sings the whole service rather than it being spoken. They have beautiful voices and Gary found it a bit daunting to join in at the beginning. He texted Barry the other Sunday morning to say the drums were beating and calling everyone to Church!

He says he is enjoying life over there; it is full of surprises and can change at a moments notice. There is not a lot of organisation and things happen very slowly. Gary's son, Ben, is going over to spend Christmas with him so that will be great for him.

Gary sends Christmas blessings to everyone and he said he thinks of everyone here in Napier, often.

Barry and Pam

6 Cooperation Needs to be About Mission, not Unity

I have often heard the comment that we are living in a post-modern, post-denominational, post-colonial world. I understand the analysis and the argument; I just object to the timing. We are not there yet and only history will really inform us of when we do make it. We are living on the cusp of this major change and, in many ways; we have to live in two different societies. There continue to be many people who are living with a modern, denominational, colonial worldview. There are many who do not have a computer, email or cell phone. Of significance is the fact that they are often key people in the life of the Church.

When the Church Union movement was in full swing and Cooperative Ventures started to form, around the country, there was a clear mandate for a cohesive Christian witness. The most cited verse was John 17:20-21 ("that they may all be one"), suggesting that the unity of the Church was paramount. The efforts of many Union and Cooperating parishes primarily focused on breaking down the denominational divisions, and building a unified congregation. For some local churches, this meant living with a diversity of traditions; for others it meant creating their own unified tradition (which melded diversity into one local expression of church).

Experience has shown that the uniting of congregations has generally focused attention internally onto the organisational aspects of parish life, rather than on turning out to the community. Discussions were about buildings, liturgies, equity and oversight – and they have largely missed the missional imperative of taking the Gospel into the community. It may seem a bit radical (especially given my current role) but the quest for a united Church has actually had detrimental effects on the mission of the Church. It has turned our eyes upon a Jesus who stands in the traditions of the Church, rather than the Jesus who stands in the marketplace.

This is not to say that Cooperative Ventures have not worked or that they should not be an option for the future. In fact, I believe that they are a viable alternative for many areas. However, it is important that the motivations for cooperating are clear. When churches come together with a mission imperative, they can achieve great things – and unity is a by-product. It is simple organisational psychology to note that a common goal (or enemy) is a uniting factor for building a team. The unity of the Body of Christ is not seen in us all being the same. Paul describes the body in 1 Corinthians 12 – ears and eyes, hands and feet, all working differently as parts of the body. Here unity and diversity sit side by side. One body – many parts. I sometimes think that the hardest part of being church is to accept that others are also part of the Church. We invest so much into our faith, our theology and our practice that it is difficult to include other expressions of church into the Body of Christ....

It may seem radical but, the quest, for a united Church, has had a detrimental effect on the mission of the Church. Resources available to focus on taking the Body of Christ into the marketplace. It should be an approach that sees a need, identifies the resources required, and builds relationships that make things happen. The focus is not on unity, but on mission - with unity being an outcome, not a goal. Such a model is not only relevant for inter-denominational co-operation; I believe it is also relevant for multi-congregational churches and inter-cultural or inter-generational relationships. To accept another part of the Church as a valid expression of faith is an important step, and then to be willing to use combined resources for the mission of God. It lets feet be feet and do the walking, while ears are doing the hearing. It affirms that Anglicans, Methodists, Baptists, Assemblies of God, Catholics and Presbyterians are all part of the Body of Christ, and we each have a part to play. It assures us that ancient hymns, choruses, Hillsongs and modern hymns are all valid expressions of faith and are appropriate for the congregations that enjoy that style of music. It reminds us that Maori, Samoan, Tongan, Cook Island, Scottish, English and Kiwi cultures all exist within the Body of Christ and offer diversity of praise. The Body of Christ is not a bland amalgamation of all things to all people, but a vibrant expression of diversity....

As we move through this cusp of history from the modern age to what comes after, we set ourselves the task of finding new ways of being church. We need to develop a clear understanding of the diversity of the Body of Christ and a willingness to accept others into the house of God. Not an easy task, but one that may give longevity to this institution we call Church.

From Peter McKenzie who is the Executive Officer for Uniting Congregations of Aotearoa New Zealand.

A Proposal for the Congregation of St Columba Taradale

7

Several people, requesting that we look at removing the pulpit, have recently approached me. The reasons given for removing it are:

- 1 It is very rarely used
- 2 (a) It completely blocks the vision for people sitting on the far side of the Church, especially if someone is looking after the children in the Kids' Corner.
(b) As a Kid's Friendly Church, we are obliged to provide an area for the young children so that parents do not have to go out of the church and be isolated.
(c) The area we have set up seems to be the least disruptive to the rest of the congregation.

We understand that this could be a very sensitive area so we will have a congregational meeting to explain the reason for the proposal and to get your feed back. You will be advised of the meeting in plenty of time.

Your views **will** be listened to and nothing will be done unless we get a positive outcome from the majority of the congregation.

Pam Thrupp

Session Clerk

Please note that due to the sensitivity of this matter, no correspondence to Halo will be accepted regarding it. If it concerns you greatly, either for or against, then please contact either Brett, Pam or your Elder. There will be time for you to consider the matter – Editor.

Christian World Service Appeal

Share the Care

Welcome to the 65th annual CWS Christmas Appeal. This year's theme is "Share the Care". The highlighted programmes are:

- **Living Positively** Helping to fight the spread of AIDS in Uganda. The Church of Uganda is working at changing prejudice with volunteers trained and equipped to provide care in the home. There is an estimated 940,000 cases of HIV or AIDS in Uganda and the programme brings hope, care and income to a country where AIDS has reduced life expectancy and wiped out family savings.
- **Reclaiming the right to healthy diet in Tonga** Tongan health has been hard hit by the severe impact of imported food on people traditionally nourished on diets low in fat and salt. Through Christian World Service, you financially support the Tongan Community Development Trust and you are helping Tongans reclaim their right to healthy nutrition, cheaper food and traditional way of life.
- **Haiti** Through our membership of the Act Alliance CWS and our related partners are working on the ground in Haiti, helping more than 341,000 people. This help has ranged from the basics like food, water a shelter through to psychosocial healing for wounded souls. Levels of trauma in post earthquake Haiti are extreme and has particularly affected the children. Psychosocial sessions of play and song in a safe setting are a way of providing a level of therapy and release.
- **A Child is Born in Gaza** We are all aware of the humanitarian tragedy in Gaza... but life does go on and babies continue to be born. Christian World Service helps to fund three maternal and child health clinics in Gaza. More than 19,000 women have attended these clinics for antenatal sessions on pregnancy health and hygiene.

Envelopes for the Christian World Service Christmas appeal are included in this edition of Halo, and your donations can be put in the Sunday collection on any Sunday up to and including Christmas day.

Advent thoughts for 2010

On Monday 22nd November an unusual event happened here in Tacoma, WA, USA, - it snowed and snowed for most of the day. At that particular moment in time, I choose to stay and watch the beauty that was unfolding before my eyes, it was just breathtaking, part of God's creation that some of us can enjoy even if it is cold.

If you are able to sit and watch snow fall outside your windows long enough, you will notice that every snow flake is quite different. Some of the flakes are small and delicate. Some are large and globular. Others are so tiny and delicate that they are barely visible, but, they just keep falling – all different in size and shape. If you watch each flake gently fall to the earth you will notice that they will latch onto each other and weave a soft delicate carpet of white that will surprise and mystify. It's like most things in our daily lives; you can see the accumulating snow as a blessing or a burden depending upon your view point, or, maybe it's the choices that we need to make in our daily lives, watch it fall or go shovel it off the drive.

Like the falling snow, daily living comes with surprises. Often, it is how we choose to view them that will make our daily lives – easy or difficult. It is part of the reason to appreciate the Advent season, for it gives us time to search for the “right” perspective. There are those that will enter this glorious season weighed down by the unexpected and unavoidable. We need to latch on to each other and weave ourselves into the fabric of each others' lives.

In a poem written by “Ann Weems” she has this to say:

“Some of us walk into Advent tethered to our unresolved yesterdays – the pain still stabbing, the hurt still throbbing. It's not that we don't know better; it's just that we can't stand up anymore by ourselves. On the way to Bethlehem, will you give me a hand?”

Like the snow flakes, in this Advent season let us grab hold of each other so that we will gently land on the ground and weave a carpet that will surprise and mystify. We know those people where the pain still stabs and the hurt still throbs. We can choose to either give them a hand or to walk on by.

from Keith Woodcock

View From Under the Pew by Church Mouse

Giddyay. Seasons greetings to you all. Goodness, the silly season is almost upon us. Mind you, we Christians do not call it the silly season do we? That is because it celebrates the birthday of Jesus. I expect non-Christians call it the silly season because they drink too much alcohol and look silly falling all over themselves.

As you know, God is our God as well. He created us and then later saved us by allowing us to go onto the ark.

So, me and mine will miss some of you as you leave this area and visit relatives across either this land or another. I hope we have some visitors here as well. Perhaps they might feel like dropping a little bit of Christmas cake. As long as there is not too much brandy in it so that I become as silly as some humans do. Mind you, if a white baiter turns up I hope they're not too shy to drop a bit of their fritter for me.

If you see a little mouse on your journeys, don't scream. Just drop a bit of tucker and tell them 'Giddyay' from me.

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

“JUST CHECKING IN”

9

A minister passing through his church
In the middle of the day,
Decided to pause by the altar
And see who had come to pray.

Just then the back door opened,
A man came down the aisle,
The minister frowned as he saw
The man hadn't shaved in a while.

His shirt was kinda shabby
And his coat was worn and frayed,
The man knelt, he bowed his head,
Then rose and walked away.

In the days that followed,
Each noon time came this chap,
Each time he knelt just for a moment,
A lunch pail in his lap..

Well, the minister's suspicions grew,
With robbery a main fear,
He decided to stop the man and ask him,
'What are you doing here?'

The old man said he worked down the road.
Lunch was half an hour.
Lunchtime was his prayer time,
For finding strength and power.

'I stay only moments, see,
Because the factory is so far away;
As I kneel here talking to the Lord,
This is kinda what I say:

*'Just came again to tell you, Lord,
How happy I've been,
Since we found each other's friendship
And you took away my sin.
Don't know much of how to pray,
But I think about you everyday.
So Jesus, this is Jim, checking in today.'*

The minister feeling foolish,
Told Jim, that was fine
He told the man he was welcome
To come and pray just anytime

Time to go, Jim smiled, said 'Thanks.'
He hurried to the door.
The minister knelt at the altar,
He'd never done it before.

His cold heart melted, warmed with love,
And met with Jesus there.
As the tears flowed, in his heart,
He repeated old Jim's prayer:

*'I just came again to tell you, Lord,
How happy I've been,
Since we found each other's friendship*

*And you took away my sin.
I don't know much of how to pray,
But I think about you everyday.
So, Jesus, this is me checking in today.'*

Past noon one day, the minister noticed
That old Jim hadn't come.
As more days passed without Jim
He began to worry some.

At the factory, he asked about him,
Learning he was ill.
The hospital staff was worried,
But he'd given them a thrill.

The week that Jim was with them,
Brought changes in the ward.
His smiles, a joy contagious.
Changed people, was his reward.

The head nurse couldn't understand
Why Jim was so glad,
When no flowers, calls or cards came,
Not a visitor he had.

The Minister stayed by his bed,
He voiced the nurse's concern:
No friends came to show they cared.
He had nowhere to turn.

Looking surprised, old Jim spoke up
And with a winsome smile;
'The nurse is wrong, she couldn't know,
That He's in here all the while.

Everyday at noon He's here,
A dear Friend of mine, you see,
He sits right down, takes my hand,
Leans over and says to me:

*'I just came again to tell you, Jim,
How happy I have been,
Since we found this friendship,
and I took away your sin.
Always love to hear you pray,
I think about you each day,
And so Jim, this is Jesus, checking in today.'*

If this blesses you, pass it on. Many people
will walk in and out of your life, but only
true friends will leave footprints in your
heart. May God hold you in the palm of His
hand and angels watch over you.

Please pass this story on to your friends
And loved ones if you aren't ashamed.
Jesus said, 'If you are ashamed of Me,'
I will be ashamed of you before My Father.'
If you are not ashamed, pass this on.

So this is me ... "Just Checking In"

Two Horses

Just up the road from my home is a field,
with two horses in it.

From a distance, each horse looks like any
other horse.

But if you stop your car, or are walking by,
you will notice something quite amazing....

Looking into the eyes of one horse will
disclose that he is blind.

His owner has chosen not to have him put
down, but has made a good home for him.
This alone is amazing.

If you stand nearby and listen, you will hear
the sound of a bell. Looking around for the
source of the sound, you will see that it
comes from the smaller horse in the field.
Attached to the horse's halter is a small bell.

It lets the blind friend know where the other
horse is, so he can follow.

As you stand and watch these two friends,
you'll see that the horse with the bell is
always checking on the blind horse, and
that the blind horse will listen for the bell
and then slowly walk to where the other
horse is, trusting that he will not be led
astray.

When the horse with the bell returns to the
shelter of the barn each evening, it stops
occasionally and looks back, making sure

that the blind friend isn't too far behind to
hear the bell.

Like the owners of these two horses, God
does not throw us away just because we
are not perfect or because we have
problems or challenges. He watches over
us and even brings others into our lives to
help us when we are in need..

Sometimes we are the blind horse being
guided by the little ringing bell of those who
God places in our lives.

Other times we are the guide horse, helping
others to find their way...

Good friends are like that... You may not
always see them, but you know they are
always there..

Please listen for my bell and I'll listen for
yours, and remember...

Be kinder than necessary - everyone you
meet is fighting some kind of battle.

Live simply,
Love generously
Care deeply,
Speak kindly.....

And leave the rest to God!

For we walk by faith and not by sight.

Author Unknown

Kool Kids Christmas Play

The Kool Kids will be presenting their Christmas play on Sunday 12th December at the 9.30 a.m. service. Please all make an effort to attend and show our support for the Christians of the future and their teachers. They have worked hard for this.

I might add that the Christians of the future, those at Kool Kids now, will, in all probability, be facing an increasingly hostile climate for being Christians when they reach our age - Editor



Wishing you a Peaceful Christmas

All of us involved in the production of Halo wish you a peaceful and safe Christmas and New Year. As you visit friends and relatives, mention, or give them a copy of Halo. If you are at another Church, see if they will allow you to take away a copy of their newsletters. (We often like to use bits and pieces from them and pick up ideas.) It is also a way to bring Christ's message to those who are unbelievers. Let's face it, if you leave a copy with a family saying that 'this' is what you get each month, they will probably at least look inside, and then you can trust God to do the rest. Drive carefully please, we want you back.



Church and Family News

Congratulations to Heather Sim who received a lovely bouquet of flowers from Avisons Flowers after she was nominated for 'Thanks a Bunch' in Hawke's Bay Today.

CONGRATULATIONS

to **Euan Argent** who won a gold medal and 4th and 5th placing ribbons at the Greendale Swimming Spring meet, **Aaron Argent** who won a 5th placing ribbon and **Lucy Druzianic** who also won a 5th placing ribbon. *Well done*

Kool Kids would like to wish everyone at St Columba's a very happy Christmas and a safe and happy New Year. Thank you for your support and patience over the year. May our loving God Bless you all

Pam and Richard



If you have a problem or a concern about something that's happening at church, or relating to the Church Family, there are **ISSUE OF CONCERN** forms in one of the pigeonholes in the foyer and you are invited to fill one in and express your concerns. Completed forms go in the Session Clerk's pigeonhole.

What's on in December

Monday 6 th December	6.00 p.m.	Girl Guides Carol Service in church
Wednesday 8 th December	9.30 a.m.	Mainly Music Christmas breakup
Wednesday 8 th December	11.00 a.m.	Mid week Communion service
Wednesday 8 th December	12.00 noon	Pastoral Care meeting and shared lunch
Thursday 9 th December	9.30 a.m.	Mainly Music Christmas breakup
Monday 13 th December	10.00 a.m.	Op Shop volunteers morning tea
Wednesday 15 th December	7.30 p.m.	Board of Managers monthly meeting in the lounge
Thursday 16 th December	1.45 p.m.	Missionary Guild
Thursday 16 th December	4.00 p.m.	Op Shop closes for Christmas break
Tuesday 18 th January	10.00 a.m.	Op Shop reopens

Christmas Services

Sunday 12 th December	9.30 a.m.	Children's Pageant
Sunday 19 th December	9.30 a.m.	Special Music Service
Friday 24 th December	7.00 p.m.	Patoka service
	11.15 p.m.	Carols by Candlelight at St Columba's
Saturday 25 th December	9.30 a.m.	Christmas Day service
Sunday 26 th December	9.30 a.m.	Morning Worship

Regular events

Mondays	House Group 7.00 p.m. (fortnightly) Contact: Pam Thrupp 835 5785
Tuesdays	Op Shop open 10 a.m. - 4 p.m. Contact: Verna Gillum 844 8265
	Prayer Group 11.00 a.m. - 11.30 a.m. Contact: Marjory Yelverton 843 5331
	House Group 7.30 - 9 p.m. Contacts: Wim & Inger Slooten 844 9070
	Women's Fellowship meets on the fourth Tuesday of the month Wednesdays
	Mainly Music 9.30 a.m. - 10.30 a.m. Contact: Margaret de la Haye 843 2272
	Op Shop open 10 a.m. - 4 p.m. Contact: Verna Gillum 844 8265
	'Now We're Talking' discussion group 7 - 9 p.m. Contact: Mark Seek 027 289 8580
	Board of Managers meet at 7.30 p.m. in the church lounge on the third Wednesday
Thursdays	Mainly Music 9.30 a.m. - 10.30 a.m. Contact: Karen Jensen 843 9447
	Op Shop open 10 a.m. - 4 p.m. Contact: Verna Gillum 844 8265
	Missionary Guild meets on the third Thursday of the month
	Session meet at 7.30 p.m. in the church lounge on the fourth Thursday
Fridays	'Massive' Youth Group 7 - 9 p.m. Contact: Mark Seek 027 289 8580

Church Office Ph 844-5004 Monday—Friday 9.30am—12.00pm
 Fax 844-5409 If no reply, please leave a message and we will call you back as soon as we can.

Church Postal Address: P O Box 7136, Taradale

Minister	Rev Brett WALKER	844-2256
Session Clerk	Pam THRUPP	835-5785
Parish Assistant—Youth	Mark SEEK	027 289 8580
Pastoral Care	Robin ARNOLD	844-7808
Communication	Dot McLEOD	844-1211
Af Care/Holiday Programme	Peter WOOTEN (convenor)	843-7770
Change of Address	Church Office	844-5004
HALO - Editor	Jim Payton	843-3937
- Distribution	Wendy GOSLING	844-0282

Services – Sunday 9.30 am morning worship

Communion is celebrated on the first Sunday of March, September and December and the second Sunday of June, plus Easter and World Communion Day. On the Wednesday following, a Communion service will be held at 11.30 a.m., followed by lunch.



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