



HALO

ST COLUMBA'S PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, TARADALE

Church Website: www.stcolumba-taradale.org.nz

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Vol 20 - No 4

May 2010

From the Minister

I thought I would be controversial here because we have just had Anzac celebrations on a Sunday and people had to choose where their priority lay. To attend a civic service of remembrance or a worship service. I was stirred by a picture of a swastika in the Cologne Cathedral and a challenging article by Jason Goroncy (professor at Knox – the PCANZ Centre for Ministry - <http://cruciality.wordpress.com/2009/05/05/aliens-in-the-church/>)

The swastika in the church just seems wrong – because for Kiwis it stood for an evil regime, but Goroncy says it is also wrong because it confuses the boundary between church and state. The church at its best must always stand partly outside the state because the church needs to be able to speak the gospel to the state. The Gospel that tells us to love our enemies, which calls all believers brothers and sisters no matter what country they are from or what political views they hold. The gospel that says there is one Lord and one God who is over all, a Lord who claims our first allegiance more than crown or country. The church at its best has a subversive mission to transform the world to the radical vision of Jesus. As such the church is a participant in the Spirit's subversive mission of converting whatever culture she finds herself in. We are in the world but not of it as Paul said.

Can we in Christ's name challenge the romanticisation of war or are we bound to only honour the sacrifices of the past without adequate acknowledgment of the horrors and stupidity of wars? I think it would be interesting to ask why celebrations of Anzac Day grow in popularity each year and why people make "pilgrimages" to Gallipoli? Has Anzac become a sacred, untouchable element of the nation and are we nostalgic for a heroic era when our own lives lack the radical discipline necessary to be heroic in our own generation – not on the battle front – but in facing the myriad social challenges that beset our nation or the world or in the radical nature of our discipleship. The Church also needs to question its own role in celebrating Anzac Day - have we become a chaplain of the state and its violent machinery – baptizing the ugliness of war and pride and violence without also calling for repentance.

During Hitler's reign in Germany he was seen as the hero and the saviour of the nation. Nationalism and patriotism became the breeding ground for the atrocities against the Jews (and others) and many of the churches succumbed to the rhetoric and lost their power to critique. People like Dietrich Bonhoeffer and Karl Barth gathered in 1934 to affirm the Barmen Declaration which specifically rejects the subordination of the church to the state. Rather, the Declaration states that the church "is solely Christ's property, and that it lives and wants to live solely from his comfort and from his direction in the expectation of his appearance."

Radical discipleship of Christ may mean that we become unpopular, that we choose worship over civic ceremony (or find ways to do both in a way that honours our primary allegiance.)

On a personal note. In a few weeks I have been asked to bless a memorial Ces Thomsen has organized for the Patoka community to acknowledge the contribution of those who came into the district after the war mostly working on rehab farms. It is a reminder that there are multiple ways of serving one's society, not always by taking up arms.

Brett

Material for June Halo in by 11 a.m. Wednesday 26th May 2010 please

Prayer Works

As I glanced through my copy of Challenge Weekly (12/04/10) I came upon a letter to the Editor headed 'No Gimmicks' written by an Elinor Collins of Gore. I managed to make contact with 'young' Elinor of the Knapdale - Waikaka Presbyterian Church and with her gracious permission I reprint that letter to the editor.

My heart was saddened to read the front page article by Aaron Ironside (Challenge Weekly, March 22) regarding youth leaving the church "18 to 23 year-olds of every denomination are dropping out of our churches" says Gary Grut.

Please take heart dear brothers in Christ, this is not a national problem.

Our small rural Presbyterian parish in the heart of Southland is experiencing the exact opposite. For the past 18 months God has been bringing young folk into our church each Sunday. Now, about a third of our congregation is aged under 25 years.

We have not done research, conducted surveys or used any 'fancy gimmicks' to stir our youth into attending - in fact we have even been without a minister for the whole of this time. We do not have a paid youth worker - all our youth group leaders do so voluntarily. How come, you ask?

For a number of years our Church numbers were in decline, then about 14 years ago a group of 10 to 12 of us started praying together at 6.45 a.m. every Tuesday.

We pray for our Church, locally and nationally, and for our youth. Each elder has a list of every youth group attendee (we have had 40 in our youth group over the last two years) and they are all prayed for daily.

Suddenly, as I said earlier, God started sending these young ones to church. Some bring non-Christian friends and several have even brought their parents along. Each year we lose a small number who go to cities for tertiary education, but these kids return to services at every opportunity saying they tend to get 'lost' in the big city churches, whereas at home we are all 'family'.

Many times I have read of people bemoaning the demise of youth at church but never once have I heard them say they are praying for them. God is not dead.

He is alive and still answers prayer—how about trying it!

Someone said your mother knows you love her, so you don't need to tell her somebody isn't a mother

Reading and Prayer

Reading: "Your word is a lamp to guide me and a light for my path." Psalm 119:105

Prayer: Thank you Lord for your word. We thank you for the Bible and the guidance you give us as we read your word, and apply it to our lives. Thank you Lord for your promises. Amen.



Being a Mother

After 17 years of marriage, my wife wanted me to take another woman out to dinner and a movie. She said, 'I love you, but I know this other woman loves you and would love to spend some time with you.'

The other woman that my wife wanted me to visit was my MOTHER, who has been alone for 20 years, but the demands of my work and my two boys had made it possible to visit her only occasionally.

That night I called to invite her to go out for dinner and a movie.

'What's wrong, aren't you well,' she asked?

My mother is the type of woman who suspects that a late night call or a surprise invitation is a sign of bad news.

'I thought it would be pleasant to spend some time with you,' I responded... 'Just the two of us.'

She thought about it for a moment, and then said, 'I would like that very much.'

That Friday after work, as I drove over to pick her up I was a bit nervous. When I arrived at her house, I noticed that she, too, seemed to be nervous about our date. She waited in the door. She had curled her hair and was wearing the dress that she had worn to celebrate her last birthday on November 19th. She smiled from a face that was as radiant as an angel's.

'I told my friends that I was going to go out with my son, and they were impressed,' she said, as she got into that new white van. 'They can't wait to hear about our date'.

We went to a restaurant that, although not elegant, was very nice and cozy. My mother took my arm as if she were the First Lady. After we sat down, I had to read the menu. Her eyes could only read large print. Half way through the entries, I lifted my eyes and saw Mom sitting there staring at me. A nostalgic smile was on her lips.

'It was I who used to have to read the menu when you were small,' she said.

'Then it's time that you relax and let me return the favour,' I responded.

During the dinner, we had an agreeable conversation - nothing extraordinary but catching up on recent events of each other's life. We talked so much that we missed the movie.

As we arrived at her house later, she said, 'I'll go out with you again, but only if you let me invite you.' I agreed.

'How was your dinner date ?' asked my wife when I got home.

'Very nice. Much more so than I could have imagined,' I answered.

A few days later, my mother died of a massive heart attack. It happened so suddenly that I didn't have a chance to do anything for her...

Some time later, I received an envelope with a copy of a restaurant receipt from the same place mother and I had dined. An attached note said:

'I paid this bill in advance. I wasn't sure that I could be there; but nevertheless, I paid for two plates - one for you and the other for your wife. You will never know what that night meant for me. I love you, son.'

At that moment, I understood the importance of saying in time: 'I LOVE YOU' and to give our loved ones the time that they deserve. Nothing in life is more important than your family. Give them the time they deserve, because these things cannot be put off till 'some other time.'

*Somebody said you learn to be a mother by instinct
Somebody never took a 3 year old shopping.*

Kia ora children of St Columba's

Here is a story just for you.

The sun was hot. Sweat from my forehead ran down into my eyes and they stung. It didn't matter how often I wiped them, they continued to sting. I longed to be back in New Zealand and not in this foreign country where it had taken me so long to learn how to speak the language.

I was here where the people were a different colour and lived a different way of life because life in New Zealand had become impossible. Mum had repeatedly told me to get a different job, to meet a nice girl, to change this and to change that and to do this and to do that. To get married to a nice girl and to have children. I got to feel as though she was trying to run my life so to get away from it I came to this place in Africa where I lived by taking food to the hungry.

In the distance I could see a tree and headed for it to get some shade from the sun. As I got closer I saw a young boy aged about 10 or 11 years, sitting on his heels. I squatted beside him. As we spoke I learned that his mum had died of a serious sickness and he was left to look after four brother and sisters. They lived a life that was balanced between life and death with hunger, sickness and loneliness. He told me that when his mum was alive she would cuddle him and care for him. She would make sure he had food and a safe place to sleep. He told me how very much he longed for her and how very much he missed her. He said that he was often told off by her but that he now knew she was doing that for his own good. Because of those 'telling offs', he told me, he had learnt some very important life lessons.

As he spoke I thought of how selfish I had been as a child. Always I had wanted this and wanted that. Always it had been me, me and me. I realised Mum had been trying to point out life lessons to me but that I had not wanted to learn them.

The tears in my eyes washed away the sweat. How much I must have hurt my Mum, but she never complained just gave me a hug and a kiss and told me she loved me and for me to be careful.

Mums! Close to being the most important beings on this earth. How sad that we often do not realise until till late. Go on - give your Mum a hug, and a kiss and tell her you love her.

by Jim Payton

*Somebody said you can't love the second child as much as the first ...
somebody doesn't have a second child.*

Bill Moore Reflects on 50 Years in the Ministry ⁵

In a conversation with some Taradale parish office bearers some weeks back, it came out that it was 50 years last February since I was ordained as a Presbyterian minister. Little did I realise that that would lead to the Editor of Halo asking me to write an article about my ministry - after all I had written a Halo article about myself and Grace in May 2009.

As I look back at over 22 years in parish ministry, over 16 years in hospital chaplaincy, and over 11 years in retirement, I realise that many things have changed in the life of the Church. For example, do you remember when 'Amen' was sung at the end of hymns, when ministers wore black robes when conducting services, when the words 'thee', 'thine', and words ending in , 'eth' were common in prayers, when all ministers were male, and when there were hordes of children and young people in our churches? I believe that most of the changes, apart from the reduction in numbers, have been beneficial.

Also, as I look back, two other words come to mind - they are 'privilege' and 'enrichment'. It has been my privilege to have had my life enriched through my interaction with parishioners and office bearers; with hospital patients, staff and relatives; and with ministers of my own and other denominations. It has been a privilege in two of my parishes and in the hospital chaplaincy to have worked in supportive team ministries. Those teams have been of minister-deaconesses, of ministers, and of chaplains. All of which have been enriching. It has been my privilege to have been entrusted with various responsibilities at Presbytery, Assembly and national level with the enrichment that has brought. It has been my privilege to have been able, in the name of Christ, to minister to people at some of their points of greatest need, to have been taken into their confidence and to know we were not alone, but that God was there in the midst of our experiences supporting, challenging and guiding us.

You may have noticed that these days, I tend not to be involved in any animated conversations in church settings. This is because of my poor hearing, rather than my lack of interest, which I trust people will understand.

Financial News

The Board of Managers are concerned about the drop in the level of offerings over the last three months. Below are the offerings for December, January and February for the past three years.

December 2007	January 2008	February 2008	Total
\$10,893.10	\$8106.40	\$8653.30	\$27,652.80
December 2008	January 2009	February 2009	Total
\$11,335.70	\$7452.08	\$8960.17	\$27,747.95
December 2009	January 2010	February 2010	Total
\$8091.90	\$6661.00	\$6219.90	\$20,972.80

We are behind budget for the year to date for offerings and the decreasing trend above is a concern for the Church finances.

Easterfest Twenty-Tekau

Tukituki Camp April 1– 5 2010

This was a really great Easter Camp and 100 of us, 77 teenagers and 23 leaders, had a ball! St Columba was represented by 11 teenagers and myself. This is encouraging and shows positive growth in our youth group because it has been many years since we had such a representation at Easter Camp.

What makes an Easter Camp a **GREAT** Easter Camp?

The quality of the leaders: Epic Ministries, under the leadership of Tama and Miriam, provide a caring, supportive and encouraging Christian environment. All 23 leaders met daily at 7.30 a.m. to plan the day ahead, share experiences, closing with a devotion and prayer. Leaders were encouraged to “hang out” with the kids in between activities. There was a really neat team spirit amongst us leaders.

The quality of the environment: Tuki Tuki is a wonderful venue with its huge space for activities. The kitchen has had a face-lift with new bench tops, cooker and freezer. Marquees and tents had been put up, creating separate areas for worship, indoor games, relaxation and art. Outside a bike track, volleyball field and loads of extra space for hockey, touch rugby and hanging out. The river is always a great attraction for a swim or midnight “eeling” expedition. Each day there were organised games; Outpost in the dark, sports in the afternoon, pushing a truck twice around a field with your team, volleyball, touch rugby, indoor bowls and hockey; we celebrated Easter with an egg-hunt and a disco to celebrate that Jesus had risen, a concert and a formal dinner, bike time trials, X-Box, snooker, fuss ball, glow-soccer etc. The weather was fantastic.

The quality of the message: This year’s theme was “My Name”. Reflecting on who you are, where you want to be in your life and what road to choose to achieve your goals.

The following quotation from Alice in Wonderland is telling:

Alice asks the cat for directions:

“Would you tell me, please, which way I ought to go from here?”

“That depends a good deal on where you want to get to,” said the cat.

“I don't care much where,” said Alice.

“Then it doesn't matter which way you go,” said the cat.

God has a plan for each persons life and to find out what that plan is you cannot say “I don’t care much”.

To reach your full potential you need to choose wisely. A group of leaders formed a “prayer-team” to assist those youth with difficulties and to help those ready to make a Christian commitment.

The daily worship session with a live band of teenage musicians was great! We all sang modern worship songs, celebrated communion in small groups and gave everyone the opportunity to make a commitment and many used the opportunity to do so. We prayed for Steph Holmes of our youth group who has had a tough year and was unable to come to Easter camp because of another operation in Starship hospital.

Easter camp 2010 must rate as one of the best because of all the above, but especially because we were encouraged to “BE CHRISTIANS” and show love, support and kindness to each other, respect God and still “GO HARD” and “HAVE FUN”.

.../

Thanks Tama and Miriam and your great group of leaders for all your hard work and excellent leadership and vision. Thanks Brian for coming out on Wednesday and Saturday, umpiring the volleyball games and by simply being there. Thanks Hargian for transporting our youth. Thanks to our youth for participating in such good numbers in such a good spirit.

Thank you to those who provided sponsorship as we were able to help some families where money is tight.

I learnt heaps, had lots of fun and received great encouragement!

A 10 out of 10!

Wim

Mainly Music Report

Wednesday morning is my music and fun boost for the week.

Mainly Music encourages pre school children and parents, or caregivers to sing, dance around and explore making sounds for half an hour on Wednesday and/or Thursday mornings in Fish Hall.

The skills developed are used with balance, rhythm, writing and mathematics so are important for enquiring minds.

Many of the songs we sing are Christian based.

The session ends with a drink and food for all. The mums do enjoy this time to relax and chat over home baking.

We have fluctuating attendance, depending on the weather, between 30 and 50 children at each session. So it is noisy.

Older ones move on to kindergarten and new mums join in.

Theme sessions this term have included Valentines Day with red ribbons, hearts and chocolate. Art Deco teddy bears picnic with bear songs, dress up in deco clothes, picnic delights of tiny cucumber sandwiches.

St Patrick's Day with green hats, shamrock, and shortbread with green icing.

Easter - A special picture book was given to each family, along with eggs.

LOVE tells the story of Easter, with colourful pictures. LOVE has become one of the favourite songs, as it is on the CD purchased by many families in December.

DVDs and videos are for hire and Karen donated more to the collection.

We do enjoy the enthusiasm of the young leaders – Armin, Zandra and Vicky who help hand out props, instruments and bounce around to the music. Front line helpers welcome the children, put a stamp on little hands and help mums find nametags and certificates. These certificates are acknowledgement of the children's attendance.

We thank the ladies who prepare the morning tea, which is appreciated by all.

Pianists who tune in to the needs of little people and play slow, fast, soft and loud.

Mainly Music runs very well with support from Brett, the Mainly Music newsletters from Auckland national office, care givers and mums who bring their children each week.

Call in for a visit, if you want to see littlies having fun.

Thursday coordinator

Karen Jensen

Wednesday coordinator

Margaret De La Haye

Harvest Festival

In reply to Janet Scott's "Whatever Happened to the Harvest Festival Celebration" Deneice Marshall replies:

I too remember Harvest Festival Sunday when I was in Sunday School. The front of the Knox Ahuriri Church was full of goods, especially pumpkins, apples and preserves, which were distributed to those in need. The congregation were to bring along produce for Festival Sunday and I can remember my mother saying to me to be careful not to break the eggs I had to carry all the way from Breakwater Road.

I think it is a sign of the times, as back then I do not remember Food Banks. Nowadays, we have the weekly trolley at church, so we don't tend to have a special day anymore, perhaps because the need is greater and there is now the need for Food Banks. Incidentally, the minister at the time was Reverend Bartle, and my Sunday School teacher was Mr. Beech. I also remember the harvest hymn "We plough the fields and scatter the good seed on the land."



Editor's Comment

For years I have advocated more prayer in our lives. Many times, as a lot of you know, I have been helped and supported by prayer groups and the prayers of individuals. The letter by Elinor Collins re-enforces my belief in the power of pray - although there is the rider that results happen in God's time. That is what I feel many find frustrating. They say their prayers, usually fairly selfish ones, and when they do not get a quick answer give up. Remember, things get done in God's Time. As with conversion, it is done by God, not us, no matter how 'silver tongued' we may be.

View From The Pew by Pew Sleeper

I have approached Pew Sleeper but she feels that her time has come and gone. George tried to muscle in but was given short shift. I have another 'young' couple in mind and they are currently considering my approach. We will see.

Thoughts for the Day...

I've Learned... that being kind is more important than being right.

I've Learned... that a smile is an inexpensive way to improve your looks.

I've Learned... that life is tough, but I'm tougher.

I've Learned... that life is like a roll of toilet paper. The closer it gets to the end, the faster it goes.

I've Learned... that it's those small daily happening that make life so spectacular.

I've Learned... that you should never say no to a gift from a child.

Church and Family News

CRADLE ROLL Jessica Maye Thomsen 14th May 4 years

CONGRATULATIONS

to **Tika Tedjamukti** who achieved the following music exam results -

1st Piano Solo—Quick Study (16 years & over)

1st Piano Solo—own selection (16 years & over)

2nd Piano Solo—Test (16 years & over)

to **Tobias Tedjamukti** for achieving the following -

1st Piano Solo—a Sonatina Movement—any composer (10 years & under 12)

Highly Commended Piano Solo—Test (10 years & under 12)

Very Highly Commended Piano Solo Modern Rhythm (10 years & under 12)

Very Highly Commended Piano Solo own selection (10 years & under 12)

and to **Henry Polehwidhi** who was placed first in classes 120,121 and 123 at the Easter Competitions.

What's on in May

Thursday 6 th May	7.30 p.m. Board of Managers meeting <i>From June the Board will meet on the third Thursday of the month</i>
Monday 10 th May	7.00 p.m. Parenting Course in the church lounge begins This is a six-week course, run by Wim Slooten
Monday 17 th May	7.00 p.m. Parenting Course in the church lounge
Thursday 20 th May	1.45 p.m. Missionary Guild
Monday 24 th May	7.00 p.m. Parenting Course in the church lounge
Tuesday 25 th May	7.30 p.m. Women's Fellowship
Wednesday 26 th May	10.30 a.m. Mid Week Service
Thursday 27 th May	7.30 p.m. Session meeting in church lounge
Sunday 30 th May	2.00 p.m. Women's Institute Fashion Parade in church
Monday 31 st May	7.00 p.m. Parenting Course in the church lounge
Saturday 5 th June	2.00 p.m. Keith and Esther's wedding in the church

Regular events

Mondays	House Group 7.00 pm (fortnightly) Contact: Pam Thrupp 835 5785
Tuesdays	Op Shop Open 10 am - 4 pm Contact: Verna Gillum 844 8265 Prayer Group 11.00 am – 11.30 am Contact: Marjory Yelverton 843 5331 House Group 7.30 - 9 pm 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 am - 4 pm Contact: Verna Gillum 844 8265 'Now We're Talking' discussion group 7 - 9 pm Contact: Wim Slooten 844 9070
Thursdays	Mainly Music 9.30 a.m. - 10.30 a.m. Contact: Karen Jensen 843 9447 Op Shop Open 10 am - 4 pm Contact: Verna Gillum 844 8265 Missionary Guild meets on the third Thursday of the month Session meet at 7.30 pm in the church lounge on the fourth Thursday Board of Managers meet at 7.30 pm in the church lounge on the third Thursday
Fridays	'Massive' Youth Group 7 - 9 pm Contact: Wim Slooten 844 9070
Sundays	Youth Group 9.30 am Contact: Wim Slooten 844 9070

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	Wim SLOOTEN	844-9070
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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