



Newsletter for Saints A and A
Northcote and Birkenhead Presbyterian Parishes.
August 2020

The Community of St Aidans

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Haere Mai, Aere mai, hwan-yeong, Fakaalofa lahi atu,
Afio mai, Ulu tonu mai, Talofa Lava,
Cantonese - Foon Ying Malay - Selamat Slovak – vitajte- Welkom
Welcome

Minister's comment

I was fascinated with the article, "Finding Fungi" in the July Newsletter and the value fungi bring to the formation of Top Grade Humus. This reminded me of two things and alerted me to one other.

“Then the Lord God formed a man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living being.” Genesis 2:7; The Hebrew word for man is *Adam*, and Adam is related to the Hebrew word for ground or earth, *Adamah*. Adam literally means the “ground man;” man, made from the ground, dirt.

In Latin, *homo* means man, *humanus* means human, and *humus* means ground. It should be easy to see the relationship between the concepts of “man” and “ground,” even if we don’t hold these original meanings as literal, it makes for rich images. Nevertheless, it is interesting to think about these relationships and reimagine how they might give us a fuller sense of our creation. Following this train of thought, in English, like in Hebrew, a human is a “groundling,” or an “earthling.”

Why should this interest us? First, humus is the part of the land that sustains life. As mentioned fungi have a considerable role to play in all of this. According to Webster, humus is “a brown or black variable material resulting from the partial decomposition of plant or animal matter and forming the organic portion of the soil.” Humus is full of nutrients that have developed from decaying forms of life. These nutrients are the spawning ground for a new life. Humus is teeming with life. It is a microcosm of the cycles of death and life that are abundant in nature.

I was alerted to a new thing coming out of Tairawhiti (Gisborne) that of a new product being trialled called ‘Respond’. It uses living fungi and bacteria to refresh the soil and aid in the growing process for plants. Accordingly, no other company anywhere use living fungi and bacteria to grow plants, and this product puts Tairawhiti on the ‘chemical-free’ food production world map.”

Secondly, the Hebrew story of creation, God made humans from this humus. God “breathed the breath of life” into this fertile soil, “ti hei mauri ora” is the opening to many a speech in Maori. I have an image of God holding this dirt, this humus, this substance teeming with life and death, and breathing into it the breath of life. I realize that this is an anthropomorphic view of God, but it gives me an intimate image of the relationship between the creator, the earth or nature, and the created. It admonishes me to remember my intimate connection with the earth, with creation. It admonishes me to remember that our image and likeness of God, this image-ness in ourselves, is not to be denied in others. It is good to be reminded that we are all made in God’s image.

What a wonderful picture as we go into a merger. Two struggling congregations clamouring to survive in a microcosm of life and death cycles. A poignant reminder we are but dirt, destined for dust. Yet we are also humus full of nutrients developed from decaying forms of life. These nutrients are the spawning ground for a new life. Humus is teeming with life. It is a microcosm of the cycles of death and life that are abundant in nature. Are we fertile ground for a re-imagined life? We are humus after all!

peace to you and yours

Colin

Proposal to progress the merger between the Community of Saint Aidans and the Church of Saint Andrew

On Sunday July 19th special congregation meetings were held at Saint Aidans and Saint Andrews to discuss and vote on the recommendation *that the merger of Saint Andrews and Saint Aidans is approved in principle, permitting phase 2 of the merger process to be undertaken as set out in the 19 July 2020 'Reference Document for Congregational Meetings' and in accordance with Book of Order requirements.*

We are happy to report that the recommendation was approved by both congregations.

Northern Presbytery has been informed of this result.

Now the work begins in earnest as we progress towards a final vote in December 2020.

The next step - A workgroup facilitated by Rev Colin Gordon plus three members appointed by each of the Saint Andrew's and Saint Aidan's Church Councils will be established. The workgroup's role is to lead and/or undertake the required work to develop and present a detailed proposal for the joining together of the two churches. The workgroup will keep the Presbytery Commission informed of progress.

The work will include:

- Vision for the future
- A missional purpose
- Name of the new church
- Values of the new church
- Aspirational but achievable goals to be achieved over the next five years
- Structure of the new church
- Description of how the new church will operate

You can read more about this in Consultation Document 2 which you should have already received. Please ask your elder or Secretary of Church/Parish Council if you do not have a copy.

Members of the congregations will be kept fully informed and consulted as the work towards a merger progresses. Thank you for all your input so far.

**Rosemary Bold, Saint Andrews
Nan Inkson, Saint Aidans**

From Saint Aidan's Church Council

Thanksgiving Appeal

A huge thank you to everyone who donated to this appeal; many people responded, and some money is still trickling in. Your donations are very much appreciated.

Working Bee

A successful Working Bee was held and a good deal of rubbish was removed and other things 're-discovered'. Thank you to everyone who took part, and a special thank you to Laurie from Saint Andrews who joined us – and learned the dark secrets of what is found underneath the church.

E-waste collection

Thank you, too, to David Hansen who organised an e-waste collection and took away a trailer full of unwanted keyboards, printers and other electrical equipment. The material went to the Abilities Group, a North Shore organisation which undertakes the recycling of such equipment so that precious metals and other material can be recycled and less go to landfill. A donation was made to the Group.

Fundraising Activities

Two exciting forthcoming activities were announced – look for information elsewhere in this bulletin, and mark the dates – **August 15th** and **October 17th** on your calendar.

Contact numbers and important dates

We still do not have emergency contacts/next of kin phone numbers for many of the congregation. You may give this information to your elder, or to Lynda Burkett or Nan Inkson. This will not be part of the usual phone directory, but will only be available to your elder and Church leadership if it is needed.

Nan, for Saint Aidan's Church Council



Praying for Children - Karakia Mo Ngā Tamariki
Sowing seeds of love
2- 8 August 2020

*We invite you this week to use the resources of the 'Praying for Children' initiative **to make space, look around**, and ask some questions like 'What would it take to include children who may be a bit different, or have particular challenges? How can we be better?'*

LOOK AROUND

Take a walk this week around your neighbourhood and notice:
How many children live in your street? What are families up to? Where is your nearest primary school or early childhood centre? Where else do you notice children e.g. at parks, playgrounds, the supermarket and shopping areas?

How well are children with physical difficulties catered for e.g signs and access?

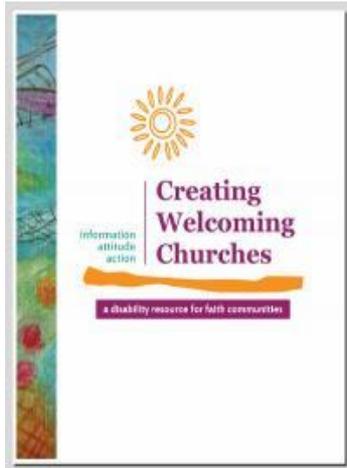
As you walk, pray for the children and the families you see, plus those you don't see but you know that they are there.

What might God want you to notice?

For an inspiring daily post go to Rev Roxy Gahegan's blog link <https://prayingforchildren2020.wordpress.com/blog-2/>

For the power point and other resources go to www.pcfm.org.nz

Creating Welcoming Churches



A disability resource for faith communities produced by the Disability, Spirituality and Faith Network, Aotearoa NZ, 2014.

Full of very helpful **Information**, A timely challenge to **Attitudes** and ideas for **Action**

A hard copy book and also available as an e-book and a PDF

More info

<http://www.dsfnetwork.org/projects/creating-welcoming-churches/>

If you would like further clarification on how you can use these resources, please contact your regional or national Presbyterian Children and Families Ministry team at www.pcfm.org.nz or Anne Overton, the Community Relationship Manager for PSN anne.overton@psn.org.nz on ways to support the innovative work PSN is doing with families and children through Family Works and other services <https://www.psn.org.nz/>

NOTICES

NEW BEGINNINGS

Gina Sanders *Soprano*
Peter Reid *Trumpet & Cornet*
Josh Helm *Violoncello*
Kay Shacklock *Piano*

Saturday 15 August 2020

St Aidan's Presbyterian Church 2PM
97 Onewa Road Northcote
Tickets \$20

Enjoy the excitement and the intimacy of live music again in this wonderful combination of soprano and trumpet trading off against each other. Gina is one of New Zealand's leading sopranos and she communicates & entices with an engaging stage presence. She will exchange high angelic phrases with local 'lad' Peter in the thrilling *Let the bright seraphim* by Handel. The high voices are counterbalanced against the warmth and

solidity of Josh's cello, while Kay glues the ensemble together from St Aidan's magnificent white grand piano.

These musicians are absolutely delighted to be part of a bigger bubble again, released from their recent home detention to be sharing music once more.

Please come and enjoy the enduring beauty and power of music and celebrate 'New Beginnings'.

ADVANCE NOTICE
Floral Affair At St Aidans

2pm Saturday, October 17 2020

DINNER CLUB

Our Dinner Club this month is on 22 August. Please let Dale know if you are interested in joining us and she can give you the details.
Contact her on 4283793 or adalekerr@gmail.com to confirm.

FOOD BANK

Contributions brought to any of the weekly Sunday Services are taken to the Salvation Army depot at 430 Glenfield Road.

They always appreciate

>**toiletries** especially deodorant, shampoo, conditioner, toothpaste and razors

>**cleaning products** eg dishwash liquid and laundry detergent

>**UHT milk**

NB

Fresh fruit or vegetables eg potatoes, carrots, onions delivered to the depot on Monday Wednesday or Friday mornings from 9.30 am would also be appreciated *but the weekly collections at church are dry goods only.*

COME TO QUIET

We decided at our last meeting to change the day of our meeting from the first Tuesday of the month to the **second Monday** of every month. We will still be meeting in the Lindisfarne Lounge from 7 – 9 pm and anyone is welcome to attend.

GRACE NOTES

mainly music

Recently, on a cold wet Tuesday morning, I was delighted to see a good number of preschool children happily singing, dancing, banging sticks together, waving rainbows and splashing excitedly in imaginary puddles. The children were accompanied by mothers, grandmothers and the occasional au pair – no fathers, although they are very welcome – and they were all attending mainly music at Saint Andrews. This excellent programme is organised and carried out by dedicated Saint Andrew's volunteers, some of whom have been doing this for quite a few years. I was helping in the kitchen – yes, children and adults also get morning tea – and I was able to watch and enjoy the activities. Dalia took part in the singing and dancing; ask her about it - she looked as if she was enjoying herself.

mainly music is a really worthwhile outreach into the community. If you would like to become a helper, I am sure that you would be welcomed. Please contact Pauline at Saint Andrews on 09 4181312 or 0276665035

Readers' Contributions.

BLACKBIRDS.

Margaret Larsen

Spring is coming and soon we will be hearing the Blackbirds sing their wonderful early morning song. I have always loved Blackbirds and learned quite a lot about them just by watching them.

Mother Blackbirds aren't black at all, they are brown. Father Blackbirds are black and they are the ones that sing. Baby Blackbirds are brown. Blackbirds don't sing all the year round, only at nesting time, starting in Spring until mid Summer. Robert Louis Stevenson knew that, when he wrote in his book, "A Child's Garden of Verses," ...

Of speckled eggs the birdie sings.

If they are confident in themselves they will sing from the top of the tallest tree, because they consider themselves to be top bird. They don't sing from the tree they are nesting in.

Don't think they are singing just to make a pretty sound, or because their hearts are filled with joy (although I'm not so sure about that one) or to please you. They start at first light to let all the other birds know that this is their territory and all the other birds had better not come too close.

Blackbirds are mean to that other lovely European songbird, the Thrush. They will occasionally share the birdbath with sparrows and Piwakawaka (white eyes) and will tolerate Sparrows and White eyes pecking the bread and apple pieces I toss on the lawn, but will chase Thrushes away. I think it is because they are both ground feeders pecking for the same worms on the lawn.

Thrushes enjoy snails more than Blackbirds do and will smash the snail shells against something hard, sometimes dropping them from a height on to the roof or path in order to break the shell and get to the flesh inside. Hedgehogs gobble snails up shells and all.

Baby Blackbirds need to leave their nest before their tail feathers develop otherwise there would be no room for them in the nest. I don't know how many eggs start off in the nest but most successful nestings of experienced adult Blackbirds result in 3 baby Blackbirds running around the garden.

It takes about a week for tail feathers to grow and during that time the baby birds are very vulnerable to attack, by cats especially, as they chirrup very loudly to their mothers and fathers for more food. Their parents talk back with soft sweet voices.

My front garden and my back garden are ideal places to bring up baby birds because they can stay under cover of plants until they are able to fly... when they have their tails. Even then they still need their parents to feed them. Shortly after they have to fend for themselves, because their mother will be back in the nest keeping a new clutch of eggs warm. She and their father take turns sitting on the nest and feeding themselves and later take turns keeping the new nestlings fed. I read somewhere that when both parents look after their young, male and female birds look similar, but when only the female tends the young, then male and female birds look quite different, as is the case with Peacocks and Peahens.

Usually, but not in times of drought, Blackbirds bring up three families in a Summer, but in the Autumn they chase all the young ones away because there is room for only one nesting pair there. I have a big garden and I always have a front garden pair of Blackbirds and a back garden pair and they don't mix. The back garden pair even try to keep the front garden pair out of the birdbath.

Early in the season Blackbirds sing at first light, at midday and at mid afternoon and towards evening they fuss and fret and fly around squawking to let the other birds know that this is their place, and keep off!

At the end of Summer the adult birds have their Summer moult. Their feathers moult off and their heads look particularly skinny. They look worn out, tired and jaded from all their effort of rearing the new generation of young Blackbirds.

Sometimes they leave the garden for pastures new, but this is a big mistake, because when they come back, around June or July, thinking about where they will build their nest this year they very often find a new pair of Blackbirds have taken over and they will have to fight, very often to the death, to get their garden back. I find that very often the same pair will stay in the garden for years, sensibly never leaving.

Sometimes a new male will come, challenging the resident male for his territory and his mate and the fighting will go on sometimes for six weeks, with both of them injured by sharp beaks and beating wings. In the end one of them will be the victor and the other be dead or will fly away. One male bird that had lived in my front garden for a year or two and had been beaten off after a long struggle that had lasted all of six weeks came back sometimes, but always got chased away by the

stronger bird. The lady bird and the usurper made several nestings, but not in the old familiar place in the Pittosporum tree. The male sang from the power line, not from the Golden Elm as the defeated bird had. At the end of Summer the first male came back and the two males had the most terrible brawl which the usurper lost to the first male. The first male and the female flew away. They came back to reclaim their garden some time later. He sang from the Golden Elm and they nested as always, in the Pittosporum and lived in my front garden for many years.

If you are not sure if you are hearing a Blackbird or a Thrush singing, just remember these lines from Robert Browning, living in Italy and missing England. He wrote these lines in his "Home thoughts from abroad"....

That's the wise Thrush,
He sings each song thrice over,
Lest you should think he never could recapture
that first fine careless rapture.

Spring is not far away. The Thrush at the bottom of my garden, where generations of Thrushes have lived, is singing now. It won't be too long before I hear the song of the Blackbird, the days will warm up and we will all delight in the wonderful renewal of the Earth that Spring brings.

THOUGHTS ON GROWING OLD (AND OLDER....)

Laurie Wesley

The injunction "Do not resent growing old, it is a privilege denied to many" is well said and I think we can all agree with it. However, regret rather than resent is another matter. I have some profound regrets, though I scarcely dwell on them. The first is that I have enjoyed my sojourn on this planet and have no wish to bid it goodbye. The second is that as the years pass many much loved relatives and dear friends are no longer around. The third is that I have neither the strength nor the agility to do the things I once enjoyed doing. No doubt there are others, but enough said.

In contrast to the above, there is much to treasure as the years advance. For many there are new relatives or friends to take the place of those passing on. There is also the pleasure of looking back and recalling

memories of all the good things we have experienced while journeying toward the present. And is not a treasure chest of good memories a valued travelling companion as our journey gets closer to its end?

Just last week, my wife Barbara was trying to downsize the amount of "stuff" we have accumulated over the years and came across three old 78 records. One of them was Wilf Carter singing "By the Silvery Moonlight Trail". This was a romantic cowboy song I loved listening to. It was part of a collection that my Granny had in Te Kuiti in the 1950s. My brothers and I used to wind up Granny's old mechanical player and listen to the records. I hadn't heard the *Silvery Moonlight Trail* since that time and was keen to hear it again. Not having the necessary device to play, I tried Google and Utube - it immediately came up and the song was just as I remembered it. I have played it many times since - it brings back precious memories from the time when Granny still lived. The last lines of the song are "It's three years since we parted, my love has never failed, and now we are together again on the silvery moonlight trail". Barbara and I were only parted for two and a half years - make what you like of that.

I have tried to recall what my most treasured memories are - several come to mind.

The first was on 6 June, 1958.

I was a student at the Engineering School at Ardmore, near Papakura. There was a girl named Barbara Walters at the Teachers College, just a stone's throw from the Engineering School. We met at the Ardmore Christian Fellowship. The New Zealand Opera Company was putting on *La Traviata* in His Majesty's Theatre in Auckland. I was rather fond of Opera and knew the story and music of *La Traviata* very well but was reluctant to go to an opera by myself. So I plucked up courage and asked Barbara if she would like to come and see an opera with me. Barbara hardly knew what an opera was and didn't know me very well, but she accepted. *La Traviata* begins with a grand ball and the scene that greeted us when the curtain went up was truly stunning, as was the remainder of the show. Barbara was quite enchanted by it all. The rest, as they say, is history, well no, not quite - Barbara and I have no immediate plans of departing this earth so there is still time to create a little more history.

The second was in March, 1960:

I was a passenger on the Italian ship Neptunia, and I woke up early and in great excitement went up on deck for my first view of the country that was to become my immediate home - and an important part of my life ever since. The Neptunia was anchored in Tamjung Priok, the port of Jakarta, Indonesia's capital, waiting for the tugs to guide her to her berth. I have vivid memories of the scene that awaited me, and of the sharp realisation it gave me that I was indeed in a strange new world. There were large numbers of small fishing boats all around, and several hawker's boats alongside ours, endeavouring to make some early morning sales of various items of Indonesian handcraft to those on board. The boats and the people in them were naturally strangers to me, with a somewhat untidy and lackadaisical air about them. I also recall well a noticeable smell in the air, not exactly unpleasant but neither particularly enticing. I suppose it was a mixture of spices, salt air, fishing leftovers, and miscellaneous rubbish strewn along the shore or floating in the harbour. There was also that sticky feel common in the high humidity of the tropics.

The third was in 1970.

The Indonesian government was planning a new highway through jungle in South Sumatra to the coast where a new ferry terminal was to be built. I was responsible for the soil investigations and testing along the route. It was not very long, about 30km if I remember correctly with numerous deep valleys. The route had been surveyed and a narrow track cleared. With several technicians and a local guide we set out to walk it in a day. After about four hours walking, we heard a loud and angry roar not too far from us, followed by the sound of something crashing through the undergrowth. We all "froze" except the village guide at the front who didn't seem very concerned. "Apa itu?" (What's that?) I asked, and the guide replied "Macen, tidak apa, sudah lari " (A tiger, no worry, it's running away). He knew the habits of tigers very well. Late in the day we reached our destination - a small village by the beach. We were to spend the night here and a boat would pick us up the following day. Accommodation was in a village house; our beds were thin mats spread on a floor of horizontal bamboo poles. If you have tried sleeping on such a bed you will know that the restful night I was hoping for did not eventuate

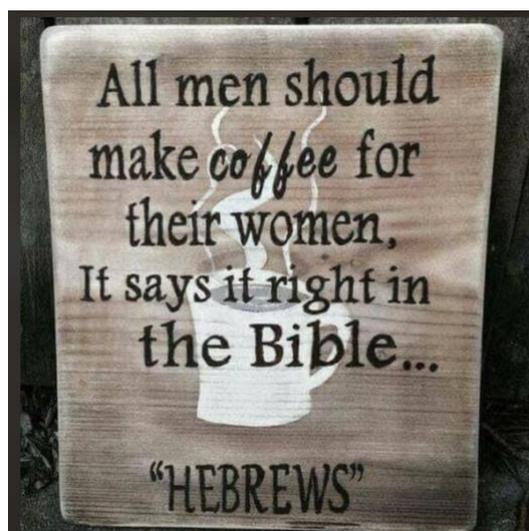
And a last one was in March 1997.

I was 60 years old. I must have been trying to prove I was still young, as I was taking part in my first ironman triathlon. It is now held in Taupo but in those days it started and ended at St Heliers. I recall being excited

and very nervous standing in my wet suit on the beach at St Heliers waiting for the starting gun to go off at 7am. I felt out of place among all the young muscular athletes (about 800) around me. However, I completed the 3.8km swim and the 180 km cycle OK and was on the last lap of the 42km (marathon distance) run heading along Tamaki Drive toward the finish line at St Heliers. I was not exactly bursting with energy and was covering the distance with a mix of running and "rest" spells of walking.

Conditions had been good all day - not too hot and with little wind. It was a wonderful evening and by this time (about five km from the finish) it was starting to get dark and the moon was rising above the horizon ahead. It was a full moon and its light reflected on the water creating a shimmering scene. By that time I knew I would get to the finish line, and my excitement was rising along with the moon. Running down the finishing chute and crossing the finish line is one of my truly memorable moments. All who do the ironman agree that crossing the finishing line is a truly unique feeling that only those who do the ironman can experience. It is a strange mixture of sheer exhaustion and exhilaration.

To finish, I should mention that I had hoped the *age reversal drug* would be discovered before I got too old. Sadly, that doesn't seem to be the case, in fact the scientists haven't even started work on it.



ROSTERS FOR AUGUST 2020

Date	Elder	Door Duty	Reading	Prayer	Morning Tea
Aug 2	Robin Baxter	Glennis	Glennis	Robin Baxter	Barbara Wesley/Lisi
Aug 9	Nan	Lynn Carter	Nan	Jocelyn Collinge	Elizabeth W Margaret L
Aug16	Dalia Sharrock	Rosemary B	Dalia Sharrock	Rachel	Café Church Team
Aug23	Lexi	Jeanne	Jeanne	Lexi	Keith and Paquita
Aug 30	Zion Hill	Ian Bogue	Ian Bogue		St Aidans to assist Zion Hill

DATES FOR AUGUST 2020

Sun 2 Aug	9.30 am	Communion Service	Rev Colin Gordon	St Andrews
Sun 9 Aug	9.30	Celebration	Rev Colin Gordon	St Andrews
Mon 10 Aug	7 pm	Come to Quiet		Lindisfarne Lounge, downstairs St Aidans
Sun 16 Aug	9.30 for 10	Café Service breakfast first	Rev Colin Gordon	St Aidans
Sun 23 Aug	9.30	Contemplative Service	Rev Colin Gordon	St Aidans
Sun 30 Aug	9.30	Combined Worship		Zion Hill Methodist

NB: New Date For COME to QUIET

DONATIONS AND OFFERINGS

FOR THOSE WHO WANT TO USE THEIR INTERNET BANKING TO MAKE DONATIONS.

PLEASE USE THE FOLLOWING BANK NUMBERS.

BOTH ACCOUNTS ARE AT BNZ BIRKENHEAD.

PLEASE BE SURE TO PUT "DONATION " AS THE REFERENCE AND YOUR NAME IF YOU WISH TO HAVE A RECEIPT.

St AIDANS 02-0112-0024699-00
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ST ANDREWS

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