

THE APOSTLE

Christmas 2020

T H E R E L O V E I S
S O M E T H I N G
H O P E F O R P E A C E
E V E R Y O N E J O Y



Glen's Foreword

This image below was shared around the world to sum up 2020 – a skip, on fire, floating along in flood conditions – it has been a year we may all be looking forward to putting behind us. From two lockdowns and the ongoing threat of more, with border restrictions and quarantines and the present and future economic implications, it certainly has felt like things couldn't get much worse. Life also goes on and although Covid has meant the regular patterns of our life have been disrupted, there still would have been the usual celebrations and times of sadness we at times experience. We hope people have felt the regular support of our community during a time when the focus has very much been on the pandemic.

While this year has been far from what we would have hoped for or expected, I have found in it much to be thankful for. We would never have asked to be confined to our homes but people have also shared about how much they appreciated that time. We would have never chosen to shut down our in-church services and various ministries but we were able to continue to find ways to worship, to serve and to be together throughout lockdowns, various periods of meeting restrictions and a total of 15 Sundays run online. I am very thankful for the way the parish took all of this in its stride – keeping up with multiple emails full of instructions on how to navigate online platforms, dealing with technical glitches and breakdowns, submitting video recordings for elements of the service and making countless phone calls to fellow parishioners to simply touch base – the various ways people have taken up the challenge of a new normal has been very encouraging to be part of and has meant our community life has both continued and developed.

Thank you also to all who have contributed to this edition of The Apostle – it has been great to see the variety of events that we have been able to run this year and to read updates of our regular ministries. I was especially touched by the Letters to God about 2020 segment – thank you all for your honest reflections. As we come together to celebrate Christmas in the midst of these trying times, I hope that we can all experience something of the love, hope, peace and joy that Christ brings to the world.

Glen

The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make his face to shine upon you, and be gracious to you; the Lord lift up his countenance upon you, and give you peace. *Numbers 6:24-26*



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Recent Events



Hike to Huia early in November.



Entries for the annual Bake-off.



Election Day cake stall.



Young Adults Home Group Thanksgiving Dinner.



Cameron, Conor and James at their BOLD Graduation. You can find the sermon about their BOLD experience at www.staidans.co.nz/sermons-2/.



The choir singing at Robyn Bridgman's Garden Party, fundraising for Auckland City Mission's HomeGround Project.

Regular Events at St Aidan's

Sunday Services	8:00am Holy Communion. 9:30am Family Communion. 5:00pm Evening service (4 th Sunday of each month).
Wednesday Service	11:30am Holy Communion without music.
Prayer in the GA	Thursday mornings at 9am.
Contemplative Prayer	Meets each Wednesday at 9.45am, 276A Victoria Avenue. Contact Anne Priestley.
Youth	Ages 11+ at the 9:30am Sunday service and Friday at 7pm. Contact Conor.
Kids' Church	All children ages 3-10 during the 9.30am Sunday service. Contact Sarah.
Mainly Music	Wednesdays during term time at 9.30am. Music and play for families with pre-school aged children. Contact Sarah.
Choir Practice	Saturdays at 10am in the Bethel Room. New members welcome.
Home Groups	Contact Sheryl Swanevelder or Louise for more information.
AAW	A women's afternoon fellowship group. Meets monthly on 1 st Tuesday at 1.30pm.
WEF	A women's evening fellowship group. Meets monthly on 3 rd Tuesday at 7.30pm.
Men's Ministry	Meets last Thursday of the month. Contact Glen for more info.
Pins & Needles	Meets monthly on 2 nd Monday of the month. Contact Marie Taylor.

You're invited to
Christmas
at St Aidan's, Remuera

T H E R E L O V E I S
S O M E T H I N G
H O P E F O R P E A C E
E V E R Y O N E E J O Y

9 Lessons & Carols, 13th Dec
7pm, plus mince pies afterwards
Community Carol Singing, 16th Dec
5:45pm, meeting at St Aidan's

Christmas Eve, 24th Dec

4pm Kids' Service
7pm Communion Service
11pm Midnight Communion
and Carol Service

Christmas Day, 25th Dec

8am Communion Service
9:30am Family Service
with Communion



St Aidan's
Anglican Church
@staidansremuera
www.staidans.co.nz

A Prayer for Putting on a Face Mask

Creator God, as I prepare to go into the world, help me to see the sacramental nature of wearing of this cloth. Let it be a tangible and visible way of living love for my neighbours, as I love myself.

Christ Jesus, since my lips will be covered, uncover my heart, that people would see my smile in the crinkles around my eyes. Since my voice may be muffled, help me to speak clearly, not only with my words, but with my actions.

Holy Spirit, as the elastic touches my ears, remind me to listen carefully and caringly to all those I meet. May this simple piece of cloth be shield and banner, and may each breath the it holds be filled with Your love.

In Your name and in that love, I pray. Amen.

Rev Richard Bott
Moderator, Presbyterian Church of Canada

How do you put 'Christ' back into Christmas?

Last Christmas we determined to bring Christ into Christmas for our twelve grandchildren. As usual, we gathered as a family at our bach at the beach.

After all the presents were handed out, there was some disquiet among the children that there were none from Nana and Grandpa. We gathered them around and explained that this was going to be a special Christmas for them. They had all received many lovely gifts so instead of receiving a present from us it would be in the true spirit of Christmas to donate their present to others less fortunate in the world. So, they were all given a list of projects supported by Christian World Service and each was asked to choose one as a gift.

Their gifts included sending a child to school, owning bees or a sheep and fun days for children. They talked about 'their projects' for the rest of the day. All agreed that it had been a great idea for Christmas.

Jan and Nigel Evans

I try to find greetings cards which convey the Incarnation: nativity scenes complete with Christmas crib, obviously yes, but one year I chose the picture of a cabbage tree which seemed to be bowing towards the light of dawning day. That card caught (for me) the light of Christ coming among us, and Creation's awed response.

I also like to have stamps which 'tell the story' well – often from the Christmas issue, but I've also still got some of Colin McCahon's 'I AM' stamps.

Playing our CD of Handel's Messiah, especially for our children. Sometimes we have taken them to Auckland Choral's live performance... looking for the day when we can take grandchildren too!

Remembering those in need: giving extra in food or money to the City Mission, or helping their preparations in some way.

Trying to keep Advent as Advent, and Christmas for 24th December. We wait, we prepare, we look forward, we hope and pray for our hearts to be transformed, for God's love to come in fullness here, now. Come, Lord Jesus!

Anne Priestley

The Challenge of Church during Lockdown

As we stepped into 2020 we obviously had no idea of what lay ahead for us. The Covid-19 pandemic has had a huge impact on us all and, not only did it drastically change the way we operated here at St Aidan's since the end of March, but will continue to have an impact on the way we do things going forward.

When the first lockdown came into effect our main focus was remaining connected through online worship and regular communication. While working hard to get our services online in the initial phases, we were fortunate to have some systems in place around pastoral care. The parish 'ring around' had been established some years earlier and the Pastoral Care Team, who managed this along with various volunteers from the parish, did a fantastic job of keeping people connected.

After an initial scramble, we were able to produce regular Sunday services, Zoom catch ups, mainly music and daily thankfulness livestreams through our Facebook and YouTube accounts, grappling with various technical issues along the way. It was hugely encouraging to see the level of uptake and engagement and this really spurred us on. We were very grateful for various efforts to stay connected and support one another and far from being adversely affected by two lockdowns and many weeks without physical engagements, we have found the commitment to this community has grown and developed over this time. We have realised the value of both meeting together and staying connected and it is hoped that this will continue to define who we are as we seek to support all in our community.

Rev'd Glen Ashworth

Why not try a **Reverse Advent Calendar** as a way to put Christ back into Christmas? Each day add an item to the box and then donate it all to Auckland City Mission.



Letters to God about 2020

Dear God,

You certainly know how to surprise us! As 2020 began, who'd have imagined our skies empty of planes, streets empty of traffic? Or that we'd embrace mask-wearing, and scanning QR codes? We even started to notice the importance of supermarket workers, delivery drivers, port workers, rubbish collectors – as well as care-givers, nurses and doctors.

Earth began to breathe more easily. But across the world, so many people have lost their lives, or livelihoods, or a chance at education. Must change be so expensive? Or are you asking us to seek a decent life for everyone?

Questioningly yours,

Anne P

Dear God,

Wowza, what a year. A lot of people that I talk to say it's been horrible - and not only because of COVID-19. We had three deaths in our family, for example, that were all unrelated to COVID-19. 2019 was not a fabulous year for a few reasons, as well, so I was a tad disappointed that 2020 has turned out this way!

However, despite the stress of the year, I would like to reflect on some of the good stuff... for example, I kept my job through a restructure, I moved into my new room, and my gorgeous niece was born! Let's see what 2021 has in store for us. Maybe be a little gentler on us, yeah?

Isobell T

Dear God,

I want to know whether you can join us for Christmas again this year. So much has happened to our world in 2020 with COVID-19, climate change and political upheaval, that I wonder whether we can rely on you to share our Christmas.

Shall we put up our Christmas crib scene? Shall we bake the Christmas cake? Shall we compose a Christmas Grace to say at the table? Shall we plan which Christmas service to attend? (I like the Christmas Eve service at 7pm!) Yes, God I want to know – WILL YOU BE THERE? If you are willing to come, I will meet you there.

Lots of love,

Peter A

Dear God,

What have you done to us? What are you doing to us? Where have we gone wrong? What have we done to you? What are you saying to us?

Have we failed to serve you as we should? Have we not listened and heard?

Are we destroying your planet? Have we neglected your people - the poor and the lonely? Have we not loved each other as we should love you?

Guide us. Lead us. Show us your way. Help us to do your will. To obey your commandments and relearn to love each other.

Show us how to be kind. To comfort those in need. To reverse child poverty. To build homes for the homeless. To care for each other, for your planet and your world.

As Jesus taught us, help us to abide in faith, hope and love - the greatest of which is love.

Marie T

Dear God,

Thank you for keeping our family safe and well and connected through virtual formats during the various levels of lockdown.

Thank you for the safe arrival of our grandson in June, and for his baptism in August, a real family affair. Thank you for the continued contact with St Aidan's during the lockdowns.

Thank you for a wonderfully fine day for our FAB sale.

Thank you for giving us time to reflect on all the things we have taken for granted and realise we are truly blessed with.

Jenny and Bryan H

Dear God,

Life is of different seasons. Just now we are in a troubled and sad season owing to Covid-19. People are dying by the 1000s, losing their jobs, travel restricted, etc.

Our church has a Blue Christmas service on 6th December. Let us come together to this service and pray that you will change the season into the Christmas season. Jesus, we have faith and hope that you will truly bless us.

Lilian G

St Francis Day Pet Service

Despite concern that COVID might impact on our annual Pet service, everything behaved, weather, COVID and animals included.

So on the first Sunday in October two footed and four footed friends were able to gather together, albeit in slightly smaller numbers than in previous years. Spacing was in place, but no one told the nine dogs that came along, as they were keen to sniff out and greet the other guests.

Although sizes ranged from those that normally fit in handbags (and sometimes have been known to sneak into church in this way) through to those that easily stand at waist height, all attendees human and animal wise seemed to enjoy the opportunity to take part in the service.

Prayer was extended to those with sobering health stories and a blessing was imparted to each special guest. Although singing was limited due to COVID, clapping, humming and quiet barking were permitted.

Rev'd Louise Anderson



Nathan and Rosey

COVID Faultlines & Spring Good-byes

Hello friends,

A buddy the other day described COVID as 'a great revealer of faultlines'. It's a good thought I reckon that there has for a long time been tensions and inequalities between groups of people and our various lockdowns have given us enough time to slow down and notice these tensions (think George Floyd & Black Lives Matter).

After our conversation though, I couldn't help thinking that COVID has also done a great revealing of faultlines for us as a family. Had the global pandemic not occurred, we would be back in India right now, trucking along with life and work. The events that we had loaded months ago into the calendars on our phones remind us almost daily of this. In July we would've left NZ, spent a week rubbing shoulders with our Ethically minded friends at a Fair Trade summit in Thailand, and then arrived back in sweltery K-town. Mid-August would've seen us heading down to South India to get our wee Rubester ready for boarding school.

COVID has done away with our plans, but it has given us the gift of time to reflect on our future, our family's mental health, our gifts and how they might be best used for the Kingdom. All of that has lead us to a seriously unexpected decision: to stay in NZ rather than returning to India.

As the joke goes, "If you want to make God laugh, tell him about your plans."

As the months have ticked by we began broaching a topic that neither of us would have considered had COVID not so thoroughly roughed us up: should we return to Kolkata?

Initially, it was Rosey who realised that she had some serious reservations about returning. Specifically, she was concerned about our kid's need for consistency through Intermediate and High school, her own language learning challenges, and the impact mega-city living was having on our mental health.

Nathan didn't share these, or at least didn't share them to the same degree, and found all this difficult to even consider.

It is common for cross-cultural workers to undertake a course of counselling called debriefing every few years. We were able to do a week of debriefing back

in July with our good friends Andrew and Susanna at Peacemakers, and this time gave us plenty of space to pray, talk about these doubts (or lack thereof), and listen to each other. Out of these conversations, Nathan realised that actually, he had some significant hesitations of his own.

Since our debrief we've spent a lot of time thinking, praying and talking to some good people about this stuff, and in the end, the decision we needed to make felt pretty clear.

That said though, it has not been an easy one to make. We have a deep love for our Loyal teammates and staff. We have been through significant challenges together and had been planning and imagining a future working alongside them. The loss of this is a profound one.

NZ Winter

The last few months have been an emotional rollercoaster. While we've felt incredibly grateful to be in NZ, the constant need to keep on top of and adapt to changes has been draining.

Our sending organisation have done a fabulous job looking after us these past months. We are usually so far from the NZ staff and our colleagues around the world, and it's been lovely getting to know them better. During lockdown, we joined an initiative called Happy Hour. Every week people tuned into a ZOOM meeting that featured a panel of interesting people working around the globe. Happy Hour addressed a bunch of really interesting themes, and we were asked to be on the panel several times. Plenty of curly questions were asked, beverages were consumed, and many LOLs were had.

Midwinter at Lake Rotoiti





The Loyal Workshop Kolkata crew at Peacemakers in Helensville

Lockdown also gave us time to do some work on our house. Our garden is looking significantly less jungle-ish, we repaired and painted our roof and prepped and painted a bedroom.

During the July school holiday, we tripped up to Auckland for two weeks. As well as our debrief we got to hang out with Nathan's family. The girls spent some very precious time with their Aunties, Uncles and cousins, and we visited Nathan's Grannie, who celebrated her 100th birthday during lockdown. Best of all, all of the NZ crew of The Loyal Workshop gathered for the first-ever NZ Hui, including Loyal's product and graphic designers. It was an amazing opportunity to all be together, away from the hustle and distraction of life in K Town, to dream and plan for the future.

Back in June Nathan began working for a youth health and wellbeing trust called Whanake Youth. Rosey is enjoying working a couple of hours at St Stephens' veggie Stall, where she used to work three years ago.

Nathan, Rosey, Eva and Ruby



THANK YOU

We resigned from the Loyal Workshop a few weeks ago and will officially resign from our sending agency at the end of November. You can continue to follow Loyal's news through the website, Facebook or Instagram.

It feels strange to think that this is the last Hughes News we will write. This newsletter has been a part of our lives for seven years! Many of you will remember when it was called the Bulatin. It's documented our travels to Fiji, the US and Central America, our time at St Andrew's Hall in Melbourne, and plenty of other adventures.

'Thank you' is an expression we use so often that it doesn't feel meaningful enough for a moment like this. Thank you for supporting us financially. Thank you for regularly praying for us. Thank for the emails, kind words and other forms of encouragement. Nga Mihi Nui to our 'company' who have done a stellar job sending and looking after us. Dhonobad to the Loyal crew.

1 Thessalonians 3:9 says it much more powerfully: We have so much joy before our God because of you! So we thank God for you. But we cannot thank him enough for all the joy we feel.

Grace & Peace,

Ruby, Eva, Nathan and Rosey



For the Prayers:

- For the Loyal Workshop staff: that they would be bearers of peace to their families and communities, and that they would remain safe. Many of the women have compromised immune systems.
- For the foreign Loyal team in NZ, as they work to support Loyal staff in K town.
- Please 'think' of India, which now ranks second in the world for infection.
- For the anxious millions who live hand-to-mouth, and are without work.
- For India's government and community leaders.

All Saints Day

All Saint's Day was celebrated this year with greater emphasis due to the need to cancel our usual St Aidan's Day festivities.

A special morning tea was enjoyed by those able to stay after both services and thanks to the team who graciously provided this. The youth did an outstanding job of being hosts as they offered the food around to everyone.

Glen and Louise took time to acknowledge the huge number of volunteers who do a huge number of jobs to ensure that St Aidan's runs smoothly. Whilst some of these roles are more 'upfront' and obvious to others, many go unseen as they happen very quietly during the week. Thanks were extended to all who contribute in some way.

During the service we were reminded that we are the 'children of God' and so slightly tongue in cheek baby photos of some of our parishioners were displayed with the aim to match them up with the adult photos. No one was able to get 100% accuracy but a bag of fudge was distributed to the closest entry. It was a great morning of celebration, and not only to pause to remember the saints of the past, but also the saints of today.

Rev'd Louise Anderson





What do you really want for Christmas?

My children ask me each year...
"What do you want for Christmas?"
After thinking about it, I decided to give them my
real answer:

I want you to keep coming around.
I want you to ask me questions. Ask my advice.
Tell me your problems.
Ask for my opinion. Ask for my help.
I want you to come over and rant about your
problems, rant about life. Whatever.
Tell me about your job. Your worries. Your classes.
I want you to continue sharing your life with me.
Come over and laugh with me, or laugh at me.
I don't care, hearing you laugh is music to me.

I want you to spend your money making a better life
for you. I have the things I need. I want to see you
happy and healthy.



When you ask me what I want for Christmas and
I say, "Nothing," it's because you've already been
giving me my gift all year.

I want you.

Anon

All articles printed in the Parish Magazine are at the discretion of the Vicar. Content and size may be edited to fit publication.
We welcome your photos. Please email contributions to the office. Deadline for next Parish Magazine is 1st March 2021.

Mission Shop

We were closed this year for 18 weeks during the various levels of lockdown due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

During the opening times between lockdowns our weekly sales totals were up on the same time last year, with advertising of Facebook, Neighbourly, Remuera New World Electronic Screen, and on ZB Community Radio. Also on Google maps if you are looking for op shops in Remuera. All good exposure and costing us nothing.

After being shut for so long we were unable to get all the winter clothes out, and by the time we opened again after the second lockdown, it was time to put out the summer clothes again. We have given many more donations than usual to the ATWC as people have "cleared out", after being at home with time on their hands!

Having a smaller Garage Sale this year meant we did not have the two venues (shop and stage) for clothing sales as normal.

However, our weekly sales totals have been good again since we re-opened in mid-October, so hopefully we

will have a reasonable amount of money to distribute next February.

We have lost some longstanding volunteers through retirement or health issues, but have had some offers to help fill the roster for next year. Grateful thanks go to those who have retired.

Many thanks go to Terrie Hawley who has often stepped in at the last minute to fill in when volunteers have been unavailable.

We look forward to a more "normal" 2021.

Jenny Haggitt



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WEF

(Women's Evening Fellowship)

Womens' Evening Fellowship finished their interrupted year with Carols played by Antoinette Pope before Dr Gail Pearson gave an interesting talk on Health, Wellness and fellowship.

We will meet again next year on Tuesday Evening 16th February. You are welcome to join us on any 3rd Tuesday of the month.

Jan, Alison, Elisabeth, Penny & Terrie

Pins & Needles

What a year this has been! Never could we have imagined COVID-19 would descend on us in the way it did! Nevertheless our Pins & Needles knitting group has continued to grow and flourish like never before.

Confined to our homes during many different levels of lockdown, our enthusiastic and loyal knitters and sewers have continued to produce wonderful garments for the various organisations we support. We have many new outworkers, friends and family, who have joined in our endeavours as we all struggled to keep our minds and bodies active in a purposeful way during lockdown.

Our thanks must go to Gail Hodder, and her supplier of yarn, for keeping our fingers nimble and our brains engaged when we were unable to shop for ourselves. Thank you to those who picked up yarn from Gail's letterbox, not only for themselves but to deliver to others.

Now we can meet again we have been in awe of the quality and quantity of fantastic goods our members have produced. After display and blessings they have all been delivered to the Anglican Trust for Women and Children, Counties Manukau Community Midwives, and National Women's Intensive Care Unit, each of whom are exceedingly grateful for our continued kindness and support. May God's blessing be on you all.

Marie Taylor

AAW

(Association of Anglican Women)

Our group has been very happy to have the chance to meet over the past 3 months after the lockdowns caused by Covid. We met in October while still under Level 2 and all sat at small tables practicing social distancing and had our afternoon tea served by individual servers! Everyone enjoyed the occasion and especially being able to meet up again after the second lockdown.

The last meeting for the year in December is always an extra special afternoon tea with festive additions to the menu. We decorate tables in the Gathering Area and adjourn there after our communion service in the church. Our menu has not really varied over the years and all our members enjoy this festive occasion, especially the Christmas cake made by Gail Hodder. The afternoon is rounded off with entertainment, and this year we have Bill Purvis (who played the piano on the Earnslaw on Lake Whakatipu for many years) leading us in our Christmas sing a long.

The committee wishes everyone a very blessed Christmas and hope that 2021 will bring in more settled times for all.

Mary Parkinson



Cryptogram

F. Scott Fitzgerald

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z

VNZ ALRI KI'X ANZIL: KI'X SGFGZ INN HRIG IN QG ALNGFGZ MNY ARSI IN QG. K

LNTG MNY HKFG R HKVG MNY'ZG TZNYP NV, RSP KV MNY VKSP MNY'ZG SNI, K LNTG

MNY LRFG ILG XIZGSDIL IN XIRZI NFGZ RDRKS.

(Answer on page 16)

FAB Sale (the Garage Sale reimagined)



COVID kept the Garage Sale Committee guessing this year, and when the Government chose our postponement date for Election Day we wondered if it was even going to happen!

After a lot of deliberating, a trimmed down version with a few specific stalls allowed for more spacing, and the potential to 'bail out' at the last minute if restrictions came into force again.

To differentiate it from our usual sale, a new name was required and so 2020 produced, for one year only, the 'FAB Sale' - Furniture, Antiques, Books, plus a few more.

To keep the overheads as low as possible we didn't hire a container, instead temporarily evicting the youth from the Bunker, and quickly filled it with donations from generous parishioners and locals.

Thanks to everyone for making it such a successful day. To date we have raised in excess of \$15,000, a terrific result in such trying circumstances.

FAB Sale Committee 2020



FAB Sale Continued



A story from a FAB Sale customer:

Thank you for holding quite an organized and safe FAB sale today. I love visiting church sales because you never know what you find...

Sometimes it's just a sausage sizzle you go home with, sometimes it's an item you didn't know you wanted and sometimes you get an interesting conversation or two. Today it was all three. I got my sausage sizzle, I found the cutest, tiniest bunny stuffy and I saw this beautiful makeup brush with a filigreed handle. I picked it up and was admiring it and this nice lady said, "Oh you can use it for makeup and it has never been used...

The handle is solid sterling silver!" She looked at it lovingly and continued "This was mine but I had never used it...my friend had given it to me many, many years ago."

I thought it must be a bit bittersweet to part with something quite special, unique and held a lot of sentimental value... To see strangers pick up a tangible piece of your life that has fond memories attached to it.

I did not purchase the brush since I have more than my fair share of unused ones, but I hope that whoever does would treasure it like she did.



Christmas Recipes

Shortbread Christmas Cookies (Kourambiades)

In Greece these cookies, heavily powdered with icing sugar and flavoured with almonds, are a festive treat. A whole clove is stuck in the centre of each cookie to remind everyone of the spices brought by the Magi to the Christ Child. In Austria at Christmas time these same cookies are shaped in a crescent.

- 1 1/4 cups flour
- 1 1/4 cups ground almonds
- Pinch of salt
- 155g (5oz) butter
- 1/4 cup icing sugar
- 2 egg yolks
- 1/2 tsp vanilla
- Whole cloves
- Extra icing sugar to dust

Sift flour and salt onto a board. Make a well in the centre and put in butter, icing sugar, egg yolks and vanilla. Sprinkle ground almonds onto flour.

Work ingredients in centre with fingertips until thoroughly blended. Using a metal spatula quickly draw in flour and ground almonds. Knead the dough lightly until smooth. Form the dough into a ball, wrap in greaseproof paper and chill for an hour.

Divide dough into small pieces and roll into balls the size of a small walnut, pinch top with thumb to shape into a pear. Push a whole clove into the top as a stalk.

Bake in a moderate oven (180°C/350°F) for 10-12 minutes. Remove to a wire rack to cool, placing a sheet of paper underneath.

Dust biscuits heavily with sifted icing sugar while still warm. Cool.

Sheryl Swanevelder



Christmas Cake

- 1 cup sugar
- 225g butter
- 1000g mixed fruit
- 1/2 tsp cinnamon
- 1.5 cups cold water
- 1 Tb golden syrup
- 1 tsp baking soda
- 1/2 tsp mixed spice

Boil these ingredients together for 10 minutes, stir occasionally. Leave to cool.

Add:

- 2 well-beaten eggs (size 7)
- 2 large cups of high grade sifted flour
- 1 tsp baking powder
- 1 tsp lemon essence
- 1 tsp almond essence
- 1 tsp brandy essence

Pour into a 9 or 10 inch lined cake tin - greaseproof on the inside and four layers of newspaper around the outside. Place in oven on a magazine about the size of Time magazine opened in half – this saves you having to line the bottom of the tin!

Bake at 150°C (in normal oven not fan bake) for 2 1/2 hours or until cooked (test with a skewer – it is cooked if it comes out clean).

Gail Hodder



Cryptogram Solution - page 13

F. Scott Fitzgerald

For what it's worth: it's never too late to be whoever you want to be. I hope you live a life you're proud of, and if you find you're not, I hope you have the strength to start over again.

Bake-off Recipes

Caramel Slice

Base:

- 1 cup Self Raising flour
- 1 cup desiccated coconut
- 2/3 cup brown sugar
- 125g butter

Melt butter, mix all ingredients together and press into a slice tray. Bake at 180°C for 10-12 minutes.

Let it cool down to keep the layers separated. If you pour the caramel over while the base is too hot it will soak down into the bottom layer.

Still yummy but not as pretty.

Middle:

- 30g butter
- 1 Tbsp golden syrup
- Can of condensed milk

Melt the butter in a saucepan and add the condensed milk and golden syrup. Stir over medium heat until it starts to thicken, about 5-10 minutes.

Pour and spread over the base and put back into the oven at 180°C for another 10-12 minutes. Let it cool completely before adding the top layer.

Cook longer if you prefer a darker caramel, but be careful not to burn the base.

Top:

- 1 Tbsp of vegetable oil (**optional*)
- 250g of milk chocolate melts

Melt the chocolate gently in short microwave bursts and mix the vegetable oil through completely. Spread over cool caramel layer and pop in fridge until set.

Cut and eat!

**Vegetable oil will make it easy to slice but if you prefer not to use it just be prepared for the chocolate layer to crack.*

Choc Mint Slice (no cook)

Base:

- 1 1/2 packets of Mint Slice biscuits
- 50g butter
- 1/2 packet of marie or rich wine biscuits
- 1 Tbsp cocoa

Blitz the biscuits, melt the butter and mix all ingredients together. Press into a paper lined slice tin and put in the fridge to set.

Middle:

- 100g butter, softened
- 1 1/2 cups icing sugar
- 1 Tbsp Cream
- 1 tsp Peppermint Essence

Cream the butter and icing sugar until light and fluffy. Stir in the cream and peppermint essence. Spread the mixture evenly over the base and put back in the fridge for at least 30 minutes.

Top:

- 200g dark chocolate, melted

Spread melted chocolate over the peppermint icing layer. Wait for the chocolate to set before cutting the slice into small pieces. For a cleaner cut use the tip of a sharp knife to mark lines in the chocolate before it sets.



Kids' Zone Puzzle Solutions

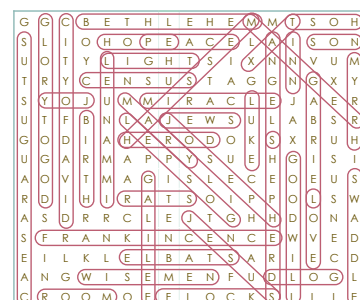
'Guess Who' baby game answers - page 10



Find the Grinch - page 22



Findaword - page 22





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A Reflection

God groans...
as does the earth.

God waits...
as the earth rejuvenates.

God sees...
fear blowing above the trees.

God listens...
for man's response,
some people pray
others delay.

God anticipates...
He opens His 'heart gates'.

Some accept His invitation,
for others, so much procrastination, hesitation.

God weeps...
with the earth.

God is God...
so, victory belongs to Him alone.

Let us bow down and pray and rejoice and praise,
for all of mankind in the coming days.

From the Registers

September to November 2020

Baptisms

Hugh Heywood Swansson

Funerals

Malcolm Dunphy

Mavis Pavis

Elsa Pasley

Garth Harris

Annabelle Fowler

Marie Parker

Jesus, Mary and Joseph on their travels

One of the gifts of Advent is joy, and what joy the beautiful knitted Christmas creations brought to our Mainly Music and church families last year. These pieces, created by the talented Gail Hodder, spent time in the homes of families and they even managed a trip to Christchurch with Mary Parkinson. This year they are again heading out around Remuera, and its environs, with a side trip to Blenheim courtesy of the Haggitt family.

Glen commented at Mainly Music that these pieces are like the Christmas story in the flesh, or in the yarn in this case. My hope is that families will know that the Christmas story is more than just a good yarn. The pieces give families an opportunity to engage with the account of the birth of Jesus; it's a stunning part of the biblical narrative. God came to earth as a wee baby and needed love, care and affection just as we do. Jesus knows what it is to be human and through him we see God, come to save us; come to give us a way to be with him forever.

Sarah Ashworth



Farewell to the Ashworth Family



In 2008 Sarah and I moved up to Auckland to study theology in order to pursue a call to church ministry. Our intention was then to look for possible positions around the country - we had no idea that we would continue on in Auckland for another 13 years. In that time we have had three children, worked in a church, done further study, got ordained, been priest-in-charge and then Vicar at St Aidan's.



Although many people have often wondered how long we would be in Auckland, we have felt that we have been faithful to God in following his lead throughout this time. However, during the year we sensed an openness to what might be a next step for us. A short time later we were approached by Nelson diocese to consider a role down there. This has been a tough decision for us and we are relying on God's leading and provision. We have come to care very much about you and this community - the support and care my family and I have had here has been second to none and has had a huge impact on us. We have felt loved and supported to do the best we can here and we are very grateful.

Wherever we find ourselves, the church shares in the great task of making the gospel real, accessible and relevant for those we encounter - let's continue to pray for each other as we seek to be faithful to that call.

Rev'd Glen Ashworth

To celebrate the wonderful ministry which Glen has provided at St Aidan's and to farewell all the Ashworths we will hold a shared lunch on **Sunday 20th December at 11am** after the 9.30am service. Whilst not their last service in the parish it makes sense to do this prior to Christmas and when many people are on holiday. Please bring a plate of finger food to share.

If you would like to contribute towards a farewell gift, please give your \$\$ to Anne Godman or Juli Mercer. Alternatively, you can make an online transfer to: 12-3026-0264657-00, with "Glen's Gift" in the reference field.

A Feast for Refugees



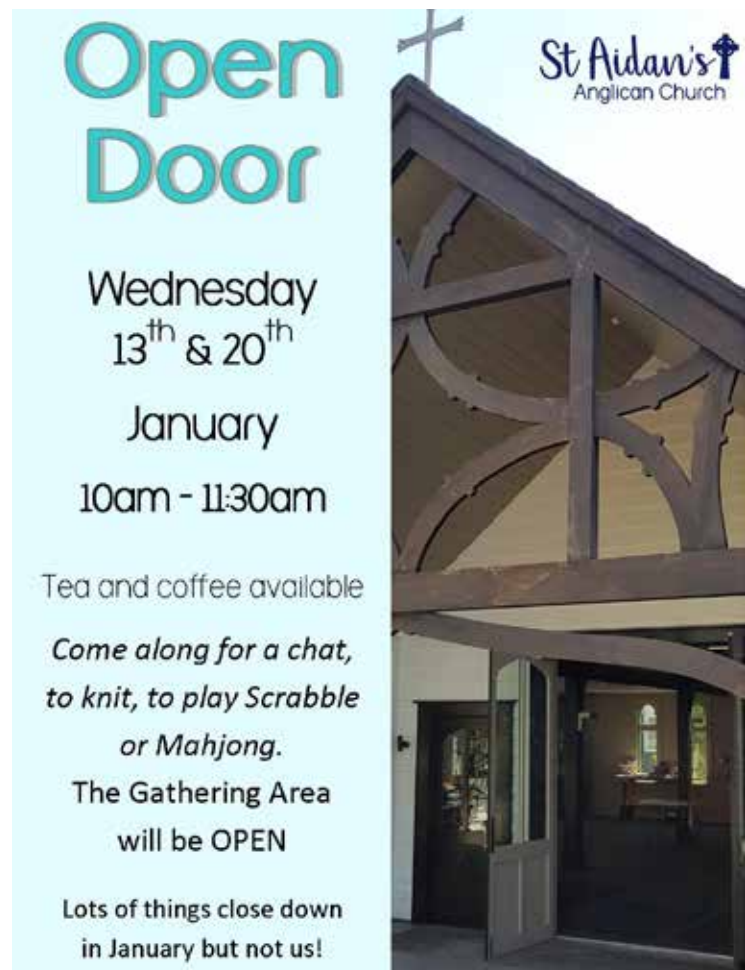
Our parish hall filled with colour, chatter and the aroma of delicious food, as St Aidan's hosted a Pasefika Feast on behalf of Christian World Service (CWS) in late November. We aimed to raise money to support their work with Syrian refugees in Lebanon. Just as important, though, were the connections made between people in the hall, as we shared our experiences and concerns. Among those present were four former refugees.

The money raised will provide food, medicine, education and social/therapeutic activities. Thanks to St Aidan's for your very generous support in many ways. Watch this space for follow up next year!

You can read more about the work of CWS's Operation Refugee 2020 at: www.cwsoperationrefugee.nz

Anne Priestley

Upcoming Events at St Aidan's



Kids' Zone

Wordsearch

G G C B E T H L E H E M M T S O H
 S L I O H O P E A C E L A I S O N
 U O T Y L I G H T S I X N N V U M
 T R Y C E N S U S T A G G N G X Y
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 BETHLEHEM
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 GABRIEL
 GLORY TO GOD
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 MYRRH
 PEACE
 ROOM
 SHEPHERDS
 SON
 STABLE
 STAR
 SWADDLE
 TAX
 WISE MEN



Find the Grinch amongst the Christmas Trees

Just for Laughs

Why can't a pine tree knit a Christmas sweater?

It keeps dropping needles.

What's the best thing to put in Christmas cookies?

Your teeth.

What does a gingerbread man need to make his bed?

A cookie sheet.

Which Christmas candle burns longer, red or green?

Neither. Candles always burn shorter.

What kind of music do elves listen to?

Wrap.

Who hides in the bakery at Christmas?

A mince spy.

There is something for everyone



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proclaiming | engaging | gathering | sharing
faith-building | service | fellowship | caring

