

PRIEST ASSOCIATE REPORT

First year completed - March 2023 marked the completion of my first year as Priest Associate at St Aidan's. I have continued to feel well supported and sustained in providing ministry to the people of this parish. During the year it was necessary for our vicar Louise to take time away to undergo medical treatment and recovery. That during her extended absence we were able to continue to operate smoothly as a parish across all areas of ministry reflects the dedication and caring nature of our people.

Farewell to the departed - The cycle of life means that support for those grieving the loss of a loved-one is a regular part of the ministry of our church. Over the past year it has been a privilege for me to lead the funeral services for several of our parishioners, as well as those with close connections to St Aidan's (Tony Laity, Joan Allen, Richard Caughey, Wally Mackrell, Jean Draffin, Anne Miller, and George Marr), whose lives had richly blessed not only their immediate family but others in their sphere of influence. Their eulogies and reflections were a testament to their courage, faith, and love. While there were tears and laughter our hearts were made glad and put at peace in committing them to God's care and keeping.

Cyclone Gabriel - and other heavy weather events kept us busy avoiding overflow of gutters and, when possible, diverting water away from buildings. Unfortunately, water will find its lowest point and made its way into the youth bunker resulting in the loss of several items of furniture and furnishings. While the damage caused was minimal it sparked the motivation of our young adults who have since redecorated and refurbished the bunker into a much more attractive and usable space. Compared to other ministry units and locations in the diocese we come through the experience relatively unscathed.

Security - After many years without incident, it was unfortunate to experience a burglary in the social lounge and hall and a fire in the men's toilets. These serve as reminders that while we make our facilities available to various users it does present risks. However, through ongoing vigilance and improvements to security, we should be able to support the needs of the wider community by continuing to offer our facilities for use.

Newcomers Lunch – As is customary we held a lunch to welcome Newcomers to the parish in June. It was an opportunity for those who had begun regularly attending worship at St Aidan's over the past several months to meet with those holding various responsibilities in our church, find out more about what goes on in the parish and take

a tour of the church buildings and grounds. We were pleased to be able to welcome 18 new individuals/families (14 adults & 4 children) and very much hope that the welcoming spirit of St Aidan's will continue to draw people through our doors.

Bishop's Advisory Group – Earlier this year I was honoured to be invited to serve on the Bishop's Advisory Group. This group assists the bishop in the process of discerning candidates who are offering to undergo ordination training. The group's major task is a weekend discernment retreat to meet with, interview, assess, pray for, and recommend candidates for ordination who would then be ready to serve in the diocese over the next few years.

Church Advisory Board - I am one of the clergy, invited to serve on the Church Advisory Board. This board represents the Anglican church on the Rangihoua Trust Board which has oversight for the Rangihoua Heritage Park. This site, on the coast near Kerikeri, has major historical and spiritual significance for the church as this was the location where the gospel was first preached in NZ on Christmas Day 1814,

Supervision - As a condition of receiving and maintaining a clergy licence from the diocese, I continue to undertake regular sessions of professional supervision; considered as a vital support for safe ministry and personal spiritual wellbeing. The sessions occur monthly under the guidance of one of the Clinical Pastoral Professionals approved by the diocese.

ANZAC Day Services – This day commemorates a time of national significance for our country. On 25 April I led our memorial service that commenced in the church and concluded with the laying of wreaths, prayers and the playing of the Last Post at the Cross of Remembrance. Later that day I led an ANZAC service at Rawhiti Estate retirement village. It was the second year that we have held an ANZAC service there with some 55 residents, their families and staff in attendance.

Parish Fundraising Walks - Auckland City Mission – It was pleasure to join with others from our parish to participate in the 17km walk from St Aidan's to HomeGround - the headquarters of the Auckland City Mission. The walk was part of a community-wide fundraising drive to assist the homeless on the streets of our city. Many groups from other parishes and organisations also participated. Earlier that day the "Coffee & K's" walking group held its monthly walk in Cornwall Park and on the preceding Sunday, James Parkinson led a group of parishioners on a walk across three maunga in the city. The efforts of these three walks undertaken by our parishioners resulted in over \$2,800 raised for the City Mission.

Central Clergy Cluster – Along with Rev'd Louise I regularly attend the gatherings of clergy who serve in the central cluster of the diocese (the approximate Central Auckland area), comprising those parishes under the Archdeaconry of Rev'd Carole Hughes, to discuss various aspects of parish ministry and diocese issues. A broad range of topics are shared including the impacts of recent flooding on church property, maintaining historic and aging properties, initiatives for growing the church and offering ministry and maintaining good work-life balance especially during times of peak ministry activity. These gatherings are helpful in building relationships with fellow clergy and learning about issues and challenges affecting other parishes.

Reading Roster – I am thankful for the new readers who have stepped forward this year to replace those who regularly read at our services but had indicated their intention to step aside from this role. It is so important to the smooth flow of worship that we have a pool of readers who are available to serve regularly on our service rosters. I am very grateful to all who put themselves forward to take a role in serving at our services.

Ukraine Concert – It was an enjoyable recital in our church of music composed and performed by Sergei Klymchuk. The purpose of this charity concert was to raise funds to support those displaced by the war in Ukraine. Sergei is an Associate Professor of Mathematics at AUT and Global Music Award winner, originally from Odessa, Ukraine. About 60 people attended the concert many of whom were from Ukraine or eastern Europe. Sergei was most grateful for the support received by St Aidan's for allowing the fundraising concert to take place in our church, as well as the attendance by several of our parishioners.

Each month the **Men's Ministry** has continued to meet for breakfast back at Browns Café. The location is very pleasant and well suited to the conversational type gathering enjoyed. Attendance has been regular with around a dozen attending each month. It is a suitable time to catch up for fellowship and getting to know one another better as parishioners and to strengthen connections. We were pleased to have as a guest attendee at one of the breakfasts Andy Miller, our CMS mission partner serving in Costa Rica who spoke about his work in the mission field evangelising and empowering Costa Rican and Latin American citizens for work in kingdom building.

mainly music - 2023 marked a milestone for mainly music at St Aidan's and gave reason for celebration. It was twenty years ago that St Aidan's partnered with the mainly music programme and took its first steps as a music and movement activity for young children in this parish. Led by the then Curate, Rev'd Jo Kelly-Moore, herself a

new mum, she encouraged other mothers to bring their toddlers along for a time of engaging fun and activity. Since that time, hundreds of children have come through our doors to enjoy their weekly session of fun and music. The programme this year included special activities each term to celebrate Easter, Mother's Day, Father's Day and in December, Christmas will be celebrated. Our mainly music sessions have continued to grow, and it remains a friendly community gathering space for parents and children to connect with others and form lasting friendships. Sadly, Tracy Helg, our mainly music coordinator, has recently resigned so we will be recruiting her successor in the coming weeks.

Remuera Garden's Retirement Village - Services of Holy Communion have continued at Kensington House which is part of the Remuera Gardens Retirement Village complex. In the past we would typically have 20+ attendees at these services. That number is decreasing as residents age and attendance for them becomes more challenging. A number have also passed away. Nonetheless it is a blessing to be able to provide ministry to the residents. Similarly, at **Rawhiti Estate Retirement Village** where we hold monthly services, I have observed a decrease in the numbers attending but there remains a pleasant atmosphere helped by a trio of musicians who provide gospel music to support our services of worship. Such is the nature of a retirement village; I am often asked to bless the apartments of former residents who have passed away, which I readily perform as part of the ministry to the retirement community. Our relationship with Remuera Gardens and Rawhiti remains in good spirits, and I look forward to continuing to serve them.

2023 is a year that seems to have passed quickly. I feel blessed to serve the people of this vineyard and pray that God will continue to be faithful to this wonderful Parish of St Aidan's. I am most grateful for the support and cooperation that I personally receive as well as the dedication and care that members of this community bring in service to our parish across all the various ministries, groups, and rosters. Thank you everyone for responding to the call to serve God and our church.

May God continue to be our comfort and strength as we reflect gratefully on this past year and look excitedly to the future with new hopes and new possibilities.

Reverend Kerry Davis
Priest Associate
November 2023