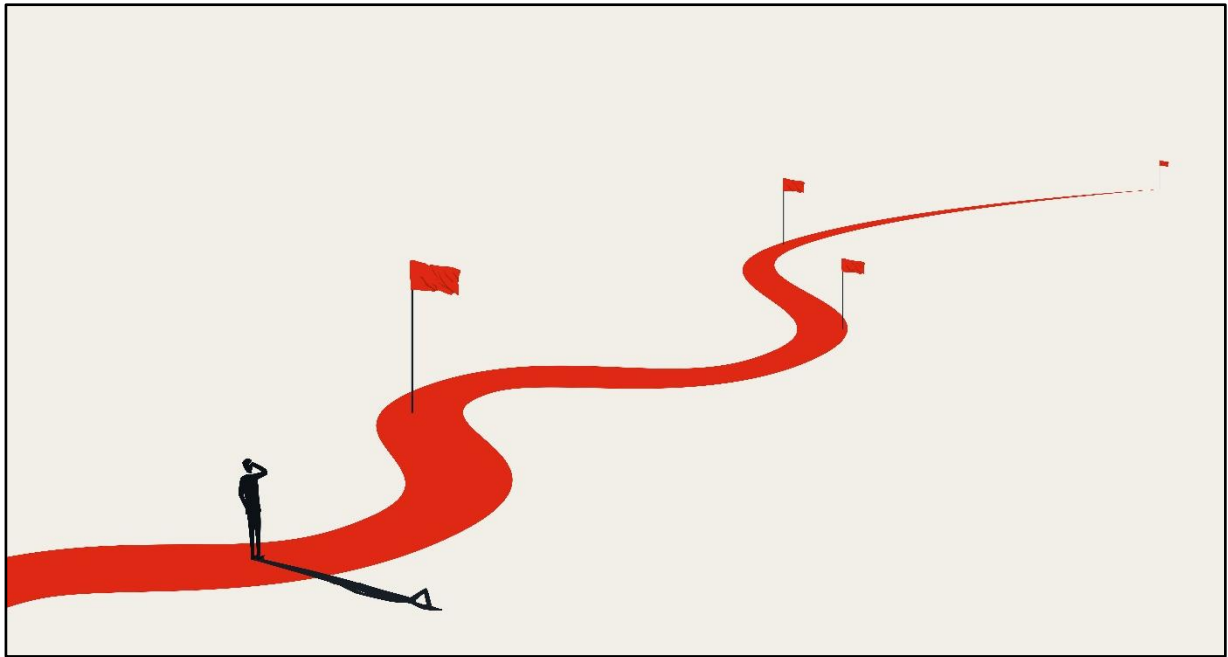


St Andrew's Presbyterian Church Newsletter

March 2025 – May 2025



Our Vision

Loving all people, being compassionate,

Seeking to live out Christ's selfless love until we see God's justice realized.

Jill's Musings.....



The Jesus Way

As a church we have entered into the Jesus Way and it was so good to have 17 of us at the first session following morning tea on the first Sunday. The Jesus Way is something we have been planning for the last six months, and it is so good to now be entering into it as a church community. It is based on the book by John Mark Comer called '*Practicing the Way*'.

Being a disciple of Jesus has described what it means to follow Jesus for the longest time. Scholars are now suggesting that a more accurate noun for a Jesus follower is the word '*apprentice*'. I think this is incredibly helpful, because discipleship feels like it is one of those 'churchy' words that is only used in a church context and can so easily become loaded.

Whereas we know well what an apprentice is. An apprentice works along side other who know a bit more than them, learning both the book work (in this case the bible) and practising what is being learned in real life. If you're an apprentice plumber, at the end of your apprenticeship, your goal isn't just to know all there is to know about plumbing, it's to be able to plumb a house. In the same way the goal of an apprentice of Jesus isn't just to know all about Jesus, but to be able to do the kinds of things he did, to join Jesus in His work of preaching, teaching, serving, healing.

It feels very timely, given the instability of the world at this juncture, that we are taking the time as a church community to lean into our faith and go deeper together. The tough things that are going on around the world and in our own nation reinforces how much we need God and how important it is that we who are apprentices of Jesus can offer salt and light in the world.

To be engaging with the Jesus Way together during this season of Lent feels so right, because Lent is indeed a significant time in our church calendar when we are called to draw closer to God.

The Lighthouse

Yesterday I was very blessed to attend a special gathering in the St Andrews Church Hall where W.I.T. (a local NGO - Whatever It Takes) now runs the Lighthouse, a day programme for people with addictions or mental health issues. Boi Daniel is the team leader there. Hastings Church leases the hall itself to WIT during the week.

I felt so incredibly moved (literally tears falling on my cheeks) to see and experience the love that was so present in this welcome and to see the St Andrews Hall aiding the flourishing of tāngata pounamu (precious people) in this new season in the life of our hall.

Sam Aberahama (Mama Oki's son who was Police Area Commander in Tairāwhiti) has recently become the CEO of W.I.T. and in his speech yesterday he talking eloquently about how important the St Andrews hall had been in his upbringing where he and everyone else practiced Cook Islands dance and song.

The Pocket Park

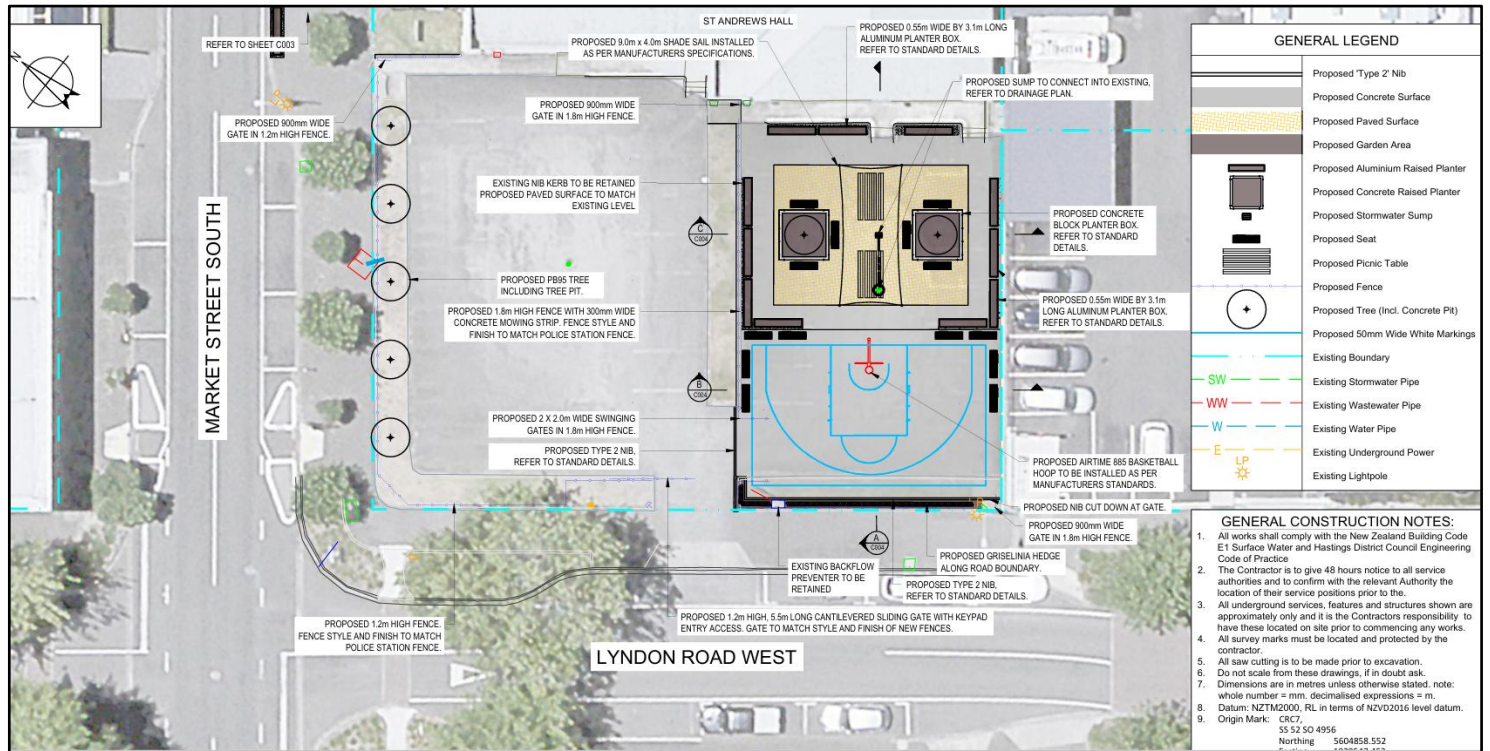
As soon as the hall sale goes through, work will begin on turning half of the St Andrews carpark into a pocket park for the use of Kuhu Mai - the Community Hub who ministers to those who are homeless. At the same time as this work is being done the other half of the car park will be resurfaced and painted and a fence and automatic gate installed (that will be opened on Sundays for church folk to use).

Hastings District Council secured independent funding (not rates) to enable this work to happen and are running the project with Topline Construction doing the work. Topline construction is a local business doing amazing things. Topline was established by ex Mongrel Mob member Taurus Taurima, ten years ago, as he set out on a path to turn his life around. He started with two staff and now employs fifty people from all walks of life - many like Taurus have been offered a second chance in life.

Topline provides jobs, as well as a training academy where people are taught life skills including how to be drug free, to respect others and respect themselves. Everyone who graduates is guaranteed a job. It is fantastic that they are doing this work.

The block around the hall is sometimes referred to as the 'justice precinct' with the District Court, the Police station and so many law firms around. With the work of Hastings Church and Kumu Mai, W.I.T. and Topline Construction it is wonderful to notice God's justice reigning. This is the justice God longs for where everyone can flourish.

In case you haven't seen it here is the garden plan. A few adaptations have now been made. (see plan below).



**Blessings
Jill**



“Christianity is a lifestyle—a way of being in the world that is simple, nonviolent, shared, and loving. However, we made it into an established religion (and all that goes with that) and avoided the lifestyle change itself. We could be warlike, greedy, racist, selfish, and vain throughout most of Christian history and still believe that Jesus is our personal Lord and Savior or continue, in good standing, to receive the sacraments. The world has no time for such silliness anymore. The suffering on earth is too great.”

— Richard Rohr, *Yes, and...: Daily Meditations*

Notes from Parish Clerk...Jim Spall

Kia Orana. I'm not sure about you but our year seems to be racing past. In the rural community many of us are feeling very relieved by an unexpectedly good season with not only rain when needed but much higher than anticipated returns. Relieved as we have just passed the 2-year anniversary of Cyclone Gabrielle, and it feels like we are finally getting our farms and orchards back on track. At Kereru we are eagerly looking forward to the reopening of the Kereru Gorge on April 18th. Our alternative route, Salisbury Road, is very scenic but the windy unsealed section means it has long since lost its appeal!

At St Andrews, January was marked by some wonderful singing from both The Seekers Concert and Village Harmony. These events and others brought us great joy and at our first parish council meeting for the year we recognised and celebrated this. When we just focus on things to be done, we can forget about joy. Of course, there were many items on council's agenda. Of note is our decision to wind up the Bridging Hawkes Bay ministry. As Jill has indicated following the death of Linda, we felt we didn't have sufficient resources to continue. However, Jill, Daniel Kerr (BHB Board), and I have been meeting with organizations involved in cyclone relief efforts. We have asked for proposals that Parish Council will receive and are confident that the funds entrusted to us will be effectively used for this purpose.

At our February meeting some of our focus was on preparing for our Congregational Meeting on 9th March. Thank you to all who attended and for your support for the sale of the St Andrews Hall, the creation of a pocket park on half of the carpark, and the upgrade of the remaining carpark. It has been a very drawn-out process, but it is very encouraging that the end is now in sight. A special thanks are due to Chris Lambourne and the finance and property team for their perseverance on this. The refurbishment team of Chris, Barbara, and Christine Spall are also starting to consider the requirements for this project.

We live in challenging times and the Presbyterian Churches in Hawkes Bay like many in the rest of the country are reaching critical points in their life cycles when congregational worship, mission and leadership is increasingly marginal in terms of long-term sustainability. We are all in the same boat with aging and declining congregations that no longer reflect the society in which we live. To this end Presbytery has engaged the Rev Mark Johnston from St Pauls to lead our region in a way forward to both build our capacity for change and for increasing collaboration. The vehicle chosen is a learning community rather than a committee in which each church has 3 representatives getting together every 6 weeks throughout 2025. We had a great start on Wednesday night. Don't worry, individual councils and congregations will also be involved in this process!

On a positive note the first Common Good with Jill interviewing Charles Ropitini drew 70 people and was very well received. It was great to finally get "The Jesus Way" course underway on Sunday- something that has been months in planning.

Another exciting development is an Easter Sunday Service planned for Maraekakaho. This will begin with Worship at 3pm and followed by afternoon tea of hot cross buns and pikelets cream and jam and an Easter Egg hunt for the kids!

Romans 15:13 *"May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit".*

Arohanui,

Jim



Following the death of Linda Pollock, Parish Council has made the tough decision to bring an end to our Bridging Hawkes Bay ministry. Prior to Linda's appointment it was challenging to get someone to lead it and to find volunteers. While the small team did some wonderful work supporting and being with those who have been impacted by Cyclone Gabrielle, Parish Council decided it was simply too challenging to continue.

We are grateful for the work that Linda, Kirsty and each of the volunteers carried out and for the impact they made in sharing Christ's love in the community.

We are conscious that the trauma of the cyclone and all that it caused continues to be very evident in Hawkes Bay. We are talking with some organisations who are working in this space to whom we will redistribute the funding that we were given. We will advise you when these decisions have been made.

At a congregational meeting last year, a decision was made to give \$10,000 to the Wairoa community. It was challenging to find the best way to do this- something that Linda had worked hard on. We are now happy to report that we have given \$10,000 to WEAVE (formally known as the Napier Family Centre). One of their counsellors already had great links into the Wairoa Community and she is going there for two days a week to support whanau up there. Part of her work is supporting the people who are already on the ground supporting people there.

The World Day of Prayer: Cook Islands

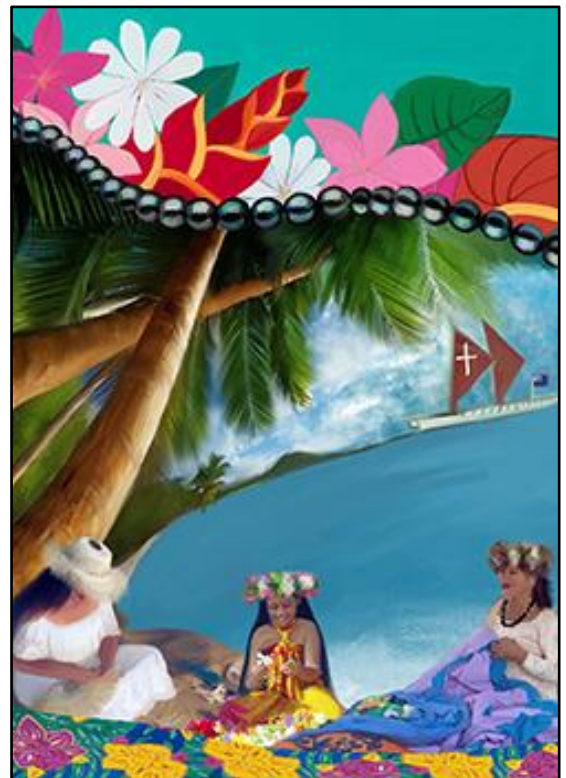
On Friday, March 7th, a number of us ventured over to St Pauls at Napier to take part in the World Day of Prayer. Each year this is put together by women from a particular nation and this year it was women from the Cook Islands! The church service was exquisite and very moving. Berry Rangi shared her own story of what it was like growing up and being punished for speaking her own language.

Here is some of the material from the World Day of Prayer:

"Wonderfully Made"

Artists Tarani Napa and Tevairangi Napa, a mother and daughter duo, created this year's artwork. They share the vision they had for their composition based on Psalm 139:14: *'I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made'*.

"Our Heavenly Father blessed our islands of the sea. From the northern islands across the ocean to the southern islands, the golden sun shines through the clear blue skies and birds freely fly. From the bright, white sandy shores all the way to the highest mountain top our islands are abundant with fresh produce and colourful flora and fauna. The lagoons and oceans are bountiful with sea life, fish and gems (like black pearls), which link us to the world.



On each island the mighty coconut tree stands tall, a symbol of strength and goodness. The coconut tree provides for our health and wellbeing. We have discovered how to use every part, from the fronds to the very deep roots for food, drink, medicine, shelter and much more. The coconut tree is essential to our survival and is the tree of life for our people.

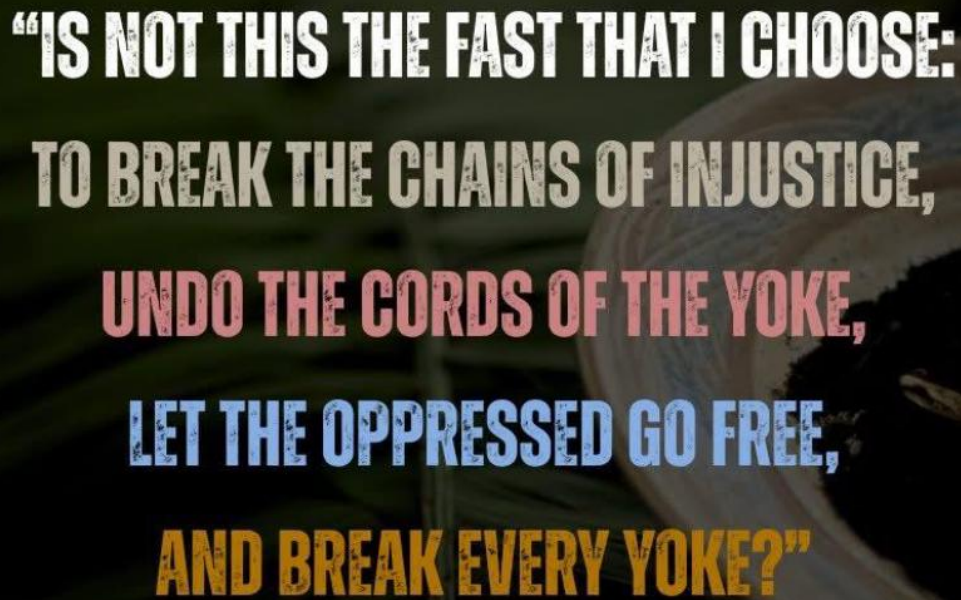
We are grateful for the arrival of Christianity to our shores 200 years ago. The gospel of Jesus Christ brought hope, peace and light. In time, our cultures have interwoven with Christianity, and the blessings are evident today. As guardians and caretakers of God's marvellous works, we always treasure these words, *'I made you wonderful'*.

Our women play a vital role in keeping our heritage and traditions alive. They are the keepers of talents, teachers and mentors. From mothers to daughters, the cycle of life, faith and love continues here on our islands of paradise. We show our respect and love for God and for one another in harmonies of song and prayer. Our precious Tivaevae

quilts represent patience, love and unity. We honour God's love and mercy with hats we wear to church, woven by skilful loving hands from the strands of rito, the young coconut leaf. We adorn ourselves with sweet scented Tiare tropical flowers, made into crowns and garlands. From the heart, we teach and nurture our beloved children, the younger generation, our future.

At the closing of a gathering, our Tongareva elders always say these powerful words of encouragement: 'Kia mau te serenga! Kia mau te napena! Kia mau!' This means '*hold on tight to who you are, in all aspects of your existence!*' We are wonderfully made by God, and we should cherish all the aspects of who we are!"

About the artists: Tarani Napa is a mother of six children and has three grandchildren. She is a certified primary school teacher, entrepreneur and creative artist. Tevairangi Napa, also a creative artist, is the eldest daughter of Tarani, and is a proud mum of two children. They feel honoured to have been able to share this piece of artwork in recognition of their love for their home, their faith and their heritage.



**"IS NOT THIS THE FAST THAT I CHOOSE:
TO BREAK THE CHAINS OF INJUSTICE,
UNDO THE CORDS OF THE YOKE,
LET THE OPPRESSED GO FREE,
AND BREAK EVERY YOKE?"**

- ISAIAH 58:6



Oh, How Words Have Changed!

20 years ago these words meant something different!

	THEN	NOW
Cloud	Just a weather phenomenon	Online storage and computer services!
Spam	A type of canned meat	Unwanted emails and messages!
Post	Sending a letter	Sharing content!
Apple	A delicious fruit	A Tech giant that creates amazing gadgets!
Mouse	A furry rodent	A computer accessory!
Tablet	A flat surface for writing	A portable touchscreen device!
Bug	An Insect	A glitch in software!
Cookie	A sweet treat	Data stored on your computer!
Surf	Riding the waves	Browsing the Internet!
Jam	A fruit spread	A session for musicians or a traffic jam
iPad	An eye patch	A handheld device from Apple!
Chip	A piece of something	A microprocessor in technology

What words do you think will change next?

IMPORTANT DATES

SACRED SPACE

Weekly Study Group 10.10am Each Thursday morning

Monthly Study Group	Last Monday night of the month
<p>1. Introduction to the course</p> <p>2. What is a study group?</p> <p>3. How to use the course materials</p> <p>4. How to prepare for the exam</p> <p>5. How to write an essay</p> <p>6. How to give a presentation</p> <p>7. How to work in a group</p> <p>8. How to manage your time</p> <p>9. How to stay motivated</p> <p>10. How to deal with stress</p>	<p>1. Introduction to the course</p> <p>2. What is a study group?</p> <p>3. How to use the course materials</p> <p>4. How to prepare for the exam</p> <p>5. How to write an essay</p> <p>6. How to give a presentation</p> <p>7. How to work in a group</p> <p>8. How to manage your time</p> <p>9. How to stay motivated</p> <p>10. How to deal with stress</p>



MARCH

Sunday 23 March - 10am worship
- 11.30am *"The Jesus Way"*

Sunday 30 March

- 10am worship
- 11.30am “*The Jesus Way*”

APRIL

Wednesday 2 April - Parish Council 7.00pm

Sunday 6 April

- **10.00am** Worship and Holy Communion
- **11.30am** *"The Jesus Way"*

Wednesday 9 April - The Common Good – Common Room – 7.00pm
“Singing Songs of Protest”

Sunday 13 April - 10.00am Worship - Palm Sunday
11.30am “The Jesus Way”

Thursday 17 April - Maundy Thursday Reflective Service - 7.00pm

Friday 18 April - Good Friday Walk with the Cross – Beginning at St Andrew's and ending at St Matthews

Sunday 20 April - 10.00am Worship
Easter Celebration at Maraekakaho – 3.00pm
No “*Jesus Way*” on this day

Friday 25 April - Anzac Day Dawn Service 5.30am
Anzac Day Maraekakaho Service – 9.30am

Sunday 27 April - 10am Worship
No “Jesus Way” today

May

- Sunday 4 May - 10am Worship and Holy Communion
11.30am *"The Jesus Way"*
- Wednesday 7 May - Parish Council – 7.00pm
- Sunday 11 May - 10 am Worship
11.30am *"The Jesus Way" (Final)*
- Wednesday 14 May - The Common Good 7.00pm (Topic to be advised)
- Sunday 18 May - 10am Worship
- Sunday 25 May - 10am Worship

