

Who is my neighbour?

I recently took my family to the new exhibition at the Wellington Museum and was surprised to see a carved wooden head of the Very Rev James Paterson, second minister of St John's. His was one of a number of such heads of prominent community men that once adorned the exterior of the former Albert Hotel on the corner of Willis and Boulcott Streets, also known as the 'Old Identities' Hotel.

Paterson was obviously a man recognised around Wellington – when the population was about 10% what it is now. With 'Neighbours Day' coming up soon, it's clear we now have a lot more neighbours in our city!

Jesus was once asked 'And who is my neighbour?' and his answer was the parable of the Good Samaritan – Luke 10:29-37.

As a church, do we assume our neighbours are those who live near the corner of Willis and Dixon Streets...? None of us actually live in this neighbourhood. And while some of us are present more than a couple of

hours a week, in reality our neighbours are in all the places we are. We have LOTS of neighbours because we are a community spread all over the place – Karori, Kilbirnie, Wainuomata, Johnsonville. And our neighbours are those on the streets where we live, as well as in our workplaces, our classrooms, our gyms, and our resthomes.

Jesus expects us to carefully re-examine who we assume our neighbours are. And above all, Jesus tells us that what really matters is that we recognise and care about all our neighbours. In all the places we are, let's be examples of good neighbours.



Revs Paterson and Lane (Blockheads), circa 2016

Allister Lane

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EDITORIAL

Recently I was part of two different community events – a working bee at my local school and hosting a barbecue for friends and neighbours. It got me thinking about the many different communities we belong to:

- our local neighbourhood where we live
- school community
- work
- friends
- church
- sports clubs
- arts and crafts
- music groups
- family

And I'm sure there are many more communities we are part of at one time or another. This issue of the Messenger talks about some of those communities and neighbours, including Thrive and Scots College.

One of the common characteristics of all these communities is that they are made up of many different personalities, ages, ethnicities and genders. So we're not always going to have the same relationship with each person in the particular group. In fact, we may not always particularly like some of the people in the various communities we belong to.

But God tells us to love our neighbour – so how do we do this if we don't like them? It's more about remembering that they have their own hopes, fears, and dreams and that God loves them just as much as He loves us. We may not always agree with our neighbours, or even like them, but we can respect them. Remembering that God loves us all, no matter what, may inspire us to try to be a bit more like Him – and who knows? One day we might be able to look past that annoying habit of theirs and see the person underneath that God loves.

Elizabeth Gibbs
Editor



Our Neighbours at Scots College

This year Scots College celebrate their Centenary. And this is special for us at St John's because our connection with this independent Presbyterian Boy's College goes right back to the beginning 100 years ago.

It was members of St John's – principally (excuse the pun) the minister Rev James Gibb and his great friend J.G.W. Aitkin (an elder and three-term Mayor of Wellington) – who took the initiative and established the college with generous commitments of their effort, leadership and finances.

What motivated them to do so? Well, the Presbyterian focus on quality education is well known, but it was the failure of Parliament to pass the Bible in Schools Referendum Bill in 1914 that ensured public education in New Zealand was going to remain secular, and thus precipitated the response of Gibb and Aitkin to rally support to establish Scots College less than two years later. The opening ceremony was held on Friday 17 March 1916.

The original site for Scots College was in Hobson Street in Thorndon – where Queen Margaret College is now (oh yeah, they founded that college also). Three years later, in 1919, Scots College moved out to the current site in Strathmore.

But it is not the geographic location that makes Scots College our neighbours. We are two communities linked by history as well as an ongoing commitment to each other. The community of Scots College value the initiative of the original founders and continually seek to manifest the spirit they had in mind to provide quality education for students and developing Christian character.

The staff and families of the school cherish the ongoing relationship which we foster in a variety of ways, including three College Services and four House Services every year. They describe St John's as 'The Rock From Which We Are Hewn' and assert that they continually 'become greater, and truer too, to our root, sprung from St John's Presbyterian Church, still standing and flourishing on Willis Street.'

We join in celebrating with Scots College their Centenary and pray for their ongoing successes.

St John's will host the Founders Service for the main Centenary celebration on the weekend of the 28th August.

Allister Lane
St John's Minister



Hi I'm Enrino

Hi, my name is Enrino Pasullean. My friends call me Ino. Recently, I was appointed as the new Assistant Children & Families Ministry Worker to work alongside Monika. Our role is basically to help to nurture the Children and Families Ministry in a safe and inclusive way and also to assist them to grow their faith in Christ through interactions, activities, and the various programmes we run.

I feel very blessed to be given this opportunity as I believe there is so much potential that could be explored within our community. I also believe that this is a great chance for me, personally, to use the gifts and talents that God has given me to assist the ministry.

It has always been my passion to work with kids and young people. I love investing my time and energy to help the kids grow

their faith. Just like other investments, I understand that returns don't happen overnight. It takes time and there might be challenges (and mistakes!) along the way. But if we rely on God, He will give us the wisdom and guidance to overcome the challenges and achieve our objectives.

As I start my journey in this ministry, I am looking forward to having a great time with the kids and the team. I think it is important to enjoy our journey with God because otherwise we run the risk of being burnt out. I want to encourage and assist others to realise what makes them want to walk with God in the first place and to enjoy their journey.

Enrino Pasullean
Assistant Children & Families
Ministry Worker



My wife, Jeane, and I loved going to St. John's because of the warm welcome and great friendship we were embraced with since the first day we set foot here. Our daughter, Erin, was baptised here in 2013. Both Jeane and Erin enjoy coming to the Music & Movement every Thursday morning.

Neighbours

This might be showing my age a little but when I think about the word 'neighbours' the theme song to the Australian TV show Neighbours comes to mind. However the theme to this programme should have been something more like 'gossip – everyone likes to gossip'. What does it really mean to be neighbourly, especially as we are neighbours in Christ – actually brothers and sisters in Christ?

Most of you know that I've had some time in Madagascar recently. While there I learnt a lot about what it means to be neighbourly. It means showing an interest in people's lives. It means helping those who need help; sharing what you have and asking for help if

Yours in Christ

Stuart Simpson

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you need it. Of course there are negatives to this type of neighbourly attention, such as nosiness, gossip and lack of privacy.

Our concern for our neighbour is born from something – for Christians our concern for the other is born from our relationship with God through Jesus. When Jesus says 'love your neighbour as you love yourself' he is telling us to love those near us, in community, in life, by being involved in their lives, by listening to their concerns, by sharing what we have and even by showing vulnerability. This year we will come across our neighbours at church, at home, on the streets, at work and at school, so let's be neighbours in Christ.



Who is my neighbour?

So the theme for the March Messenger is 'Neighbours/Community' and Elizabeth as Editor wants a contribution. My immediate thought is 'Who is my neighbour?'

A quick look online takes me to Biblehub.com, a superb resource with 27+ translations and commentaries on Luke 10.29: But he wanted to justify himself, so he asked Jesus, 'And who is my neighbour?' (NIV). Of course, Jesus then immediately proceeded to tell the parable of the Good Samaritan in reply, having earlier told the lawyer, who was putting Jesus to the test, that it is correct to love God and love 'your neighbour as yourself' in order to inherit eternal life.

The parable of the Good Samaritan tells us several things:

- that our neighbour is the person in need front of us
- that those in need may be from a completely different part of society to ourselves as well as those in our own community; and
- that we should be the ones taking action in response

It's very easy to fall into the trap of seeking to justify yourself, just like the lawyer – so by now I'm starting to feel really challenged by Elizabeth's topic.

In Jesus's day, a day's journey might be 30 kilometres. Now a day's journey by air could get us to a neighbour anywhere on the planet.

We now have a lot more resources, technology, and expertise to address needs. For instance, the development in China over the last 40 years has lifted half a billion people out of poverty. Medical, political, and economic breakthroughs have lifted life expectancy from the 'three score years and ten' of the King James Bible to in excess of 80 years now. For many people, getting their lives in order through knowing Christ can change their whole value structure, bringing an uplift in both their spiritual and secular circumstances. And in Wellington, many in our Congregation have access to Government, community, and corporate systems in which they can exercise influence.

The neighbourhood is big.

At St John's we can at least make a start in addressing our neighbour's needs – with our pastoral care position, Elders' pastoral care, the BGI, Outreach Committee and Mission activities, Children and Families Ministry, or even the simple act of the Choir singing in rest homes.

David Galt
Session Clerk

Thrive at Festival One

In January Thrive youth made its inaugural trip to Festival One, the much anticipated 'smaller-yet-better-music-festival-cousin' of Parachute. A 22-person-strong team travelled in convoy to the beautiful Mystery Creek for three hot, sticky, and muggy days of contemporary worship, fellowship, and community building.

Opportunities for large-scale gatherings of youth, families, and young adults from the Body of Christ are few and far between, so when they happen they're super duper exciting to be part of!! These trips away are absolute gold for leader-youthie and youthie-youthie relationship building and provide a relaxed atmosphere for us leaders to speak into our youthies' walks with Christ.

We would like to thank the St John's community for the prayerful and financial assistance, which made our trip up to Festival One a reality.
Bring on Easter Camp!

Brett Reid, Thrive Youth Leaders and youthies

Congratulations

Welcome back Gina Williamson following her secondment to Tonga

Wyn Beasley's 90th Birthday

Marriage of Andrew Johnston to Janesha Bhana

Marriage of Oliver Redding and Georgette Phip

Appointment of Enrino Pasullean as the St John's Assistant Children & Families Ministry Worker

Nicki Read's appointment as Deputy Principle at Newtown School

To all those who had successful exam results



What's Happening at St John's?

March

2	Session
6	Church Picnic
9	Communications Committee meeting
13	Quarterly Communion and Fergusson House visit from Scots College
16	Council
20	Palm Sunday
	Scots College Easter Service (5pm)
22	Fellowship Group Easter Service and Lunch (11am)
	Outreach
25	Good Friday
27	Easter Sunday

April

6	Session
3	Aitkin House visit from Scots College
10	Communion
13	Communications Committee meeting
20	Council
25	ANZAC
26	Fellowship Group, Outreach

May

4	Session
8	Communion
11	Communications Committee meeting
15	Pentecost
	Combined Service with St Mary of the Angels and St Peter's
18	Council
24	Fellowship Group, Outreach

Save the Date!!

Coming up on September 2nd - 4th , another way to get to know your Church neighbours by taking part in the Church Camp.

More details to come.