

## Go Give

Have you seen the bus around Wellington with the huge words 'GO GIVE'? If you have, perhaps like me, it took you a moment to decipher it is encouraging blood donors.

We have been talking a lot about giving at St John's recently as we discuss and discern our response to the **Vision for Giving**.



Our giving as a Church (time, talent, and treasure) is motivated by our devotion to God and is a living-out of our faith. Giving expresses our commitment to God and it assumes God is active in and through us as a Church. With God's guiding grace we work together in ministry and mission, and so we

pool our giving to share together in what God is doing in the world. Just like giving blood to a Blood Bank enables life to flow on to others, our giving as a Church enables us to be part of sharing the Gospel with others.

Perhaps we take it for granted that God gives through our giving. But God does choose to involve us. God intends us to be givers, sharing in this divine characteristic.

This Christmas let us remember and celebrate that God gave, so we are able to receive his Son, Jesus Christ. Let us celebrate that Jesus gave blood; gave his life for our sakes, and asks us to share with others the life he gives.

### Allister

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# EDITORIAL

**“A word spoken in due season, how good it is.”**

Proverbs 15 v 23

Another year looms. What will 2014 bring? We do know that in 2014 there will be a football world cup, a general election, a Commonwealth Games, the New Zealand Festival, Winter Olympics and much, much more. There is of course much of 2014 that we as yet know nothing about.

During the year we may be totally oblivious as to what influence we may have on others as a result of what we say or do. In the city of New Orleans at the very start of 1913, a 12 year old boy decided to celebrate the New Year by firing the revolver he had taken from his step-father into the air. The police were alerted. They found the boy who was well known to them as a trouble maker and locked him in the police station cells. Early on the morning of New Year's Day the boy was taken from the cells to the 'Colored Waifs Home for Boys,' a house of correction for young trouble makers. There, his behaviour was so unruly that in desperation the institutions director called in Professor Peter Davis to deal with the boy. Professor Davis was a musician who instructed some of the boys in playing musical instruments as a way of channelling their pent up anger into something constructive. Professor Davis gave the boy a cornet. Instantly the boy fell silent and gently picked up the instrument. His fingers which had recently been playing with the trigger of a revolver, now caressed the instrument. He put the cornet to his mouth and produced his first warm, wild notes.

Never in his wildest imagination would Professor Davis have imagined that his new pupil would go on to be arguably the greatest jazz trumpeter in history. The boy's name was Louis Armstrong, universally proclaimed as the 'great Satchmo.'

In 2014 who knows what words we speak, or gesture that we make or action that we take may take seed and further down the years have an impact that in our wildest dreams we never would have anticipated. It is easy to dismiss this as fanciful, improbable or trite. However, at advent we recall the improbability of how a helpless babe, born in the humblest of circumstances in a small, neglected backwater came to be the saviour of the world. On 28 June 1963, President Kennedy addressed the Dail, the Irish parliament. In his speech he acknowledged the small nations.

*“All the world owes much to the little, five feet high’ nations. The greatest art of the world was the work of little nations. The most enduring literature of the world came from little nations. The heroic deeds that thrill humanity through generations were the deeds of little nations fighting for their freedom. And oh, yes, the salvation of mankind came through little nations.”*

May I take this opportunity to wish all those who read The Messenger a happy Christmas and God's Blessing on all that you say and do in 2014.

**Rob Anderson**

## Growing Circles of Outreach

Those who been at St John's since last year will know that Session has adopted three priorities – growing faith, increasing participation and building community.

I have been struck by an example of all three in action – the Girls Brigade working at St John's under the dedicated leadership of Kathy Sutherland and her team. You might think it is a small outreach – just 6 girls were present at the Brigade break-up on 12 November. But that outreach is much deeper and wider than you might think. At every event it runs, the Brigade provides an opportunity to grow faith as well as have fun and learn skills.

For a start, the Brigade reaches at least one or two parents for each girl at the break-up. Parents speak glowingly of the worth of the brigade to their daughters – they value the community, the leadership, opportunities and the values it teaches. It also reaches out to its own leaders, providing them a chance to grow their own faith, to participate and build their role in the community. The outreach extends beyond the leaders themselves – a group of active supporters from leaders' families and friends were also

present at the break-up. So you can multiply the outreach the Brigade achieves from each girl present by at least three people.

There is also depth. The Brigade's commitment to a weekly programme ensures that community is built each week along with faith. Weeks can grow to years. The best example of that at the Girls Brigade break-up was the award of a rare National Executive badge to Avis Marshall retiring after 62 years in the Brigade and 53 in leadership roles including over 20 years at St John's. Three cheers for Avis! That is an in-depth contribution really worth celebrating and thanking Avis for.

Session will be turning its attention further to participation in the New Year, recognising there are many gifts and talents in our congregation to be recognised, nurtured and used.

**David Galt**  
Session Clerk



*Professor Peter Davis with his pupil Louis Armstrong*

# Alex Read's Baptism

On Sunday afternoon, 10 November, Alex Read was baptised in a service conducted by Allister Lane. The baptism was attended by Alex's friends, family and a large number from the congregation. The following is the testimony that Alex read at the service prior to her baptism.

Thank you all for creating time in your busy lives to come to my baptism. It means a lot to me. I would especially like to thank my family, who have travelled from down South to make it here today. I am honoured that you would spend time and money to be a part of this special moment in my life. I would also like to thank Allister for helping to create this occasion. And of course, my parents. Thank you for helping organise today, spending hours baking and having many conversations but also for supporting me my whole life, encouraging me to ask questions and get to know God.

I have been brought up in a Christian home, Bible stories from birth, grace before every meal and church every Sunday. I knew about Jesus and his birth and death before I started school. I knew about Adam and Eve, Noah and his ark and Joseph and his multi-coloured coat. I did not doubt these stories were true, my parents said they were and as every child knows, parents know everything. As I got older, I was encouraged to ask questions to find out more about God which is inevitably paired with doubts, the main one being 'Does God actually exist?' This was the question I never voiced, I didn't even want to acknowledge it was there. I tried to ignore it but it grew. And so I imagined my life without God, I imagined there was nothing else, Planet Earth and all it contained was just some coincidence. And I felt an incredible sense of loss and loneliness, I felt uncomfortable and not right. I backed off this idea pretty quickly, God's message had come through loud and clear.

My next step in faith took place at my first JYMC Easter camp. I had never experienced anything like it, eating, hanging out and laughing with 100 people who shared your beliefs. The spirit was high but so was the kindness and the caring. Everyone was looking out for each other and this was just so cool. During Saturday night worship, I knelt at the foot of the cross when I felt God's presence. I had never felt so disappointed in myself and I had never felt so whole. I felt and still feel that this was a turning point in my relationship with God.

Nature is where I see God's hand the most. There are some amazing places in the world, even just in New Zealand which are so clever that someone has to have designed them. We went on a family holiday to Fiordland and what I saw just blew my mind. It was so big, majestic yet frightening.

I am still learning, I still have questions and I still have doubts but I know that God sacrificed his only son to save me and I want to commit my life to someone that amazing. God gives me the strength to do things I couldn't otherwise, He gives me patience, He gives me wisdom, He helps me be kind, He takes all my worries and gives me peace. He is love, He is generous, He is so huge He can cause earthquakes and split the sea, He created the world and everything in it and yet He is still my friend who I can talk to any time. That is an awesome God to serve.

**Alex Read**



Allister Lane and Richard Read baptise Alex

## Congratulations

Helen McIntosh, Sam Bennett, Michelle Knight and Hannah Van Dorp for completing their degrees

Bob Burch on his 90th birthday

### Baptisms

Erin Emmanuella, Wellingtonia Pasullean, Jayden George McClure, Hana Sarotte Tuatoko, Zoe Edith Olan Ensor, Holly Grace Johnstone, Alex Read

### Births

Nicholas Christie

And to Avis Marshall for being presented with the NZ Girls' Brigade National Executive Award for dedication and long service

## A New Book for Wyn Beasley

On Friday, 11 October at New Zealand House in London, 'The Supreme Survivor', a book by Wyn Beasley was launched. The New Zealand launch of the book took place in Wellington some six weeks later. The book is an historical biography of the health of Sir Winston Churchill. As an orthopaedic surgeon, Wyn is well-qualified to present the fascinating medical details of one of the



world's great leaders. The Daily Telegraph review of the book noted that: 'Beasley brings an expert but clear approach. He has a nice way with him of explaining medical

# Thinking About Giving

Well the year is almost at its end and what a year it has been. For me one of the most rewarding parts of being one of the ministers at St John's is witnessing people growing in their faith. In one way I believe we have all grown in our understanding of 'giving'. There may be some who have felt we have gone overboard with the vision for giving, however it is such an important part of being disciples' of Christ. As we start to think about Christmas and the New Year, I wonder how we will respond to the pressure of transactional giving in light of 'for God so loved the world that He gave his only Son...?'



"About my loaves and fishes . . . could I get a receipt for tax purposes?"

Another question we may want to ponder during December and into January, especially while things slow down a little, is 'How will we give as Jesus gives in 2014 and beyond in light of the three priorities, growing faith, building community and encouraging participation? If we are part of the St John's community I hope it because we find something in the community valuable. If this is the case then we will want to become more involved, not just by giving financially but also by giving time and sharing talents. Maybe you have started to think about the talents you have which you would like to share with the community as we seek to serve God's mission and ministry. Maybe you have suggestions about how to encourage more participation or you have questions about faith. If this is you then don't hesitate to talk to one of the ministers or one of the elders. Let's continue to 'give as Jesus gives' or at least try! May you all have a blessed Christmas and Happy New Year.

Yours in Christ  
**Stuart**

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*Winston Churchill*

a nice way with him of explaining medical science with vivid analogies... He gives a good account of the reality of treating a great man on whose health a nation's fate depended. What is medically most advisable may not be what is politically possible.... It (the book) stands on its own merits as a vivid account of Churchill's battle between his body and his spirit."

Well done Wyn.  
**Rob Anderson**

*we wish everyone a  
Blessed Christmas*



# What's Happening at St John's?

## December

<b>1</b>	Advent 1: Ordination of new elders A Vision for Giving Lunch Combined Service with St Mary of the Angels
<b>2</b>	St John's Stitchers
<b>4</b>	Session
<b>8</b>	Advent 2: Kid's Pageant
<b>11</b>	Communication Committee
<b>12</b>	Music and Movement
<b>15</b>	Advent 3: Carol Service
<b>18</b>	Council Meeting
<b>22</b>	Advent 4
<b>24</b>	Christmas Eve Family Service
<b>25</b>	Christmas Service

## February

<b>5</b>	Session
<b>9</b>	Thanksgiving in the morning service for the St John's Lectureship
<b>10</b>	St John's Stitchers
<b>12</b>	Communication Committee Finance Committee
<b>13</b>	Music and Movement
<b>16</b>	Rev Tom Cuthell Preaches
<b>19</b>	Council Committee
<b>20</b>	Music and Movement
<b>23</b>	Presbytery Picnic in Petone First evening service
<b>25</b>	Fellowship Group
<b>27</b>	Music & Movement Outreach Committee

## January

<b>23</b>	Parachute Trip
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