

# The Gardeners' Hymn

All things bright and beautiful

All creatures great and small  
All things wise and wonderful  
The Lord God made them all

But what we never mention though gardeners know it's true  
Is when He made the goodies He made the baddies too.

*All things spray and swattable  
Disasters great and small  
All things paraquatable  
The Lord God made them all*

The green fly on the roses, the maggots in the peas  
Manure that fills our noses, He also gave us these

All things spray and swattable etc

The fungus on the goose-gos, the club root on the greens  
The slugs that eat the lettuce and chew the aubergines

*All things spray and swattable etc.*

The drought that kills the fuchias, the frost that nips the buds  
The rain that drowns the seedlings, the blight that hits the spuds.

*All things spray and swattable etc.*

The midges and mosquitoes the nettles and the weeds.  
The pigeons in the green stuff, the sparrows on the seeds.

*All things spray and swattable etc.*

The fly that gets the carrots, the wasps that eats the plums,  
How black the gardeners outlook, though green may be his thumbs.

*All things spray and swattable etc.*

But still we gardeners labour midst vegetables and flowers  
And pray what hits our neighbours will somehow bypass ours

*All things spray and swattable etc.*

Barbara Robinson

## Calendar of Events

**14 June**  
Quarterly Communion

**21 June**  
All Age Worship  
60th Anniversary of  
St John's Boys' Brigade

**12 July**  
Monthly Communion

**1 August**  
Blackboard concert, St  
John's Centre. A night to  
share and celebrate home  
grown talent. Contact Beth  
Cizadlo 476 7733

St John's in the City  
Presbyterian Church  
Corner Willis & Dixon Sts  
p: 385 1546  
e: info@stjohnsinthecity.org.nz  
www.stjohnsinthecity.org.nz

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# The Messenger

June 2009

St John's in the City, Presbyterian Church

## What does it mean to belong? The 'how' and 'what' of belonging.

St John's has identified the theme of 'Belonging' this year. It is a worthy theme that is rich in meaning for us as the church community. Two questions related to this theme are: 'How do we know if we belong?' and, 'What is it that we belong to?'

Our theology (our understanding of God and the ways of God) says that all are invited to belong to God and to each other. God loves and welcomes all into relationship and enables that relationship through Jesus Christ. God also invites us into relationship with each other and enables this through Jesus Christ. In baptism we celebrate that through Jesus Christ we are both forgiven and redeemed. We are brought back from anything and everything that would lead us to annihilation to share in the open, life-giving relationship found through Jesus Christ. Baptism marks us as belonging to God; we become known as children of God (Romans 8). At the same time baptism incorporates us into the family of the children of God, the Body of Christ, the Church. Whilst this is done among the people of a local congregation (e.g. St John's in the City) the belonging that baptism knows

and proclaims is within the universal Church (with a capital 'C')! This mysterious and often elusive entity is a product of God's Spirit, and yet is identifiable and tangible in many places (e.g. St John's in the City). As children of God ourselves we baptise people who express their faith and desire to share in the life of Christ.

But what about people who cannot express their faith and such a desire to belong? Are those people excluded?

Our theology is grounded in God's grace, and as such we recognise that God moves ahead of us always, enabling us to respond to his outpouring of love. Therefore, we baptise babies who are unable to express faith as an adult might. We do so on the basis of God's grace, as well as in recognition

of our responsibility to nurture all people in faith. As a baby's parents express their faith in bringing their child for baptism we, the Church, support them in doing so because of the faith we share together. As a community we commit ourselves anew to also nurture the faith development of young people and those new to faith. We do so in recognition that

*continued inside...*



Rev Allister Lane  
with Ciara Coughlan

## What does it mean to belong? Continued from cover

all of us rely on the love of God which is given before we deserve God's love, or are even aware of God's love.

We give thanks that our belonging is not because of something that we do, but

because of what God does for us. We give thanks that, because of God's grace, all are able to belong. We give thanks that God seeks us out, and that he gives us each other to support, nurture and

encourage each other. I pray that you will experience this belonging and find new ways to share that belonging with others.

Allister Lane

## Kelburn's 100th Anniversary

1909 was an important year, not just because of the birth of my father. It saw a number of events that led to the establishing of Kelburn Presbyterian Church in Raroa Road, Kelburn.

For a new congregation in a new housing area to decide to become a sanctioned charge and call a minister without any financial help from the wider church and relying entirely on its own resources would now be considered a venture of great faith and courage. Yet this is part of the Kelburn story.

Members of St John's and St Andrew's became aware of the need to expand the Church's work into newly developing areas. George Troup, Charles Moore of St John's and Robert Tait from St Andrew's were key movers. From 1905 a group had met for worship in a local home and then in 1908 at the Anglican Church in Upland

Road. The average attendance was 28, the average offering 12 shillings. In 1907 the Presbyterians were offered land near the Kelburn viaduct, the cost being 825 pounds. This land had been part of William Moxham's Upland dairy farm.

On 28th February 1909 the church was opened for divine service by Dr Gibb. A Sunday School was opened with 7 teachers and 49 scholars. Presbytery cordially agreed for Kelburn to become a fully sanctioned charge. On Thursday 3rd June 1909, the Session met in the church, at the close of the ordination and induction service, and was duly constituted. A congregational meeting on 24 June 1909 agreed to call a minister, with a stipend of L200 per annum, with an allowance of L50 in lieu of a manse. The first minister (the Rev. D.D. Scott) approached accepted the call but his congregation at Onehunga

prevented him from coming.

The Rev. A.C.W. Standage said that when he and Mrs Standage came to Kelburn early in 1910 they found a membership of only 40. "But there was a spirit of enthusiasm and sacrificial dedication of time, talents and possessions, a friendliness, and a devotion to our Lord Jesus Christ that enabled initial tasks to be undertaken successfully, and a strong and growing Church to be established within a few years."

The end of Kelburn as a separate entity came in December 1993. The congregation of St John's became United with Kelburn Presbyterian Church on 12 December 1993. The church that had been established as a daughter was welcomed back into the St John's fold where they have continued to worship and to play a variety of roles in its life.

Lynn Pollock

## E d i t o r i a l

The Reverend Doctor Peter Jensen, The Anglican Bishop of Sydney deservedly gets a good press. In a recent Sydney Morning Herald article he commented on the fears generated by the global recession. "The individualism promoted by the economic boom years has eroded communitarianism. We don't give time and space to our relationships with one another and with God. We go jogging rather than join a running club. It's terrific to have a cheque in the mail and food on the table, but if you're eating alone and no one cares, it's no good. People are asking, 'what is there to look forward to, the good times are over and we fear the future?' Individualism has robbed us of the relationships that can support us in the tough times."

Another notable 'Australian,' Wallaby coach Robbie Deans used to coach the Crusaders rugby team, a team laden with the superstars of the game. Deans attributed the success of the side to their team work, rather than the contributions of particular individuals. His mantra was, "there is no 'I' in team."

When he founded The Young Mens' Bible Class Sir George Troup appreciated

the benefits of 'team'. He coached the Bible Class rugby team (see photo) that played competitive rugby in the Wellington senior competition. Troup also organised harrier and tennis teams for his charges.

The concept of team is not new. You can argue, that Jesus selected a team of people with complementary gifts and complementary personality types. They became known as the 12 disciples. They were given a specific and challenging goal by their Master: "go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you."

I don't see St Johns in the City as a team, nor do I see it as a number of individuals. I see it as a community comprised of a number of teams. There is

team session, the pastoral care team, the music team, the flower roster team and so on. Belonging to these teams build up the communitarianism that Peter Jensen sees as vital to the successful functioning of a community. It empowers us as a congregation to not only support one another but to continue to strive in fulfilling Jesus's command to his disciples. For that commission still stands.

Rob Anderson



St John's Young Men's Bible Class Rugby Team



Team Session, with a certain shield donated by the Earl of Ranfurly

# Taonga - Living Treasures St John's Evening Service

Norah Owen-John is more than likely unknown to a number of people in the congregation. Confined to her flat in Johnsonville, Norah has been unable to attend worship at St John's for a number of years. However, she is still very much a part of the congregation and members of the St John's community help with her care. Although frail, her mind is sharp and her voice is as clear and decisive as I remember it when she preached at St John's on a regular basis.



**Mrs Norah Owen-John**  
Remarkable woman,  
remarkable life.

Recently Margaret Gilkison took me to visit Norah. I sat entranced as she regaled stories from her remarkable life. The pity is that in the space available I can barely do it justice. Norah was born and raised in South Africa. Never one to 'take a step backwards' Norah's early years give a hint of her character. When she was just 20 years of age Norah became a chaplain in a Pretoria women's prison. At the same age she also joined South Africa's Women's Volunteer Air Force. Her determination to become a fully fledged pilot was only thwarted when the flying instructors left for active service.

In 1944 she married a young lawyer William. Norah again defied convention when she decided to train for the ministry. However, she was firmly told that she was wasting her time as, "There will never be women ministers." Undeterred she began her theological studies and was licensed as a lay preacher. Following the war Norah and William moved to Rhodesia. Her years in Rhodesia evoke a kaleidoscope of wonderful family memories. Norah threw herself into all manner of activities with typical vigour and enthusiasm. Starting off as a Girl Guide Captain she ended up as Provincial Commissioner. In 1945 she joined the National Council of Women and by 1960 was National President

for Southern Rhodesia. That same year she was made a Member of the British Empire (MBE) for her 'voluntary work among women and children of all races.'

Norah, William and young son Peter migrated to New Zealand in 1964. They lived firstly in Blenheim, then Upper Hutt and finally in Wellington. It was then that their association with St John's began. An attraction of St John's was no doubt the minister, Jock Kinloch. Jock was a Scotsman who had also spent time in Rhodesia where he had been a policeman. Norah 'loved being a member of St John's.' At St. John's Norah became something of a pioneer. She was the first woman to preach in St. John's. Following her first sermon at St. John's she felt some trepidation when she saw Session Clerk, Bruce Fowler striding purposefully towards her. "Norah", he said "My grandfather would turn in the grave, seeing a woman in the pulpit, but I enjoyed it, good on you." For the next decade her sermons, spiced with stories from her life, became a familiar and popular part of the rhythm of St John's. In 1970 Norah was inducted as St John's first woman elder. Her induction was not without controversy as there were some who resisted this move.

Norah's life of service was not restricted to the church. She continued her work with the Girl Guides becoming National Vice President in 1980. In this capacity she visited England and had afternoon tea with Her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth II. She was chairman of the Duke of Edinburgh Advisory Council, a foundation member of the Litter Control Council and Conservation New Zealand and a sought after public speaker. In 1980 Norah became a marriage celebrant. Her warmth and empathetic nature made her a popular choice and she estimates that she was a celebrant at between 500 and 600 weddings. During our interview she pointed at her wedding ring and said with a twinkle: "three times I had to use my own wedding ring in ceremonies when the groom forgot to bring the ring." She has also officiated at around 30 funerals. Later, I contemplated that during her rich and full life most of her work has been of a voluntary nature and all has been spent in the service of others.

Paradoxically, Norah Owen John personifies St John's motto for 2009, 'The Year of Belonging.' For, although she has not set foot inside the church for some years she is an integral part of the congregation. Norah takes a keen interest in church affairs. Her connectivity to the congregation is by way of regular phone calls and visits from St John's member; Margaret Gilkison, Roger Lloyd and Alan Darroch (who once a week shops for her groceries).

Above all surrounded by her family photos, memorabilia and memories Norah continues to be a witness to the love of God.

*Rob Anderson*

In January of this year I made the biggest move of my life thus far - I packed all my worldly possessions (well at least as many of them as I could fit) into my little Toyota Corolla and made the move from Dunedin - my home of 24 years - to Wellington to begin my professional working life. This move meant a lot of new things for me - a new job, a new city, a new flat, a new rugby team, and, for the first time in my life, a new church. I came along to St J's one Sunday morning in February, really to check out the new act in town (i.e. Allister Lane - whom I knew from Allister and Naomi's time down south). It was on this very first Sunday at St John's that I spied a notice advertising the start up of an exciting new evening service targeted particularly at my age group. My immediate thought was 'AWESOME - how cool that this church wants to reach out and cater to the 20-30s age group'. Over the following weeks I heard more about this service from various people involved and waited with eager anticipation for the inaugural service. And when it came around...it was fantastic - hence why I am still attending (that and the wonderful sense of welcome I

have felt at St John's generally - thanks).

The service is like, but also totally unlike any 'typical' church service. There is prayer, there is worship, there is an offering, there is a sermon. But there is much, much more. There are some unique features of the evening service that really make it something special. The service is based in the conference centre so there are no pews, but rather the room is set up in a sort of cafe style where we all sit in groups around small tables, which lends itself perfectly to conversation. Early in each service we pass the peace of Christ to one another - we bless one another by saying "the peace of Christ be with you" - but we continue this time by sharing coffee and conversation with one another. It's a great way to meet new people each week, to see how others have been doing and of course have a little bite to eat and a steaming cuppa (which will become more and more wonderful as we head into the winter months). The second special thing about this service is the sermon - if that is really what it can be called. Each week we are brought a message, either by Ryhan, or a visitor. This is a

relatively short talk, but full of thought-provoking material, which really fuels the small group discussion that follows. With the aid of some great facilitators each group delves into a series of questions in any which way they fancy in order to explore the topic. And of course, I would be remiss in not mentioning the amaaaazing meal that follows the service every week (courtesy of a roster of fabulous volunteers - big thanks to you awesome guys and girls). At the conclusion of the service we are lead in grace, we pull all the tables together and eat a delicious meal together over which we continue our conversation.

The most valuable part of all of these aspects of the evening service is the way they build and strengthen community. Already in the evening service there is a great community atmosphere building. And this is also an area of great potential in this service. I am certain that this community will continue to build and as it does there is huge potential to extend from this base out into the wider community through outreach and service. How this will evolve will be exciting to witness and be a part of.

*Gina Williamson*

## Rodger Lloyd: My Favourite Hymn

Without doubt the hymn that I have valued the most over all my years has been "Trust and Obey". As a small boy visiting Nelson and my paternal Grandmother I came to know the hymn at the Baptist Church where she worshipped.

Many years later at my home church, Island Bay Presbyterian, where I was for many years leader of the Sunday School, "Trust and Obey" became popular with the children and invariably included at anniversaries. And more recently when Kathy and I were married at St John's the hymn was sung during the service. That was the icing on the cake.

Verse 1:  
*When we walk with the Lord  
In the light of His word  
What a glory He sheds on our way  
While we do His good will  
He abides with us still  
And with all who will trust and obey.*

Chorus:  
*Trust and obey  
For there's no other way  
To be happy in Jesus  
But to trust and obey.*

In this rather unsettled world of ours there is little doubt there is no other way to go but to trust and obey Him. That surely is our prayer.



Two signs spotted outside a church in England

## And another thing...

Congratulations to Youth Group leader Thomas Budd. At parliament recently Thomas was one of a select group of students who received a prestigious NZQA scholarship for top students in the New Zealand Scholarship Examination for Graphics. This is an outstanding achievement. Thomas is presently studying architecture at Victoria University. In a recent interview with the Dominion Post Thomas stated that: "I want to take the architecture world by storm. I don't want to design concrete slab buildings. I want to be really creative," Good on you Thomas. The congregation will follow your career with interest.

The Pastoral Care Committee want to encourage people so that they feel that they belong to and feel part of the church community. To this end the Pastoral Care Committee are organising 'geographical' lunches throughout the year. The remaining lunches for 2009 are:

- 28 June: Northern Suburbs
  - 26 July: Karori
  - 25 August: Central Wellington
  - 27 September: Eastern suburbs
- The committee is also organising a congregational morning tea on 15 November.

All the lunches will be held after morning worship in the St John's Centre. Those attending are asked to bring a plate of finger food.

Congregational social event: Blackboard Concert

Saturday evening 1st August in the Conference Centre. If you're a budding musician, singer or have some other performance talent to share put your name on the blackboard and start preparing to entertain us at this concert. This is a night for sharing and celebrating home grown talent so put the date in your diary for a great night!!

Contact Beth Cizadlo: 4763377 or watch the weekly bulletin for further information

## Elaine Steedman

Elaine Steedman, wife of St John's Minister from 1976 until 1984 The Very Reverend Doctor David Steedman, died recently. Her funeral was held in the church on 25 May and conducted by family friend and David Steedman's successor at St John's, Rev Maurice Brown. Elaine will be fondly remembered as a warm and welcoming person. Elaine and David's manse at 2 Kelburn Parade was a place of great hospitality and inclusiveness. Both David and Elaine were convivial hosts who had the capacity for making everyone feel welcome. They hosted many groups in the manse. One group was 'Young Marrieds' where those couples

whom David had married were invited to regular Friday night evenings of fellowship, discussion and supper.

Elaine was the founder of Friends at Court. The Friends at Court story personifies Elaine's pastoral sensitivity and commitment. One day at a Christchurch bus stop Elaine overheard two young women talking about an imminent court appearance. The two were obviously daunted by what to expect, so Elaine volunteered to go with them and support them during their court appearance. Following this Elaine ascertained that there was a need to assist and support people who were

facing the judicial system. When the Steedmans came to Wellington Elaine, with David's help, enlisted the support of Court chaplains David Millar and Father Sherry and Mayor Michael Fowler to present the concept of 'Friends at Court' to a large group of people including many members of the congregation. The result was that 60 volunteered to assist people in court by providing services such as finding legal aid, completing forms, organising translators and so forth. Elaine's vision had a huge impact.

Our condolences go to Elaine's family.

*Rob Anderson*