

A Visit to Myanmar

In May the congregation was told that there was an opportunity for a team of 5-6 young adults from the Presbyterian Church of Aotearoa New Zealand to spend 7-10 days at the Tahan Theological College of the Presbyterian church of Myanmar with the staff and students of the college. The group will be building on a trip that was taken by PCANZ members in January 2011, using English conversation material to structure the lessons and their time at TTC. This is all really exciting. So why should St John's have relationships with the Presbyterian Church of Myanmar?

Why Myanmar? In 2010 the Outreach Committee decided that St John's should become more involved in God's mission overseas through a relationship with an overseas Church. It considered those which the Presbyterian Church of Aotearoa New Zealand (PCANZ) already had, and was attracted to the active partnership with the Presbyterian Church of Myanmar (PCM) led by St Columba's Presbyterian Church in Botany Downs. St Columba and the PCANZ had good links to the PCM and had worked through the matter of whether overseas churches could support God's mission in Myanmar and, if so, how best that could

be achieved. St John's would be joining an already well thought through and supported partnership that was enthusiastically supported by the PCM.

Why not just send money to Myanmar? Angela Norton, who is the PCANZ Partnership Co-ordinator says that although the Presbyterian Church of Myanmar is grateful for any financial support it receives, its key desire is to know its people are not alone. They desire relationships with other Churches and Christians. As Christians we do not live in a vacuum, we need each other and although we can support and encourage our brothers and sisters in Christ in Myanmar they can do the same for us.

Will it be safe? Myanmar is actively encouraging visitors. Angela says "we felt safe at all times however, we were aware of being under constant surveillance. The greatest issue we faced was whether we were placing the local people under any danger or hardship. We would often ask that question and were consistently reassured that they were "OK". The fact that we visited was great encouragement that God and the world had not forgotten them." Most places have negative and positive elements to them and Myanmar is no different.

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However the trip in November is not the first and will be carefully planned. The organiser and team leader is an experienced traveller and has been to Myanmar a number of times.

If you are interested in learning more of this new relationship with the Presbyterian Church of Myanmar and the trip in November you are welcome, in the first instance, to speak with me, Stuart Simpson 043851547

*Yours in Christ
Stuart Simpson*

Editorial

In my first year at Victoria University one Friday night I went along to a Christian Union meeting. The leader of the group was a typically dressed student: jandals, worn jeans, T shirt. He had a beard and longish brown hair. When he spoke he did so with authority. His name was Chris Marshall. Some 30 years later when Chris returned to Victoria University as the St John's lecturer in Christian Theology, along with many others I went along to The University Council Chambers in the Hunter Building to hear Chris's inaugural lecture. This time Chris was attired somewhat differently in a smart grey suit. He was clean shaven and his brown locks were now silver. When he spoke he did so with authority.

Since moving to Victoria University Chris has had a significant impact on those who have taken his popular courses as well as the wider academic community. He is currently Associate Professor and last

year he was appointed Head of the School of Art History, Classics and Religious Studies. Chris has established an international reputation particularly in the area of restorative justice. He is in demand as a speaker both in New Zealand and overseas.

It is something of a *coup* therefore that the Outreach Committee have secured Chris to deliver a six week lecture series on 'Jesus and the Gospels'. These lectures will take place in the St John's Centre from 7:00 until 9:00pm beginning Tuesday 16 August. Chris delivered the same series last year in the Hutt Valley to large and enthusiastic groups. We are hoping to similarly attract large numbers to the St John's Centre.

***Jesus and The Gospels
The St John's Centre
Commencing, Tuesday 16 August.***

Rob Anderson

Dave Adams, Youth Ministry Worker

I caught up with St John's Youth Ministry worker, Dave Adams when he was back at his old school, Wellington College working with Year 9 students on team building activities. Facilitating team building as part of a BGI contract is just one part of Dave's busy life. Dave's major responsibility as the Youth Ministry worker is working with the Senior Youth Group. He also works 10 hours a week at a local high school working with autistic students. As a qualified high ropes instructor he also instructs groups at the BGI high ropes course at Wainuiomata.

Dave is the youngest of four brothers. As a youngster he spent two years in England where his parents were working at a Christian retreat. After finishing at Wellington College Dave had a 'Gap Year'. He moved to Vancouver Island where he worked at a Christian retreat. On returning to Wellington David enrolled at Victoria University where he studied Political Science and International Relations. In mid May he graduated. While studying at Victoria Dave worked as a volunteer youth worker at The Street City Church. Dave's interests are ultimate Frisbee and playing the kory kassilator pro. If you are as mystified about this as I am I am reliably informed that it is a high tech synthesizer.



Youth Ministry Worker, Dave Adams

After two months into the job Dave answers the inevitable question about how he is enjoying it without hesitation. "I am loving the job, everyone has been so welcoming. Although it has been hard work, it really doesn't feel as though it is work." And what does he see as the major goal? Dave pauses briefly before saying: "I remember the impact that a youth worker had on my life. I aspire to have that impact on others' lives." Not a bad goal that.

Rob Anderson

Pastoral Care

I have been appointed to this new role at St John's to coordinate the many and varied ways we offer pastoral care to our church family. This differs from my last role at St John's as the Pastoral Care Worker, where I had a more hands on approach.

So what has changed?

With new appointments to our church over the past couple of years, we now have more people providing pastoral care and a coordinated approach is required.

Who provides pastoral care at St John's?

Care is provided by the Ministry Team, which comprises of our two Ministers (Rev Allister Lane and Rev Stuart Simpson) a Children and Families Worker (Anna Davis) her Assistant (Heather Walker), the Junior Youth Leader (Ngahua Larsen) and the Senior Youth Leader (Dave Adams). We have a group of elders (Session) who have pastoral roles. Pastoral care also happens within our many groups – St J's Kids, Junior and Senior Youth Groups, the 18-30's Evening Group, English as a Second Language, Wine and Theology, Home Study Groups, Transformers (a mentor programme teaming adult members of the congregation with younger members), Music and Movement, Boys' and Girls' Brigade, Men's Breakfast, Women's Association and the Pastoral Prayer Chain. Pastoral care happens amongst, you too, the congregation, as we gather together on Sunday mornings to worship and listen to God's word; as we gather for social functions; as we gather for Communion

and pastoral lunches....and as we gather at funerals to farewell loved ones.

So what actually is pastoral care?

Pastoral care is caring for one another in times of celebration, in times of need and in our daily lives. It is making the life and love of Christ real in personal lives and relationships. It is love in action.

So why do we need a coordinator?

Yes, why? - especially if pastoral care is being offered in so many ways already? Simply, because we are a large congregation, we are a growing congregation, we are a "gathered community", a diverse group with diverse needs. Sometimes in our busyness, caring for others doesn't always happen as we would like, or may be overlooked. Coordinated care is better than fragmented care.

So what do we want to see happen?

We want every person to **feel cared for**, their **needs met** and their **faith strengthened**. We want newcomers to feel **welcomed** and no one to feel isolated. We want everyone to feel that they "**belong**" to our church family. With belonging comes a deepening of faith. With deepening of our faith comes commitment to our church, and to each other. With our commitment comes our ability to reach out to others. It is the calling of every Christian to be a caring person. Our example is Christ and his attitude and spirit and caring. This means it is the task of us all to be pastoral carers.

So how can you help?

If you become aware of any concerns or needs, **please** contact me, **so I can source the help required**, if this is not already happening. As well as our Ministers and elders, we have a team of Pastoral Care Assistants, who have offered their services to help in a variety of ways, such as providing transport to hospital or Dr's appointment, visiting, phoning, providing meals, odd jobs in emergencies etc. In other words, I coordinate care where and when needed.

In conclusion:

Remember, we are all called to bless others by sharing God's love with them. Pastoral care embodies active love, and is grounded in our relationship with God and others. God has entrusted us to "journey with others". And God will be journeying with us, holding and strengthening us as we travel forward.

I can be reached on my email: Margaret.Gilkison@xtra.co.nz or at home on 4763144 or on my mobile 021 144 0494

The theme this year for St John's is *The Year of Sharing*.

Margaret Gilkison

*Grant us a vision, Lord
To see what we can achieve
To reach out beyond ourselves
To share our lives with others
To stretch our capabilities
To increase our sense of purpose
To be aware of where we can help
To be sensitive to your Presence
To give heed to your constant call.*

David Adams from the Book of A Thousand Prayers

Girl's Afternoon Tea

One Friday afternoon in March Dayle and I popped into the Penthouse Movie Theatre cafe for a restorative cup of coffee at the end of a busy week. We were both delighted and surprised to see some of the younger members of the congregation luxuriating in afternoon tea with two of their leaders; Nicki Read and Kathryn Ojala. Lucy McEnaney kindly wrote and sent me this account of their time there - Ed.

On Friday 4 March, the girls of the Wingers Group went to the Penthouse Café for afternoon tea. Kathryn and Nicki took us out. Me, Lucy, Reima, Mackenzie, Callista and Aina had an awesome time!! The food was YUM! And I didn't eat much dinner!

Thanks so much! We had an awesome chill out time! Thanks again.

Lucy McEnaney

Check this Out!

Te Ara is the world's first national encyclopedia created specifically created for the World Wide Web. The project is undertaken by the Reference Group of the Ministry for Culture and Heritage in New Zealand. The encyclopedia is a free use resource, funded by the New Zealand Government. When completed it will be a comprehensive guide to New Zealand – its people, land, culture, history and identity.

They are developing a new entry on the Presbyterian Church and have included some images of St John's.

You may view the entry at: www.teara.govt.nz/en/presbyterian-church

Council

I've been Chair of Council at St John's since October 2010. The Council is the body at St John's which is responsible for ensuring the operations of St John's proceed smoothly (in contrast to Session, which has responsibility for spiritual oversight of the church). Council reports to Session and is accountable to Session. Council's monthly meetings provide an opportunity for the conveners of the nine committees at St John's to report back on their activities. While all of the committees have an important role in the life of St John's, the Finance and Property Committees are often those with the most to report back on. The Outreach Committee is also very active, although has a dual reporting responsibility, also reporting to Session (as is the case with the Christian Education Committee and the Pastoral Care Committee too).

Council Meetings take place on the third Wednesday of each month (from February to November) and are open to all members (and adherents) of St John's although only designated members of Council are able to vote.

Since I've taken over as Chair, quarterly reports of Council business are being published on the church website (www.StJohnsintheCity.org.nz) in an effort to ensure the congregation has greater visibility of Council activities – the latest report has just been added. I also attend the quarterly congregational forums and am available at other times if there are any questions about what the Council is working on.

Anton Ojala.

YES, IT'S A CRIME:

St John's Public Issues Forum, Thursday 23 June, 7:00-9:15pm, St John's Centre, Willis St, Attendance Free

Moving beyond **Revenge, Recidivism and Retaliation** and embracing prisoner **Rehabilitation, Reintegration and Reconciliation.**

St John's in the City Presbyterian Church

Parish Survey

Under the auspices of session and the Pastoral Care Committee a survey of parishioners is to be carried out.

The purpose of the survey is to:

- update our parish records
- and
- gain a better understanding of the pastoral care needs at St John's in the City.

The survey is due back by 30 June.

Mission as Witness

Mission is sometimes regarded by Christians as something that happens overseas, or at least outside the walls of the church. But if our mission is joined to God's mission of love to transform the world through Jesus Christ, then our whole lives can be mission. Relationship, stewardship, and worship (or as Tom Wright summarises: "Sex, gardening, and God") – all witness to the character and purposes of God. The activity of shared worship is where we seek to express our witness most clearly as we refine ourselves, seeking to become more faithful as we discover and experience the mystery of God together. Currently, the St John's Session is encouraging us all to

explore what place music has in our worship. How does music express and shape our witness? Creatively using a wide range of musical styles can express something of our own rich diversity as the People of God; people all made in the image of God and yet all different. Music in worship is not for our sake, but is directed to God in our praise. May we find harmony in making music together as part of our witness to the character and purposes of God.

For a copy of the discussion paper 'Music and Worship' please go to www.StJohnsintheCity.org.nz or contact the St John's Office.

Allister Lane

What's happening at St. John's

June

Sunday 2,
Fundraiser: An evening of Stylish Motivation

Thursday 3,
Men's Prayer Breakfast and ESL Study Group

Sunday 12, 10:00am
Quarterly Communion

Sunday 12
Pentecost

Wednesday 15, 5:30pm
Council

Wednesday 22,
St J's Kids Safe at Home Workshop

Thursday 23,
Men's Prayer Breakfast and ESL Study Group

Thursday 23, 7:00pm
Public Issues Forum

Tuesday 28,
Women's Association

Wednesday 29,
Session Executive

July

Wednesday 6, 5:30pm
Session

Thursday 7,
Men's Prayer Breakfast and ESL Study Group

Sunday 10, 10:00am
Monthly Communion

Wednesday 20, 5:30pm
Council

Thursday 21,
Men's Prayer Breakfast and ESL Study Group

Tuesday 26,
Women's Association

Wednesday 27,
Session Executive

August

Wednesday 3, 5.30pm
Session

Thursday 4,
Men's Prayer Breakfast and ESL Study Group

Sunday 14, 10:00am
Monthly Communion

Tuesday 16, 7:00pm
Chris Marshal Lecture in the St John's Centre

Wednesday 17, 5:30pm
Council

Tuesday 23,
Women's Association

Tuesday 23, 7:00pm
Chris Marshal Lecture in the St John's Centre

Tuesday 30, 7:00pm
Chris Marshal Lecture in the St John's Centre

Wednesday 31,
Session Executive

Weekly Events

Sundays
10:00am - Morning Service
5:45pm - Evening Service

Mondays
5:45pm - BB Juniors
6:30pm - BB Seniors

Tuesdays
Girls Brigade

Fridays
6:30pm - Epic
6:30pm - Youth Group

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Views expressed in
The Messenger do not
necessarily reflect those of
St John's in the City.