

Bits and Pieces.

The Banner on our HCUC Magazine Front Cover.

One of the readings for the 20year celebration of HCUC in December 2015 was appropriately focused on Romans 12:4-8. Verse 5 says, "...though we are many, we are one body in union with Christ, and we are all joined to each other as different parts of one body".

The gathering of all the HCUC "family" provided a wonderful opportunity for the children to come together as part of an extended family.

To help the children make sense of the reading we explored the way the human body is made up of many different parts that really need each other to work well (hence the picture of a child at the centre of the wall hanging).

All HCUC congregations were represented as a larger puzzle piece and the children then identified themselves, using various mediums. It was a happy project and it was the children that decided on the header for the hanging... "HCUC we make it WHOLE".

The contribution of children to bring insight and energy cannot be underestimated. We are indeed one family formed by the grace of Christ into one body. *Carolyn, St. Marks.*

We will go...

Many of the Pacific islands had already been discovered in the 14th Century. This was the time of great mariners. They came to the islands as far north as Hawaii, Rapa nui (Easter Island) in the South East and as far south as Aotearoa. It is now believed they went as far east as Madagascar. They discovered all the islands in between in out rigged sailing canoes believed to carry up to 300 people. They carried crops, tools and food. They were great astronomers who were thought to use the stars for direction. The Polynesian people were known as the first to take such long ocean voyages. They are known as the greatest explorers of this time. It would have taken courage to leave their home to go to unknown shores. In Aotearoa, New Zealand, our people have come from elsewhere. It takes a leap of faith to leave and go to somewhere new.

For any further information regarding material in this publication –

Contact our Parish office.

admin@hcuc.co.nz.

Telephone 04 569 6017.

58 Woburn Rd, P.O. Box 30-529, Lower Hutt.



Parish Magazine: March 2017

Kia Ora, Malo e Lelei, Talofa Lava,

Bula Vinaka, Greetings to one and all!



MISSION STATEMENT "We, the members of the Hutt City Uniting Congregations parish, covenant to nurture the spiritual in ourselves and other people and explore new ways of experiencing and sharing God's love in Christ."

*Be Welcome...
and Worship
with Us!*

Contents**Page 2**

Our Church Family

Page 3

Our Team

Page 4

A letter

Page 5

Notes from our Parish Forum

Pages 6-12

Welcome to our Parish.

Schedule of Events,

St. Mark's, Wesley Multicultural Church,

Waiwhetu Uniting,

St. John's,

St. Stephen's,

St. Aidan's,

Stokes Valley Uniting,

Page 8

Decorated Biblical texts

Page 9

Favourite Childhood Bible Stories

Page 10

We will sing his Praises in our Pacific!

Page 12From Spring has Come by Shirley Murray
and Colin Gibson**Page 13**

Thoughts about Spring

Page 14

Friends of God

Page 15

A Bunch of Flowers

Page 16The Banner on our HCUC Magazine Front
Cover**Insert**

Church Notices.

Being part of a church is like being part of a family. You don't just go to church; you belong to a church, part of the family. Having grace for people – being intentional about being together – caring for each other – in each of these ways you will find relationships deepening and strengthening; and as they do, the sense of family and belonging will grow too. *Unknown.*

Editor: Julia Alcorn, Waiwhetu Uniting.

A bunch of flowers. The word carnation comes from “corone”, a flower garland, from which we get Coronation because the flower garlands were used in ceremonial crowns. We carnations in our bouquet for their regal beauty. Roses have a language all their own, telling stories and secrets through their varying colours. In Rome, a wild rose was placed on the door to a room where confidential matters were being discussed. We need Roses in our Bouquet. We need those who believe in us and see all we can be, holding in confidence our imperfections. With that we also celebrate those who will stand up for us, fight for us. Gladiolas symbolize strength and moral integrity. Their name comes from the Latin “gladius” which means Sword, named for the shape of their leaves. We also need Hydrangea in our bouquet! Hydrangea are big beautiful blooms that capture attention Their name comes from the Greek “hydro” which means water and “angos” which means jar or vessel. Literally, the name means, Water Barrel, and it refers to the hydrangea's need for plenty of water. In the Gospel of John, we hear about a woman who was somewhat of a social outcast who comes to the well to draw water. She meets Jesus at the well and he tells her the Good News, the promise of Jesus Christ. She holds this wisdom and the glory of this meeting. A sunflower will literally follow the sun throughout the day, constantly facing the warmth and light. During the night, it will go back in order to greet the sun at its rising. We understand this as we also reach for the Rays of God's love. The Peony is another impressive flower. Peonies are gorgeous, but sometimes, their thin stems are not strong enough to hold them up. Even so, they don't seem to break....they simply bend and bloom a little closer to the ground! Peonies are flexible. We admire their flexible nature. The Iris is another beautiful spring flower we need in our bouquet. The three upright petals are said to stand for Faith, Valour and Wisdom. Lastly, we need a Chrysanthemum in our Bouquet. In Japan, the unfolding of the Chrysanthemum's petals are said to represent Pure Perfection. When we see a small child we think of how perfect God is. We then remember how God sees us. Here is a bunch of flowers for you. *R.Shinkle*



Some of our Friends of God shine like the sun, and their names are known. Some lie in forgotten corners of history like so many fallen autumn leaves blown into the shadows. The Green Isle Community is one example of this.

Born in 1307 to a family of some renown, Rulman Merswin was a successful and wealthy banker, but around 1346 the decay of the world weighed heavy on him; he and his wife, Gertrude, turned their attentions to the pursuit of the friendship of God. He purchased a small island on the River Ill that runs through Strasbourg. The island had been the site of a small convent and church two centuries before, but the buildings had been abandoned and fallen into ruins. Merswin restored the buildings and created a Foundation that could serve as a centre for the spiritual pursuits of both lay people and churchmen who needed a quiet place to develop the work of prayer and meditation. After his death, his colleagues found an extensive collection of works written for and by Merswin. They include a wide range of letters, testimonies, recorded conversations, teachings, histories, and memoirs.

Merswin, and the other Friends of God, were convinced that God's kingdom and the restoration of divine love in the world would come not through sword, not through coin, not through political dictate, and not through sheer human progress, but through the leavening work of the Friends—the work of prayer, worship, and listening. The movement grew out of the preaching and teaching of Meister Eckhart, and especially his Dominican spiritual heirs the preacher John Tauler and the writer Henry Suso.

It is the free relationship between the Friends that we seem to lack in our day. Perhaps this stems from our chronic obsessions with individualism and independence, but the network of Friends—all focused together on prayer and worship—seems enticingly foreign to me. And potentially powerful.

I think of my personal friends scattered afar and friends gathered near who are in the daily weave of my life. Part of what binds me to them is not merely our memories of friendship and occasional connections, but the knowledge that they too are seeking the mind of Christ, they too are pursuing friendship with God. *K. Mulhern*

What we plant in the soil of contemplation, we shall reap in the harvest of action. *Meister Eckhart*

Our Team:

Rev. Anna Gilkison(Senior Minister)

Rev.Kalo Kaisa

Rev. Jannet Mudavanhu

Joan Ellicot



Parish Office: 58 Woburn Road

P O Box 30-529, Lower Hutt

Tel number 569-6017

Parish Administration Officer: admin@hcuc.co.nz

Parish Finance Officer: finance@hcuc.co.nz

...and our team of Supply Ministers, Lay leaders, Administrators, Supporters, Teachers, Council Members and Pastoral Carers.

Doug Rogers signs his emails - 'Your friend, Doug.'

Well, our friend, Doug, this is a letter for you from HCUC as you embark on this ministry role, not for the first time and. hopefully, not for the last.

We want you to know that the many gifts you bring to the several congregations of HCUC have not gone unappreciated, nor are they taken lightly. You have been a minister, mentor and model for the members of HCUC for more years than we care to count.

You are a living archive of the history of the Parish for those of us who have come to HCUC more recently. You continue to feed our hunger for growing in our faith with your twice-yearly studies. You have a warm and steadfast relationship not only with your home congregation but with all the congregations whose ministry you have contributed to. You have befriended and supported not only the members of the Ministry Team but also many who carry out leadership tasks in the different parts of the Parish.

You are a generous and gifted worship leader, a kind and compassionate pastor, and effective at the administrative tasks you undertake.

God bless you, Doug and Gwyn and God bless the ministry you share with Wainuiomata Union Church.

Rev. Anna Gilkison



Thoughts about Spring

1.Spring is a time of new beginnings, HOPE and FRESH STARTS, JOY and HAPPINESS, PEACE and CONTENTMENT. Do you have HOPE and PEACE in your life?

SPRING is a good time to really look at your life and decide what you believe and why. SPRING is also a good time to give your life over to the Lord and let HIM direct and guide your steps, so use this opportunity to do SPRING CLEANING not just in your home but in your heart and spirit too. ~ an excerpt from annieshomepage.com

2. A SPRING POEM

The Spring again is here, life wakes from winter's gloom;

in field and forest far and near sweet opening flowerets bloom.

The morn is fresh and bright, the slow dark hours depart;

let days unstained and pure delight bring sunshine to the heart.

Lord, touch our careless eyes; new life, new ardour bring

that we may read Thy mysteries, the wonder of Thy spring. - *Arthur C. Benson (1862-1925)*

3. How to Spring Clean Your Spirit

While you're cleaning out cupboards and sweeping under the furniture, think about this: Spring cleaning, while worth the effort, will only last for a season, but spiritual cleansing could have an eternal influence, so don't just dust behind those book shelves, dust off that favourite Bible and get ready for a spiritual spring cleaning.~ from about.com: 'Christianity' by Mary Fairchild

Sent by Maureen, Wainuiomata Union Church.



Waiwhetu Uniting, corner of Trafalgar and Grenville St.

Sunday worship 9.30am with a children's programme followed by morning tea and fellowship.

Singing group: Wednesday, 7pm.

Evening Women's Fellowship meets every third Wednesday of the month at 7.30 pm.

Men's Bowls . Every second Friday of the month 2pm

Resource Centre: A library of Books, magazines and DVD's for church members.

From Spring has Come by Shirley Murray and Colin Gibson

The spring has come, let all the church be part of it!

The world has changed, and God is at the heart of it!

New light, new day, new colour after winter grey,

new light, new day, the spring has come,

let all the church be part of it!



Notes from Parish Forum held at Waiwhetu Uniting Church on Thursday 24 August.

- Our devotion, led by Rev Anna, was themed "keys to the kingdom" from Matthew 16. Members of Forum shared their thoughts and visions in response.
- A number of churches have had recent youth activities and services . Continuing involvement for all people in HCUC including youth was a repeated theme.
- Many items related to admin and finance in the lead up to our parish AGM
- A worship leaders training and reflection day lead by Rev Anna is planned for Saturday 9 September at Waiwhetu. Details were sent out in congregational notices. This has since been held and was very successful.
- From the Ministry Team we heard that Rev Doug Rodgers supply is shortly to begin at Wainuiomata with a light induction to be held at morning worship there on 10 September 2017.
- Some maintenance work has been done on the Stokes Valley residence of Rev Jannet while a longer term solution is sought. We also heard that Joan Ellicott's ministry covenant at Stokes Valley has been extended.
- Congregations were reminded to get their nominations for delegates, statistical reports and general reports to the parish office well ahead of the HCUC AGM to be held at St Marks at 10.00am on Sunday 1 October 2017. Ours have been sent in already. Nomination forms to confirm delegates to forum will be shortly sent out by the parish office. Nga Rolston Central Presbytery Youth Enabler will present the reflection at the service to be held before the AGM. Bring a plate to share.
- Early notice: A Parish retreat is to be held at Knox Presbyterian Church on 3 March 2018.



St. Marks Wesley Multicultural Church, 58 Woburn Rd, Lower Hutt.

Combined English Services are held on Sunday at 10.15am. Morning tea after the morning service. (On a few occasions services may be combined with other congregations in the Hutt City Uniting Congregations – these occasions will be notified in the Monthly Newsletter). Communion – First Sunday of the month

Samoan Sunday School – Every Sunday after children's story time from March to August.

Samoan / Tongan Language service – 12noon. Language Sunday School

Taize Service – First Sunday of the month at 7:30pm

Prayer Meeting – Wednesday at 7:30am in the Wesley Room. We begin with a time of prayer and then breakfast afterwards. Anyone from the parish and the community is welcome.

Samoan Youth / Tupulaga – Friday 6pm – 8pm

Samoan Choir practices – Saturday 2pm – 4pm

Samoan Men's & Women's Fellowship – Meets every first Saturday of the month from 12pm – 2pm, February to November.

Samoan Failauga / Lay Preachers – Meets 2nd & 4th Saturday of the month from 12pm – 2pm, February to November. Women's Afternoon Fellowship Group – First Tuesday of the month at 1:30pm.



The stained glass windows at the Kirk.

Stokes Valley Uniting Church, 346 Stokes Valley Rd.

Sunday Worship 9.30am followed by morning tea and fellowship.

Communion: First Sunday in the month.

Kids' Ministry: Every Sunday at 9.30am.

Youth Programme: 13yrs plus: Every second & fourth Sunday after morning service.

Cafe Service: Once a quarter led by the Youth.

Meditation Service: fourth Sunday in the month 2.00pm.

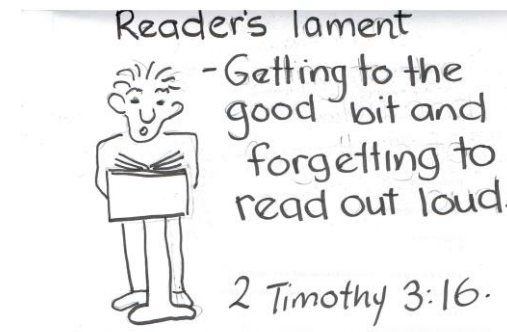
Advent Studies in November, Time/Date to be advised.

Mainly Music 5yrs under: Every Tuesday at 9.30am during the school term.

Indoor Bowls: Every Thursday, 7.30pm in the big Hall.

Friendship Group: Every second Tuesday in the month 2.00pm.

Afternoon Fellowship: Every third Thursday in the month 1.30pm.





St. John's Avalon, 986 High Street, Avalon.

Service: Sunday at 11:00am (Mainly in Tongan)

Sunday School: 10:00am then join the service

Communion: Second Sunday of the month

Tongan language prayers and bible classes: Wednesday at 7:00pm

Club work (10 – 17 years): Second and fourth Sundays from 2-4pm. Anyone between the ages of 10-17 (from outside St John's) is welcome to join us

Does anybody remember the beautifully decorated Biblical texts we used to get from our Sunday School teachers? They were made of stiffened cardboard or thick paper, and were ornately decorated with colourful pictures in the background. They had a chosen Biblical verse at the bottom, and you memorised the verse you were given before Sunday School class the following week. (We used them as bookmarks, and were very proud of our collection of favourite verses from the Bible). In those days there were probably about fifty children in the Sunday Schools and Bible Classes, and we had 8 to 10 teachers to help us learn about Jesus when we adjourned from our church service each Sunday. The little children in the infant classes had sand tables and little square houses with flat roofs and staircases that went up the outside of the houses. We had little stick people dressed as disciples who we moved in and out of the sandcastle villages. Bible stories were illustrated with feltboard figures - with characters such as Nicodemus up a tree and baby Moses in the rushes (made of felt), to illustrate the stories we heard from the Bible. These days children are more likely to watch a DVD... but in those days they hadn't been invented. Television didn't arrive until we were teenagers, so books and illustrations were very important to us when we were learning our Sunday school lessons.

Betty, Wainuiomata.



St Aidan's, Corner Poto Road and Stratton St. Normandale.

Service: Sunday at 9am followed by morning tea and fellowship

Junior Church: Sunday mornings during the service. A stimulating place for pre-schoolers and school-age students.

Communion Service: Second Sunday of the month

Cafe Service: Replaces the regular service on the first Sunday of the month starting at 10am

Messy Church: Third Sunday of the month at 4pm. All ages welcome. For more information contact: carolineatst.a@gmail.com

Open Door (for seniors): a lunch meal fortnightly on a Friday. Transport is available

Mainly Music: Thursday from 9:30 to 10:00am followed by morning tea and play until 11:00am. The church is open from 9:00am

Favourite Childhood Bible Stories

My favourite childhood Bible story is that of Joseph of Israel. I liked that it had family, drama and a good life for Joseph. The story says a number of times that the Lord was with Joseph so it had me hoping that the Lord was with me too. In childhood my three older sisters were not always kind to me, (as younger ones often think of older ones), so I felt a kinship with Joseph. Nothing ever dramatic happened to me, thanks mainly to Mum and Dad. So that is my favourite childhood story. *Ali, Waiwhetu*

My favourite story was of Samson. I loved to imagine a strong man with his strength in his hair. He was also bright and could work out riddles. I imagined Samson pulling down the temple. As a child we can feel powerless so the image of strength was awe inspiring. My mother went to a Christian school. I had Bible stories instead of fairy tales. *Julia, Waiwhetu*

We will sing his Praises in our Pacific!

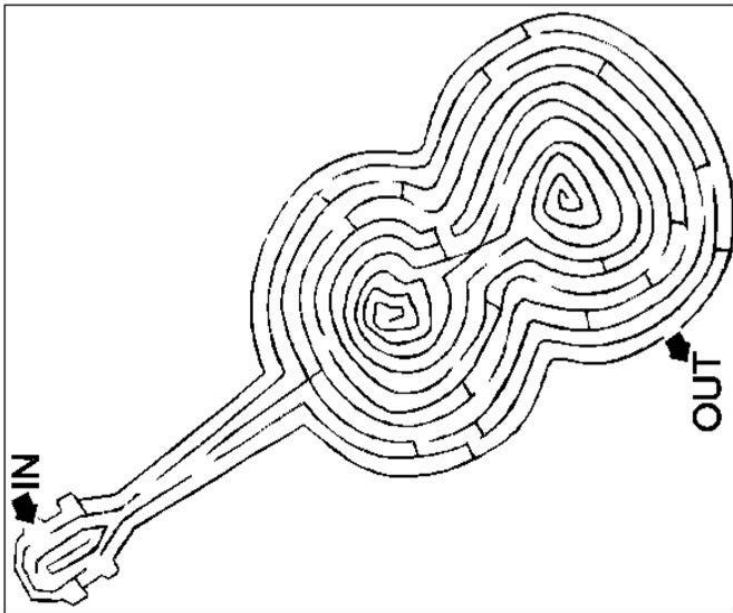
In the smaller churches, hymn singing is sometimes unaccompanied, A strong singer will sing the first notes alone and the rest of the congregation will then join. Church choirs are popular, practice is frequent, and most congregations sing all hymns in harmony.

Some churches have brass bands. It is possible that this tradition comes from northern England, a strongly Methodist area, where participating in brass bands is popular. Other churches have an organ, while others have bands that include drums, keyboard, guitar and ukulele.

Sometimes Choirs meet up and concerts are held in the larger churches, to which all the neighbouring congregations are invited. Choirs are asked to sing at special events and work hard to honour the occasion.

Dance and Drama can be used to bring Bible stories and hymns to life. Adults and children join together to share stories.

While the singing is beautiful, the primary goal is to lead people into worshiping God through music. The songs connect everyone as they listen to the words and take them into their hearts *Unknown*



St Stephen's, Wainuiomata Union Church. Main Rd, Wainuiomata. Service: Sunday at 10:00am followed by morning tea and fellowship in the hall

Sunday School: Runs during the service

Communion: Second Sunday of the month at 10:00am

Tongan language service: Third Sunday of the month

Choir Practice: Sundays at 9:30am

Church Council Meeting Fourth Sunday of the month at 11:45am

Home Group: Tuesday fortnightly at 7:30pm

Wesley Haven Service: First Thursday of the month at 10:30am

Prayer Group: Meets every Tuesday at 9.30am

Look around you: Winter is over; the winter rains are over, gone! Spring flowers are in blossom all over. The whole world's a choir—and singing. *Song of Solomon 2:11*

