

AMONG THE GREATEST THINGS

The greatest reality is
Our existence here on Earth;
The greatest resource is
Our ability to create;
The greatest capacity is
Our capacity for love;
The greatest gift to us is the
Gift of life and a capacity to give;
Our greatest resource for good
Is a shining grace upon us. *F.D.Harper*

St Marks Wesley



For any further information regarding material in this publication -

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Telephone 04 569 6017.

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Parish Magazine: March 2016

Kia Ora, Malo e Lelei, Talofa Lava,
Bula Vinaka, Greetings to one and all!

Ezekiel 16:60 Yet I will remember the covenant I made with you in the days of your youth, and I will establish an everlasting covenant with you.



St Marks Wesley

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!*

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Words of Wisdom "A new life begins for us with every second. Let us go forward joyously to meet it... and we shall walk better with our eyes before us than with them ever cast behind".
(Jerome K. Jerome 1859-1927)

"May no one ever come to you without going away better and happier. Everyone should see kindness in your face, in your eyes, in your smile".
(Mother Teresa 1910 - 1997) from *Betty of St. Stephen's collection*

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BREAKFAST AT McDONALD'S.

A story from a woman completing a college degree in America.

The last class I had to take was Sociology. Her last project of the term was called, 'Smile.' The class was asked to go out and smile at three people and document their reactions. I'm a friendly person and always smile at everyone and say hello anyway, so, I thought it would be a piece of cake, literally.

Soon after we were assigned the project, my husband, young son, and I went to McDonald's. We were standing in line when all of a sudden everyone around us began to back away, even my husband. I did not move an inch. Overwhelming panic welled up inside me as I turned to see why they had moved.

As I turned around there was a stale smell and standing behind me were 2 poor homeless men. As I looked down at the short man close to me, he was 'smiling'. He said 'Good day' as he counted the few coins he was clutching. I held my tears as I stood there with them. The lady at the counter asked what they wanted. He said 'Coffee is all Miss'. It was all they could afford. They needed to sit in the cafe to warm up, so they had to buy something. They just wanted to be warm.

Then I really felt it, the compulsion was so great I almost reached out and embraced the little man with the blue eyes. That is when I noticed all eyes in the cafe were on me, judging my every action. I smiled and asked the assistant to give me two more breakfast meals on a separate tray. I put the tray down and laid my hand on the blue-eyed gentleman's cold hand. He looked up at me with tears in his eyes and said, 'Thank you.' I leaned over, patted his hand and said, 'I didn't do this, God is here working through me to give you hope.'

I started to cry as I walked away to join my husband and son. When I sat down my husband smiled and said, 'That is why God gave you to me, Honey, to give me hope.'

I returned to college on the last evening of class with this story in hand. I turned in my project and the instructor read it. She looked up at me and said, 'Can I share this?' I nodded as she got the attention of the class. She began to read and that is when I knew that we as human beings and part of God, share a need to heal people and be healed.

In my own way I had touched the people at McDonald's, my son, the instructor and every soul that shared the classroom on my last night at college. I graduated with one of the biggest lessons I would ever learn: UNCONDITIONAL ACCEPTANCE. We should all learn how to LOVE PEOPLE and USE THINGS, NOT LOVE THINGS and USE PEOPLE.

Sent in by Maureen, from St Stephen's, Wainuiomata

Book launch of "Muddy Waters" held at St Aidan's on the Hill

John Turton launched his new book "Muddy Waters" at St Aidan's on the Hill in April.

"Muddy Waters" is an auto-biography of John Turton's experience in a home-grown New Zealand religious cult set in North Canterbury. The book tells about how he entered the life-style and the traumatic events leading up to his rapid exit and the impact after it. It is an interesting book and gives a lot of insight in to how cults work.

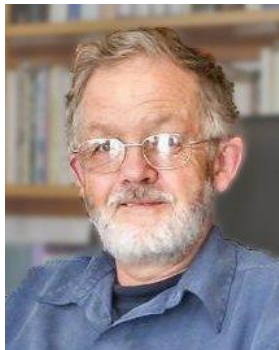
The book launch was a very warm occasion with many people from the Hutt City Uniting Churches attending. John showed us a video about the cult and shared some of his experiences. He also signed books for those who bought them. We all enjoyed a good time of mixing and mingling and John sold out his first run of "Muddy Waters." A second run was being printed.

Also featured at the launch was John's poetry book, "A Pastor's Scrapbook". These poems were written during John's years in ministry when he was looking after the needs of many different people.

Congratulations to John on producing both these books. The people at St Aidan's enjoyed hosting the event and we pray that God would bless each person who reads John's books. During the week of the launch John was interviewed for the Hutt News and there was a lot of interest in the wider community.

Thank you to everyone who came to the launch and helped to make it a successful evening.

If you would like to order copies of these books please contact John: 'jturton@clear.net.nz' cell phone 027 5947076



Our Parish

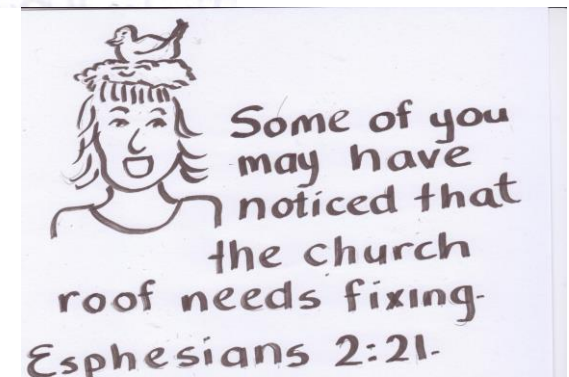
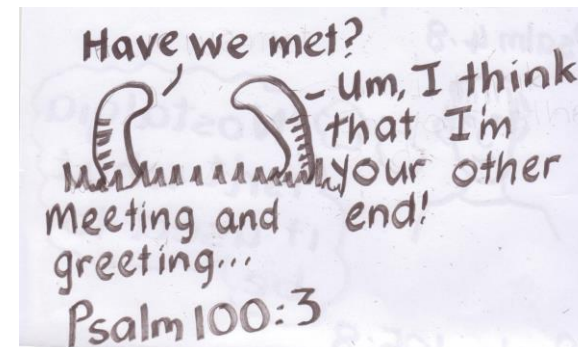
St John's Avalon	577 2533
Stokes Valley Uniting	563 9414
St Marks Wesley	566 0743
St Aidan's	566 7130
Waiwhetu Uniting	976 6597
Wainuiomata Union	934 4092

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



"Forever Young"- Bob Dylan

May God bless and keep you always
May your wishes all come true
May you always do for others
And let others do for you
May you build a ladder to the stars
And climb on every rung
May you stay forever young
Forever young, forever young
May you stay forever young.

May you grow up to be righteous
May you grow up to be true
May you always know the truth
And see the lights surrounding you
May you always be courageous
Stand upright and be strong
May you stay forever young
Forever young, forever young
May you stay forever young.

May your hands always be busy
May your feet always be swift
May you have a strong foundation
When the winds of changes shift
May your heart always be joyful
And may your song always be sung
May you stay forever young
Forever young, forever young
May you stay forever young.



Bob Dylan and son, Jakob



Young People in our Church

On the first Sunday in May, we had a church service at St. Stephen's Church, called Faka Me. It was a service run by the Sunday School children and the Youth Group in our church. The older members of our congregation always look forward to Faka Me, as the children spend many weeks beforehand preparing skits and action songs to present to us on the day. We find the whole experience very heartwarming and inspirational. The children work hard to share their ideas and talents with us, and there are tears of joy and much laughter amongst the the church members as we follow what is happening during the children's presentation. The children give us new insights into our love for Jesus: we look forward to learning from our young people with their readings, songs and plays at this special time. Afterwards we all have a big feast in the hall, then go home feeling physically satisfied and spiritually uplifted, after having shared a most enjoyable morning together as one big, happy church family. *Betty, St.Stephens (Photos pg. 7)*

COMBINED YOUTH SERVICE

I always look forward to these combined services. It was good to see all the churches together in worship and awesome to hear Rev David Dell's sermon around trusting in God's plan. What a timely message it was for a lot of our young people – a reminder that our God is always working to ensure a prosperous future for his children. I look forward to more gatherings involving the youth of our parish so that we may continue to grow together in God's love. *Wade, St Johns Avalon*

*Psalm 25. Verse 4 and 5 of the psalm is a cry to God to
"Show me...
teach me...
guide me...
instruct me..."*



Learning from each other.

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.

Afternoon Fellowship for men and women: Meets every second Thursday of the month at 2pm.

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

Messy Church: Every third Friday of the month 5.30 pm

Playgroup: Thursday 9.30 am to 11.30 am. **New!**

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

New! Creators @ Home are running a programme every Thursday morning in our church hall. Certainly creative and caring, this weekly playgroup is available free of charge.

Parents, grandparents, caregivers are welcome to stay and be part of our activities from 9.30am to 11.30am. Come and visit and be inspired.

Creators fosters the Reggio Emilia approach to learning, which focuses on providing an environment that acts as a 'third teacher' and where a child's learning revolves around their interests.



Spiritual Wellbeing - gives a child identity and purpose

Emotional Well Being - gives children a sense of value, love and acceptance

Intellectual well-being - nurtures a child's need to discover, explore and create

Physical well-being - allows children to grow as happy, healthy individuals

Social well-being - gives children a sense of belonging while cultivating their responsibility for, and trust in, other people

Quotable quotes

But wherever they go, and whatever happens to them on the way, in that enchanted place on the top of the Forest a little boy and his Bear will always be playing. *A.A. Milne, last lines from The House at Pooh Corner*

Don't let anyone belittle you because you are young. Instead, show the faithful, young and old, an example of how to live: set the standard for how to talk, act, love, and be faithful and pure in thought and deed. *1 Timothy 4:12*

Psalm 71:5 I depend on you, and I have trusted you since I was young.

Psalm 139:14 I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made. Wonderful are your works; my soul knows it very well.

Psalm 103:5 Who satisfies your years with good things, So that your youth is renewed like the eagle.

I am a restlessness inside a stillness inside a restlessness.

Dodie Smith, I Capture the Castle

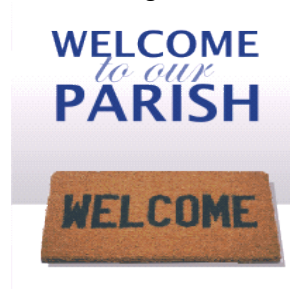
Whether sixty or sixteen, there is in every human being's heart the lure of wonder, the unfailing child-like appetite of what's next, and the joy of the game of living. In the centre of your heart and my heart there is a wireless station; so long as it receives messages of beauty, hope, cheer, courage and power from people and from the infinite, so long are you young.

Samuel Ullman

We'll Dance: One night my friend, a camp mother, awoke in the dark. From her top bunk, she watched a young girl dancing silently but with abandon in the middle of the room. Her music was within. After watching a few moments, my friend suggested that since it was late, perhaps she should get some rest. The girl was reluctant to give up her movements of joy, but my friend promised, "We'll dance in the morning."

I do believe that real Truth must be so authentic, so very real, so tangibly, audaciously genuine that even when it's dark, and there's no music, we can trip the light fantastic. And, when we can't, we can always comfort ourselves (and each other) with the promise, "We'll dance in the morning." *K.Mulhern.*





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

Sunday Services 10:15am. Holy Communion, 1st Sunday of the month.

Samoan Service 12. noon

Tongan Service 12. Noon

Women's Afternoon Fellowship: 1.30pm every FIRST Tuesday of the month.

FAKAME St Marks Wesley Uniting, Tongan Congregation

That time of the year that is known to all Tongan Christians worldwide is that special occasion that is marked on the calendar on the first Sunday of May as "FAKAME" (Tongan White Sunday). This Sunday is known to be children's Sunday, that one special service of the year that is run by the young generation, from our infants all the way through to our young adults. This year the Tongan Sunday school and youth at St Marks Wesley Uniting, (from the age of 6 months to 26yrs), had a successful Fakame. Our theme for this year's was "God's Grace Is Enough" ("Oku Fe'unga Anoa Pe 'Ae Kelesi 'Ae Otua"). As they arrived at church looking fabulous and gorgeous in their white outfits, you could see their faces light up, full of excitement and joy knowing that it's their day. It started off with the introduction song played and sung by the Tongan Sunday school and youth and the whole congregation- 'God is so good'- as they made their way to the front. Our worship leader was Siliusi Speedy. The first hymn was read out by the very young children, which was heart-warming and touching, seeing and hearing the young children speaking out in God's glory. Rev. Kalo Kaisa delivered a very important message in her reflection and the Tongan Sunday school and youth performed action songs and a skit all reflecting to the theme "God's Grace Is Enough". We also had our brothers and sisters from the Samoan Sunday school and youth perform a wonderful skit and action song. To finish off the special occasion of the day it was followed by a beautiful and yummy lunch. (Photos on pages 4, 10, and on cover and back of Newsletter) *Melelua, (St Marks Wesley)*

Stokes Valley Uniting Church, 346 Stokes Valley Rd.

Sunday Worship 9:30am followed by morning tea and fellowship.

Cafe service: Every fifth Sunday 9:30am

Communion: First Sunday in the month.

Kids' Ministry: Every Sunday at 9.30am

Youth Programme 13yrs plus: Every Sunday after morning service

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

Friendship Group: Every second Tuesday of the Month 2pm.

Afternoon Fellowship: Every third Thursday in the month 1pm.

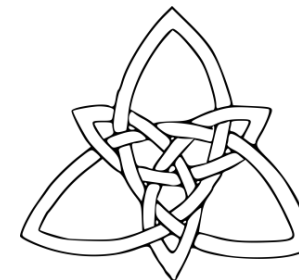
Our Creative God.

Genesis' is a Hebrew word that simply means 'beginning'. The first thing that God does at the beginning of the world is that he creates. Right from the start of time, we see that our God is a creative God. God speaks today into our world. Every sunset speaks of his faithfulness and love, every juicy apple eaten speaks of his care. God formed humanity. He filled them with the breath of life, and then he blessed them (verse 28). And God, of course, is still in the blessing business today. God doesn't make junk or cheap stuff. What God makes is 'very good'.

You are one of the highest expressions of God's creativity. No one else in the world is quite like you. You are unique—highly valued, a treasure beyond compare. *Rod Carey*

God came to get tangled up with us, to become entwined with us, to be knitted and knotted into our lives. The knots are not always tidy. I can admire the wondrous and beautiful patterns that the Celtic artists accomplished, but the patterns and entanglements of my own life, and my own art, tend to be far less orderly. Yet amid the complexities and complications and conundrums that life offers us, God twists and turns, walking the labyrinth with us and helping us find our way through.

Jan Richardson.



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

Sunday School: 10.am will start in June as we are working towards celebrating Easter and the events for May: (FakaMē, Mothers and Fathers Day).

Service: 11:00am -Mainly in Tongan

Communion: Every second Sunday of each Month.

Tongan Language Prayers and Bible Classes: Every Wednesday 7pm.

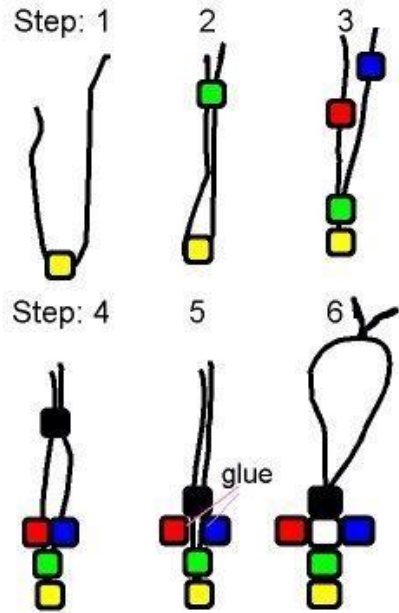
Club Work: (10 to 17 years) 2nd & 4th Sundays, 2-4pm (ON HOLD until June)

Anyone between the ages of 10 - 17 (from outside St John's) is welcome to join us.

Women's Fellowship: 3rd Saturday in the month

Choir practice: Saturday evenings.

Crafts.



The mug's design is made with permanent markers. Place mugs in a warm oven for half an hour to dry ink. It would not be a good idea to wash the mugs in the dishwasher! Perhaps use your mug for storing your pens and pencils.

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

Regular Sunday Worship 9:00am: followed by morning tea and fellowship. Children's programme for pre-school up to college age students. On the first Sunday of the month, our service is a Café Service. It begins at 10am

Messy Church: Every third Sunday in the month commencing 4pm

Open Door (for seniors): meets fortnightly on Fridays for midday lunch and Fellowship. Transport available.

Mainly Music: 9.30 - 10am, Thursday (term time) followed by morning tea and a playgroup until 11am.

Messy Church on the Hill.

Our last session featured Zacchaeus. We made a tree from balloons then a 'climbing' Zacchaeus who was able to be climbed up the tree and down.

We made a pull string bag to hold money and could be taken home. Everyone wanted one of those!

We talked of being short and the advantages and disadvantages. There were photographs of us working at the activities shown on a large screen. We told the story of Zacchaeus and acted it out. Then we had tea and talked before going home.

We have families from mainly music and the wider community as well as from St.Aidan's.



Youth Ministry. I have never met a church which didn't want to reach young people. Every church sees the value in younger people becoming an active part of the church. They know the future life of the church depends upon it.

I've found I must make time in my schedule for the younger generation. I need to engage them regularly. They want to know me personally. But, when I do, it's huge to them – and I have more credibility to speak into their life. (And, it fuels me personally.)

For the newer generation, it appears service may be the new front door. They will care more about serving than they will about "membership". They want to make a difference meeting real needs. I've discovered they like hands on experiences. And, they usually aren't afraid to get their hands dirty.

In my experience, young people want a safe place to be transparent and they want you to love them even when they do things – and believe things – of which you wouldn't approve. If you want an opportunity to speak into their life, they have to know you genuinely care for them. If you talk about the concept of mentoring – they are into it. If a more experienced person is willing to invest in them – they'll listen. This is a huge opportunity for the church in reaching a newer generation. *Ron Edmonson.*



St Marks Wesley

Lessons I Learned in Youth Group That Turned Out to be True

You don't need to follow the in crowd. If you make major life choices based on what someone else is doing or based on what they think, when you know it isn't right, it could have a great (and, therefore, not-so-great) impact on things.

True Beauty is Found On the Inside. The beauty that truly lies on the inside is the beauty of the spirit in you.

Life has a purpose. We learn working together on common goals and beliefs is rewarding. As we participate in service for others we learn that others also have problems, fears and doubts.

How to have fun and look ridiculous. Youth group was the place where I could let go and be me.

It is possible to have more than one family. We become close enough to tell each other our inner thoughts and care for each other. *Deanna*

St Stephen's, Main Rd, Wainuiomata.

Our Sunday morning worship is at 10am followed by fellowship in the hall. Holy Communion Service is followed by lunch on the 2nd Sunday of each month, and we have morning tea after the church services on the other Sundays. The Tongan Language Bible Group meets every 3rd Saturday and the Tongan Language Service is held on the 3rd Sunday of each month at 11.30am. Church Council Meeting is on the 4th Sunday after church. Prayer Group meets on Tuesdays at 9.30am in St. Stephen's Chapel, and the Bible Study Group meets there each fortnight at 7.30pm. Our Mission Outreach is at Wesleyhaven in Naenae on the first Thursday of each month at 10.30am, and our Opportunity Shop hours are on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays between 1 and 3pm, and on Thursday mornings when the Arthritis Group meets in the hall. Church choir practice is at 9.30am each Sunday morning. Visitors are always welcome, and our Mission is to commit ourselves to make the good news of Jesus Christ real in our community.



Well done, Ana (Superintendent) and teachers Moira, Tufaina, Sione and Sofia who, worked hard for weeks on end in preparing the Sunday School and Youth together for a successful Faka Me this year. It was a hit! *Adele, St. Stephens*