



Parish Magazine: December 2019

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**

Do all the good you can

**Page 3**

Our Team

**Page 4**

Thankfulness and Gratitude

**Page 5**

‘The Nativity play’

**Pages 6-12**

Welcome to our Parish.

St. Mark’s, Wesley Multicultural Church  
Waiwhetu Uniting,

St. John’s,

St. Stephen’s,

St. Aidan’s,

Stokes Valley Uniting,

Wainuiomata Union

**Page 9**

Christmas. What is uppermost in our minds?

**Page 10**

Christmas notes from Wainuiomata

**Page 12**

Light

**Page 13**

Cut out and colour: Nativity scene

**Page 14**

MAKING A DIFFERENCE – In a place for a purpose. Cooperative.

**Page 16**

Let there be love

**Insert**

Church Notices.

Do all the good you can

By all the means you can

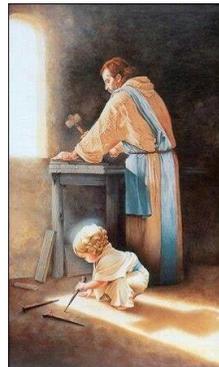
In all the ways you can

In all the places you can

At all the times you can

To all the people you can

As long as ever you can. *John Wesley. (from Betty Wright’s collection)*



Our Team:

Rev. Anna Gilkison (Senior Minister.)

Rev. Kalo Kaisa

Rev. Jannet Mudavanhu

Rev. Les Solomona

Joan Ellicot

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

## Thankfulness and Gratitude

Often people tell us to take time to smell the roses, to slow down and enjoy life.

Then we turn on the radio or television, and we hear about the wrongs and the injustices in our community and the wider world. There seems little to be thankful for.

Yet the Bible encourages us to rejoice always, pray constantly, give thanks in all circumstances, for this is the will of God for you in Christ Jesus.

Giving thanks in ALL circumstances. - not just when things are going well.

And in another place:-This is the day that the Lord has made, let us be glad and rejoice in it.

The writer G.K. Chesterton said

“I would maintain that thanks are the highest form of thought; and that gratitude is happiness doubled by wonder.”

Is it possible to be thankful when THE WORLD SEEMS SO FRACTURED/ Or is it sensible?

I think it's both possible and sensible and that being thankful can change our lives.

One highly respected scientific study has shown that negative thinking consumes us to the point where we can think of nothing else.

Whereas positive emotions like joy, contentedness and love, broaden our sense of possibility and open our mind to see options.

Positive emotions lead us to building new skills,

If we put our effort in to finding something good or joyful in every day we **will** find a whole new world opening to us.

There are things we can do to build positive thought patterns in our lives. a gratitude journal is one of them. I've found it helpful to write down the things I'm thankful for – I like to pick five things I've enjoyed and write them in my journal - sometimes writing with description and detail. This enhances the positive thoughts and helps me to remember the good things. *Continued on page 5*

*Continued from page 4*

Remembering the joyful times and thanking God.

Looking for fun things we enjoy doing and adding them in to our routine.

But most of all remembering that God is for us, searching us out and showing us KINDNESS.

Kindness that is supremely revealed to us in the gift of Jesus Christ – who is God with us.

“Always giving thanks to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ” *Viv Ball*.



**From Joyce Grenfell’s Nursery radio play: ‘The Nativity play’**

Now my Wise Men here please. Billy, Peter and George. Ah George... Wise Men never do that! Now my Kings, please. Of course, Mrs Binton, we know that by tradition the Wise Men and Kings are one and the same, but we do want everyone in our Nursery School Nativity play to have a chance, so we have taken a few liberties and I don’t think anyone will mind.

Now then, Shepherds. Jimmy, you are not a racing car. Caroline, if you are very good perhaps you can wear a lovely grey beard; wouldn’t that be fun? George, what do wise men never do?

Jimmy. You are going to say, “Behold a star”, aren’t you. Yes you are dear!

I hope it will be all right on the night. But you know Mrs Binton, I think next year we might make do with a Christmas carol.’



**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.

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**Guess the Carol from the description.**

Listen, aerial spirits are harmonising.

Happiness to the Earth.

Assemble all who believe.

O greetings of ease and happiness.

*Answers: Hark the Herald Angels Sing; Joy to the World; Come all ye Faithful;  
O Tidings of Comfort and Joy.*



**St Stephen's, Wainuiomata Union Church. Main Rd,  
Wainuiomata.**

It is a time of change for the church at Wainuiomata: Reverend Bill Ingley concentrates on building his recovery while he undergoes a course of chemotherapy; meanwhile Reverend Leslie Solomona steps up to minister to our congregation over the next twelve months. We welcome him and his family into our midst, as we move forward to face new challenges while we continue to worship, fellowship, learn, and reach out to others: making the good news of Jesus Christ real in our community.

("Whoever is on a journey towards God goes from one beginning to another beginning. Will you be among those who dare to tell themselves: "Begin again! Leave discouragement behind! Let your soul live!" - Brother Roger of Taize).

**Our activities are as follows:** Singing group practice Sundays at 9.30am, Church Worship Sundays at 10am - followed by morning tea and fellowship in the hall, Holy Communion 2nd Sunday of each month, Tongan Fellowship Service at 12 o'clock every third Sunday, Prayer Group every Tuesday at 9.30am, Church Council every 4th Sunday at 11.45am, Adult Bible Study Tuesdays at 7pm, Youth Bible Class Tuesdays at 7pm, Tongan Bible Study 3rd Saturday of the month at 7pm, Indoor Bowls 1st & 3rd Monday of the month at 7pm, Op. Shop Hours: Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays from 1 to 3pm (except during school holidays).

We have recently held our AGM for 2019 and re-elected our church leaders for another year.

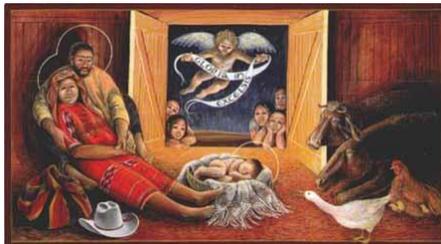
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And peace and love were in the air that night—  
that wondrous night when earth and heaven met.

Remember Him on this and every day...

and tell His story, lest we all forget;

and tell his story, lest we all forget.

*Susan Noyes Anderson*





**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

12.30 pm Tongan Service

Communion: Every second Sunday of each Month.

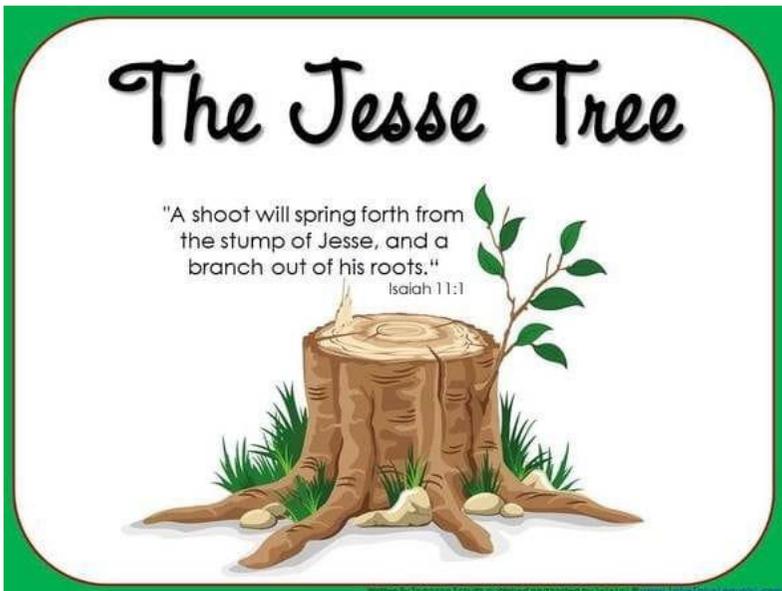
Tongan Language Prayers and Bible Classes: Every Wednesday 7pm.

Club Work: (10 to 17 years) 2nd & 4th Sundays, 2-4pm; anyone between the ages of 10 - 17 (from outside St John's) is welcome to join us.

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For a tiny shoot of Jesse tree took root in me  
to love transform, give sight, set free.

*Christine Schenk*





**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)

Monthly Communion: Every second Sunday in the month.

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

Mainly Music: 9.30 - 10am, followed by morning tea and a playgroup until 11am  
Messy church: third Sunday of the month. 4pm to 5.30pm. All ages welcome.

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**Christmas.** As we await the birth of the Messiah what is it that is uppermost in our minds?

It's such a busy time of year that it's hard to think about the meaning of Jesus coming for us.

I've been pondering about how the coming of the promised Messaiah is God's answer for all time. Through the whole of the Old Testament there was a looking forward. Looking forward to the promised peace for Israel. A new era would be dawning. There would be peace among people, peace between God and God's people and peace within each person's heart.

In Jesus God welcomes all who will come. All who will come to the promised one and accept the hope in to their lives that is offered. Whatever is going on for you there is the assurance that this little baby coming at Christmas time can offer a new way of living where there is hope, peace and always a way to find answers in the difficulties of life. That help is there for us in God's chosen one, Jesus the Christ. It means coming in heartfelt prayer and putting our trust in the one God promised.

May peace love and joy be with you this Christmas and may you and your families be anointed in the love of God. Kind wishes, *Viv Ball*

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## **CHRISTMAS DECEMBER 2019**

CHRISTMAS at 'Wainuiomata Union Church' is just as busy and full of joy just like anywhere else in HCUC realm . This Black Friday Sales may seem convincing but we focus on this very era of 2019 Xmas and its festivities which has landed at our very door, and we call it Christmas to commemorating the 'Birth of Jesus Christ'. The Sunday School is preparing its pageant on Sunday 8th December telling this story: the 'Birth of Jesus'. Wow! Good luck children!

The children at WUC has been inundated with work such as drawing, sketching, memorising and singing. The first Sunday in May this year they played out the 'Faka Me', it was a success. Rev Les Solomona made sure the Sunday School has to report back at the end of the Service what they have done. AND ITS DONE!

The commissioning of Rev Les Solomona at WUC was held Thursday 10th October 2019, officiated by Presbyterian representatives, Ana Gilkirson and members of HCUC and a large number of family and friends witnessed this event.

A Memorial Service to remember past members which held 10th November this year was an emotional one, and as Rev Bill Ingley read each name on the Remembrance Board them remembering them in their days with the WUC.

In the month of July this year the Tongan Choir/Bible group, Church Choir, Sunday School and the Bible Study group alternately took part in performing Scriptures and Songs from the Bible to celebrate the Bible Month July.

**MANUIA LE KERISIMASI (MERRY CHRISTMAS)**

*Roger & Adele Rasmussen*

Wainuiomata Union Church



The stained glass windows at the Kirk

**Stokes Valley Uniting Church, 346 Stokes Valley Rd.**

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.

Round Table Discussion Group: 3.00pm second Sunday in the month.

Hymns about the weather

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.





**Waiwhetu Uniting, corner of Trafalgar and Grenville St.**

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

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.

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**Light-**

...there is a way of being and knowing that is grounded in timing I did not create. There is a way of being and knowing that dimly remembers that waiting in hope is an attitude of faith. Waiting in silence, creating space for steadfast love to grow within, may be the most essential practice of all. It is in many ways the spirit of Advent, that time of the Christian liturgical year when we practice the waiting of gestation and hoping, of trusting in new life not yet fully known. *M.C.Earle.*

I cannot tell you how the light comes. What I know is that it is more ancient than imagining. That it travels across an astounding expanse to reach us. That it loves searching out what is hidden, what is lost, what is forgotten, or in peril or in pain. And so may we this day turn ourselves toward it.

May we lift our faces to let it find us.

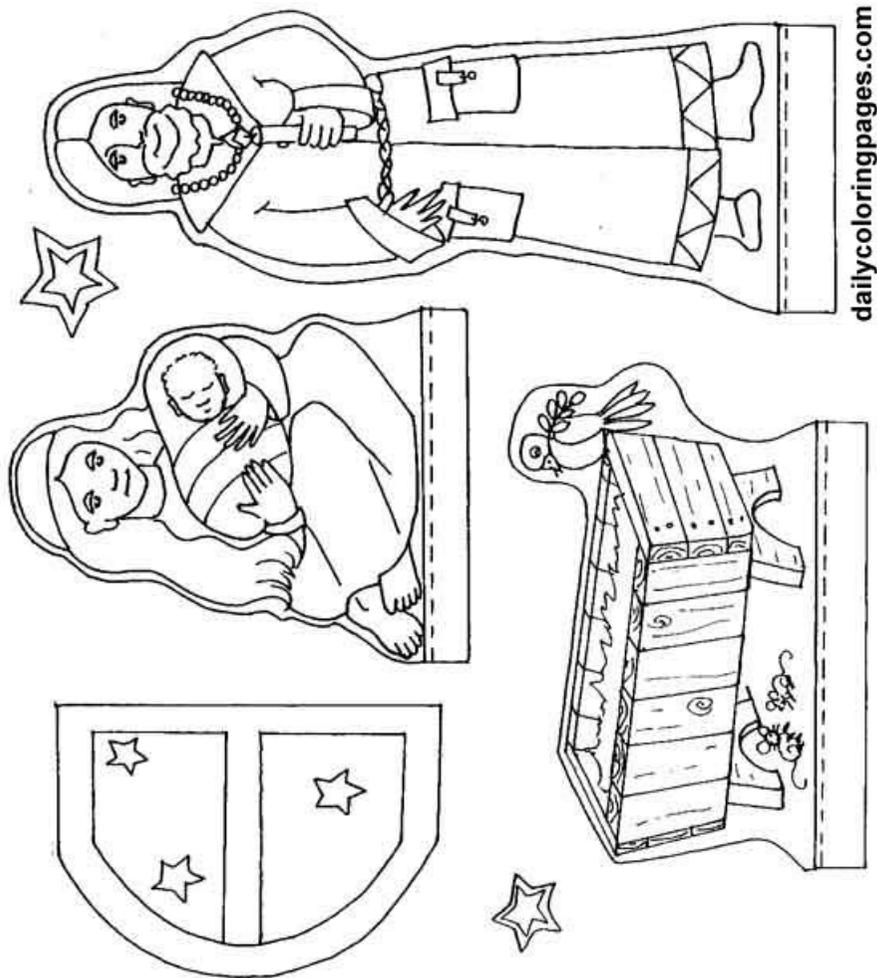
May we bend our bodies to follow the arc it makes.

May we open and open more; and open still to the blessed light that comes. *Jan Richardson*



Cut out and colour

Nativity scene



## **MAKING A DIFFERENCE – In a place. For a purpose.Cooperative.**

The NATIONAL FORUM OF UNITING CONGREGATIONS IN NEW ZEALAND met in Alexandra, Central Otago, 17 – 20 October 2019. We were privileged to be your representatives, as we met with over 65 others from Riverton (in the south) to Kaio (in the north), many from rural parishes.

The programme provided for a range of activities including worship, key note speakers, workshops and also time for socialising and a little business.

Opening Worship and Morning Devotions were led by Rev Sue Brown (of Ngaio Union Church). Friday's theme was "Carry each other's burdens, and in this way you will fulfil the law of Christ" from Galatians 6:2. Sue led worship last January in the HCUC. She gave each of us a small stone, and we had to write our worry, concern or what on the stone, and then she gathered them up in a basket. Later we each took a stone from the basket and carried someone else's burden –sharing the load. Her theme on Saturday was "Be surprised by God". In every moment God may surprise us with new possibilities, new courage and wisdom and new dimensions of faith.

The Keynote Speakers had been carefully selected – an impressive lineup – Rt Rev Fakaofu Kaio (PCANZ Moderator) spoke on "Relationships, in Christ".

Without relationship, we have nothing. Racism and discrimination is subtle and everywhere. Do not be afraid. Our relationship with God, started with God.

Rt Rev Steven Benfield (Anglican Bishop of Dunedin) spoke on "Water, Wine and Fruitfulness". We are all called to be signs pointing to God.

Rev Setaita Vaikune (MCNZ President) was not in good health, but spoke just after travelling from Sydney. She is the first Tongan woman to be President.

Rev Dr Kevin Ward (Senior Lecturer at Knox Centre for Ministry and Leadership)spoke on "Practising the hospitality of God".

Professor Peter Lineham (a well-known NZ historian) provided long-term and in-depth analysis of the state of uniting congregations. "Given the dramatic downward trends in all major denominations (Catholics are a partial exception due to immigration) the resilience of union churches is remarkable. Are we part of the elusive rising trend of "Christian – no further definition", which accounts for 307,926 people in the last census – almost as many as there are Anglicans in New Zealand.

*Continued on page 15*

*Continued from page 14*

Rather than being a “failed experiment”, might Uniting Parishes be freed of denominational strictures and property ties to be the idea whose time has come?”

Between the speakers and the workshops, another highlight were the interludes of music and songs led by Rev David Dell – who was a member of the HCUC Ministry Team a few years ago.

Our lasting memories will be of the people we met – the local organisers, those in the kitchen who cheerfully fed us, old friends, new friends, and people in rural areas of NZ who are facing problems we are so remote from here in HCUC, eg.

Ernie and Beth from Riverton. Both lovely people. Their church has not had a minister for fourteen years. For five years they ministered to themselves with the occasional help of an ‘Enabler’ but for too many years they have been left to cope on their own. Four people from Riverton came to UCANZ which is a testimony to the excellence of their self-help ministry. They seemed to really appreciate fresh perspectives from outside and they would welcome even intermittent help from a qualified minister. Neither Partner Church has systems in place to support them.

George and Hazel Elder from Alexandra. Intellectual explorers and theological mountain climbers in their 80’s. Much as they love Alexandra, they feel cut off from opportunities to have their need for intellectual stimulation met. ‘Whatever challenges we face, great people in great places are facing bigger challenges than we are in our urban church’.

Geoffrey from Canada. He knew things about Alexandra we had not bothered to find out. He was fascinated by two cedar trees in the Alexandra Gardens, for example, which are more than a century old. He reminded us to ‘pay attention to whatever place I am in as if I was a tourist, full of wonder’.

Fruit-pickers from Vanuatu. They joined us for lunch on our last day, very nice men. One man is separated from his wife and his baby for six months in order to earn the money to build a house for his family back home.

“There is so much I take for granted which I was reminded to be grateful for!”

Rev Anna Gilkison, Eric Wadsworth, Lyn and Neville Price.

## Let there be love

God of hope, who brought love into this world,  
be the love that dwells between us.  
God of hope, who brought peace into this world,  
be the peace that dwells between us.  
God of hope, who brought joy into this world,  
be the joy that dwells between us.  
God of hope, the rock we stand upon,  
be the centre, the focus of our lives  
always, and particularly this Advent time.

In the fourth century, Saint Augustine wrote, "What does love look like? It has the hands to help others. It has the feet to hasten to the poor and needy. It has eyes to see misery and want. It has the ears to hear the sighs and sorrows of men."  
Advent gives us space to love. Love that transforms. *Unknown*

Love comes more naturally to the human heart than its opposite. *Nelson Mandela*

Start by doing what's necessary, then do what's possible and suddenly you are doing the impossible. *Francis of Assisi*

Someday, after mastering the winds, the waves, the tides and gravity, we shall harness for God the energies of love, and then, for a second time in the history of the world, man will have discovered fire.  
*Pierre Teilhard de Chardin*



For any further information regarding material in this publication –

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