



PARISH WEB

March 2024

St. George's Anglican Church

Gate Pā, Tauranga



*Endings
&
Beginnings*

Oh Lord, You love this world so much that you gave your one and only son, that we might be called your children too.

Lord help us to live in the gladness and grace of Easter Sunday, every day.

All for your glory, do we pray. Amen.



Te Whare Karakia o Hori Tapu St George's Anglican Church Events and Services for Holy Week and Easter 2024



Palm Sunday: 24th March

8.30 am Eucharist.

Bring a plate for a shared morning tea which will be held between these services.

10 am All ages Communion Service; Come early for the shared morning tea

7.00 pm Taizé service

Monday: 25th March

5.30pm Reflective Eucharist

Tuesday: 26th March

9.30 am Eucharist.

5.30 pm Reflective Eucharist.

Wednesday: 27th March

5.30 pm Penitential Reflective Eucharist

This will include a longer time to note those things we need to confess to God so that we might be assured of God's forgiveness.

Maundy Thursday: 28th March

5.30 pm Shared Meal

Bring a plate for a shared meal, cheeses, different types of breads, fruit, cold meat platter etc.

7.00 pm The Stripping of the Church and Tenebrae Service

Good Friday: 29th March

9.00 am Reflective Service.

12noon – 3pm A quiet space offering different ways of engaging with the story of Good Friday using twelve of the Stations of the Cross.

Easter Sunday: 31st March

8.30 am Eucharist.

10 am All ages communions.

Other Services



60 Bells service 29 April 4 pm

John's final service 12 May 9:30 am

Taizé service 12 May 7 pm

Vicar's Blog

Peace and all good



As I read back over my articles for the Parish Web for the last four years I noted the constant theme of uncertainty. This year is no different, except that this year it is all my fault. My decision to retire in May marks an end of my ministry amongst you over the last 12 years, and an end to over 40 years, training for and

being involved in, stipendiary ministry. This is creating a level of uncertainty for this parish, and for me as well to be honest. Endings are tough and bring a level of grief for everyone involved. It is hard to let go and embrace what might be next. I am so grateful for the last twelve years, but it is time to let go and see what is next. For you and me it is a time of endings and beginnings. For the parish, while it is a time of endings with my finishing, it is also a time of new beginnings as the vestry discerns what is yours to do as you look ahead. That is exciting, if a little stressful.

My decision to retire has not only created a lot of uncertainty, but also a lot of extra work for the wardens and vestry. I am sorry to be the cause of all that. As May approaches, the vestry is working with Bishop Andrew and Archdeacon Nigel Dixon to appoint a priest in charge for the next while, and to work through the process to hopefully appoint a new vicar. More about that elsewhere.

As I write this we are about halfway through Lent. Lent is a time of prayerful reflection in preparation for the seeming ending of Good Friday. At the heart of our identity as followers of Christ is this story of the humiliating defeat in the crucifixion being affirmed as the way of God in the resurrection. The cross was not the end but the beginning.

Lent is a time of endings, of letting go. It is also a time of new beginnings as we take up new ways of seeing ourselves and living the gospel. Lent always begins with the story of Jesus's identity as the "Beloved Son", given at his baptism, being tested in

the wilderness. How would he live that title – like King David or a Roman Caesar? Or some other way. That same type of question is asked of us every Lent. In the early church, Lent was originally a time when those preparing to be baptised at Easter were led into their own wilderness experience. It was a time for them to prepare to let go of all that had shaped their identity and priorities as they went into the baptismal water. Then as they came out, they were clothed with a new identity and with new priorities as beloved children of God. Lent, for us, is a time to slow down and reflect on what we might need to let go of, and what new identity and priorities we might now be gifted. In a sense this time of interregnum will ask some of the same questions for you as a parish. Who is God and who are you as the parish of Gate Pā? What shapes your identity and how you live that out? What helps you know that you are all beloved children of God, and what prevents you knowing that? The traditional practices of prayer, fasting, and alms giving are shaped by these questions.

Endings are often a time of giving thanks. I will write more about this elsewhere, but I am extremely grateful for these last twelve years. They have been much more than I could have imagined. Since announcing my intention to retire I have been doing things for the last time, with all the joy and sorry that brings. The date of the retirement was really worked out by thinking about what last things I wanted to be involved in with you all.

Christmas brought Carols on the Lawn and being part of the choir, taking part in all the Christmas services, which were well attended, and enjoying taking services after Christmas as I moved my leave to later in January to use up more days (too many statutory holidays around Christmas and New Year). Thank you again to Ainsley and the social committee for the lovely parish picnic, and then again for the wonderful turn out for the Pancake Tuesday. What fun incinerating the old palm crosses for the last time to have ashes for Ash Wednesday. Sadly, the ecumenical services did not happen again, and I don't think they will for a while. My first ecumenical Ash Wednesday service was two days after I had been installed as vicar. I had no idea what I was doing, and I enjoyed and appreciated each one. Another ending.

Cliff and I were able to offer the Pukehinahina history lectures. Thank you, Cliff, for the time and knowledge that you bring to these. And I am so grateful for Graham Cameron who offered some insights from his doctoral work on Faith as Resistance. Over 200 people came which gives me a little hope.

And now we are in my last Lent here. It is a joy to again be part of the Lenten Studies as we use this time to grow in our living the Way of Christ. And just ahead are the extra services and events we offer from Palm Sunday to Easter Sunday to help us fully enter into, and stay with, the story of Jesus' entry into Jerusalem, leading to his crucifixion and resurrection. The Way of Christ is through the cross and all the pain of that, and into the new life of Easter. As you face the uncertainty my leaving will cause, may this Easter offer you the promise of God's presence among you, inviting you into hope, living God's generosity, compassion, and aroha for all.

In that hope we continue to look for ways to honour the story of this land through the lectures and through the Remembering the Battle service at 4pm on April 29. It is vestry's hope that these will continue after I retire, and this important ministry will continue to mark our presence on this land.

By the time this comes out we will have held our AGM. These give us an opportunity to give thanks for all God did through us in this last year and to look ahead to a new year. I want to thank Clark and Faye who have worked hard as our wardens, and the rest of the vestry for the hours spent in meetings and then picking up what needed to be done. Thank you to Andrea and Peter who are stepping down this year. Like all of those on our vestry they have left their mark on this parish. I continue to be grateful to Ainsley and all those involved in the pastoral care. Finally thank you to Debbie for all she has offered in supporting me so well over these last three years while I was archdeacon. Her official stipendiary role finished on January 31, but her ministry continues. Thank you.

Early this year Patrica Hardley died unexpectedly, and we were able to help her family hold a funeral so that those in the community could say goodbye – an ending. And on the Sunday after Easter we will baptise Paul (Higson) and Rachel's daughter Odette Ackerley – a beginning of a life of faith.

As we face all the endings and beginnings, both in the liturgical cycle and the life of our parish, may we be people of hope.

John Hebert TSSF.

Vestry Notes...



Wardens Report

We had a lovely Christmas season with services well attended including the outdoor carol concert. Thanks to Bonnie and the singers for this enjoyable afternoon.

Looking further ahead in this new year, it will be one of farewells to some very special people. John our vicar of 12 years retiring, Debbie who is off to Australia and Andrea moving to Hamilton. John's farewell for the parish will be on the 12th May and his last day May 26th for the official goodbye. More details pending.

Once a month the vestry have been meeting at church and the wardens with John at Columbus Café.

Maintenance has been undertaken on the gutters and in the Lady Chapel floor.

Lenten Studies for Lent are underway following the 10am service. The resource is This is us: Who we are as Anglicans.

The Parish AGM was on Sunday 17th of March. We welcome Gavin Bunker onto the vestry and farewell two members; Andrea Andresen and Peter Williams. Thank you both for your hard work and dedication.

Easter Tidings

Easter is a Miracle: the miracle of the newness of life

Easter is a Glory: the glory of resurrection power

Easter is a Triumph: the triumph of love and hate

Easter is a Promise: the promise of unending friendship

Easter is Consolation: the consolation of a living companion

Easter is a Victory: the victory of life and death

Easter is a hope: the hope of eternal life.

J. Harold Gwynne D.D.

Faye Mayo ***People's Warden***

CENTREPOINT PICS



Janet and Paul collecting electrical items to take to be safety tested.



Kate in her very messy office.



Greta kindly helping Gulie back after morning tea.



Busy sorting out the back. Verna, Karen and Maisie.



Thomas, giving his all, locking the tricky padlock on the red clothing bin.



Faye, Helen and Maria serving a happy customer.



Helen reorganising the clothing racks after a busy week at Centrepont.



Gayleen and Mihi sorting the Something Special Rack.

Parish Activities **Shrove Tuesday**

On February 13th, St George's held their pancake meal to mark Shrove Tuesday. Shrove Tuesday, also known as Pancake Tuesday, Pancake Day or Fat Tuesday, occurs the day before Lent begins. 'Shrove' comes from the word 'shrive' which means absolution. Christians traditionally visited their church to confess their sins, thus being shriven (absolved). This practice of preparing our hearts for Lent dates back to the Middle Ages.

Typically Christians gave up rich food for the period of Lent. Shrove Tuesday was the last chance for a spot of indulgence before 40 days of fasting. It was also an opportunity to use up all the food they would no longer be using. Eggs, butter, sugar, fats were made into pancakes.

Recipe for Crepes

Blend until smooth, 500 mls cold milk, 3 eggs, 200g plain flour, pinch salt and 1tsp vanilla essence.

When blended stir in 2 tbsp melted butter and let stand for at least 15 minutes and up to 12 hours in a covered container in the fridge.

Lightly butter small frypan and ladle in small amount of batter (about 50mls) and quickly tilt pan to cover base evenly.

Flip when lightly golden on the bottom and briefly cook other side.

Makes about 18. Pancakes can be stored in the fridge for several days or can be frozen. If stacking pancakes to be used later, put a sheet of baking paper or gladwrap between pancakes.

Suggestions for Dessert Fillings

1. Cinnamon and apple.
2. Apricots and chopped nuts.
3. Strawberries and Grand Marnier.
4. Lemon and sugar.
5. Mixed berries and grated chocolate.
6. Bacon and maple syrup.
7. Banana and maple syrup.



From the Register

*Memorial
Service*

*Patricia
Hardley
28.2.2024*

Wedding

*Ella Jensen and
Campbell Graham
16.3.2024*

You are invited to

*John's final service and
farewell morning tea on
Sunday 12 May at 9:30 am*

*John's formal farewell service
with the Bishop on 26 May at
3:00pm*



You are invited to SAFEGUARDING TRAINING

3-4 May 2024

For at the last 25 years anyone who held a licence, clergy or lay, had to do Safeguarding Training every three years. These events ranged from a couple of hours to all day, depending on who was running them. They were developed after some very high-profile cases of sexual misconduct. In the fallout it was realised that we, as a church, needed to work harder to keep people safe: safe from unwanted advances and misconduct, safe from bullying, safe from false accusations, safe from accidentally putting ourselves in hurtful situations. So, for the last 30 years we have tried to be clear about the ministry standards expected of anyone in a leadership or pastoral role, and to have a good complaints process and good training to keep everyone safe.

Sadly, the recent Royal Commission into State and Faith Based Care has highlighted a number of failings in all of this, some very recent. It has led to a revision of Canon Title D, the General Synod Canon (law) that describes the standards expected of office bearers in the Anglican Church in Aotearoa New Zealand and Polynesia, and sets out the church's complaints and disciplinary processes. The revised Canon now covers anyone who holds any leadership role in the church, including Vestry and Management Committee members. It also established the new Ministry Standards Commission, an independent body appointed by the Church to oversee the Church's ministry standards and the complaints process. The Commission describes misconduct occurring when any person in a leadership, teaching or pastoral role violates boundaries (emotional, sexual, financial) with a parishioner, student, employee or staff member in a professional or ministry relationship. It covers a lot of situations.

Bishop Andrew and the Standing Committee have decided that we need to be proactive in addressing this as a diocese. Penny Hales was appointed as the Safeguarding and Risk Manager in 2022 to provide training for as many people as possible. Penny and Deborah Broome, the Ministry Educator, have developed training workshops to help us all think about our safety and the safety of others in our community.

In answer to the question, "What is it and why are we being asked to undertake training?" Penny writes,

“I see safeguarding as a way of ensuring that no-one needs to feel unsafe when they attend church or attend one of our affiliated organisations such as our shops. We do not know the lives of other people or what they have suffered in their past, but we can ensure that our behaviour does not trigger bad feelings for them when they come to our church.”

Penny says the workshops will look at instances where people have felt unsafe, in all kinds of situations, and help us think about ways to avoid this happening and how to help. The workshops will help everyone who attends to think about what we say and do and how that might impact on someone else. They will also give us information to use when we are unsure what to do.

Our vestry have invited Penny and Deborah to run the workshop here at St George's.

Level One part 1 is on Friday 3 May, 1.30 – 4.40 pm

Level One part 2 is on Saturday 4 May, 9.30-12.30 pm

This is for everyone including readers, welcomers, vestry members, employees or volunteers, tea makers, music leaders, licenced laity or clergy. All are encouraged to attend. Penny says, “No matter your role within the church - you are seen as leaders of the church and therefore need to be seen to lead the behaviour of the church.”

However, ordained clergy, those holding lay licenses, employees, and elected leaders (vestry, synod, management committees), are required to attend. These will also have to attend Level Two on Saturday afternoon, from 1.30 to 4pm.

It feels like a lot, but it allows us to be a safe place for all who enter, and for us to be able to care for people with the utmost care, living God's love for all.

The Anglican Church in Aotearoa/ New Zealand is not without its failings in this area. That is why the Church has made safeguarding processes and information sharing such a priority. “I can assure you that the workshops you will attend may be thought provoking, but they will be useful in terms of ensuring the safety of everyone who is involved in the church, be they church leaders or casual visitors ...and there is no pass or fail.”

Parishioner's Contributions



Church Chuckles

The following statements about the bible were written by children and have not been retouched or corrected (i.e. bad spelling left in).

In the first book of the bible Guinnessis, God got tired of creating the world, so he took the sabbath off.

Adam and Eve were created from an apple tree.

Noah's wife was called Joan of Ark. Noah built an ark, which the animals come on to in pears.

Lot's wife was a pillar of salt by day, but a ball of fire by night.

The Jew's were a proud people and throughout history they had trouble with the unsympathetic Genitals. Samson was a strong man who let himself be led astray by a Jezebel like Delilah. Samson prayed the Philistines with the axe of the Apostles.

Moses led the Hebrews to the Red Sea, where they made unleavened bread which is bread without any ingredients.

The Egyptians were all drowned in the dessert. Afterward, Moses went up on Mount Cyanide to get the ten ammendments. The first commandment was when Eve told Adam to eat the apple. The seventh commandment is Thou shalt not commit adultery.

Moses died before he ever reached Canada. Then Joshua led the Hebrews in the battle of Geritol.

The greatest miracle in the bible is when Joshua told his son to stand still and he obeyed him.

David was a Hebrew king skilled at playing the liar. He fought with the Finklesteins, a race of people who lived in Biblical times.

Solomon, one of David's sons, had 300 wives and 700 porcupines.

When Mary heard that she was the mother of Jesus she sang the Magna Carta.

When the three wise guys from the east side arrived, they found Jesus in the manager.

Contributed by Debbie Garrett

Bev's Travels

Who could have imagined that I'd check off so many items from my "Bucket List"? From exploring the vibrant city of London to tracing my family roots in Aberdeenshire, embarking on an island retreat, and witnessing a major All Blacks game – each experience added a unique chapter to my adventure.

Accompanied by my friend's daughter, whose youthful energy proved invaluable, we kicked off our journey with five captivating days in London. A boat trip along the Thames, guided by an excellent storyteller, marked a highlight. Transitioning to Glasgow via train, we joined a seven-day bus tour, unveiling hidden gems and even embarking on a boat expedition in search of the elusive Loch Ness Monster – a encounter captured only in memory.



Shopping old town Antibes

Golfing at St. Andrews showcased my lack of skill, matching my performance in



Off to the quarter final in Paris

Tauranga. The journey culminated in Edinburgh, where we hired a car to explore Aberdeenshire, the cherished homeland of my ancestors. Ghost-busting escapades and the discovery of my great-grandmother's grave in Fyvie's church graveyard added an exhilarating touch. In Inverness, a stay in a

converted haunted railway station provided an unexpected encounter with ghostly footsteps.

Leaving Scotland behind, the next leg led us to Paris, reuniting with our travel companions. A swift trip to Lyon for the All Blacks versus Italy game heightened the excitement, though pricey beer kept the crowds surprisingly sober. Subsequently, our group retreated to the picturesque resort in Mallorca, where I unintentionally lost my phone during a boat cruise but miraculously it was retrieved from the depths.

Spain left us with fond memories as we traversed to Antibes, marveling at its historic charm. The journey reinforced the age and history of European cities, contrasting starkly



Scotland's new queen



Great great grandfather's headstone

with youthful

New Zealand. Returning to Paris, we savoured iconic landmarks before the pinnacle of the trip – the 2023 Rugby World Cup quarter-final. Traveling to the stadium in the NZRFU Bus I felt like the Queen! The intense game between the All Blacks and the Irish left an indelible mark, complete with a tearful Irish supporter on my shoulder.

As all good things must end, we bade adieu to Paris, heading to the airport for the lengthy journey back to New Zealand and my home in Tauranga. Reflecting on this incredible journey, I felt truly blessed. What's next on the horizon? Perhaps a return to Bundaberg to stay with my daughter, continuing the adventure of a lifetime.

Bev Nisbet

Walking Lake Waikaremoana

Donald McMenamin



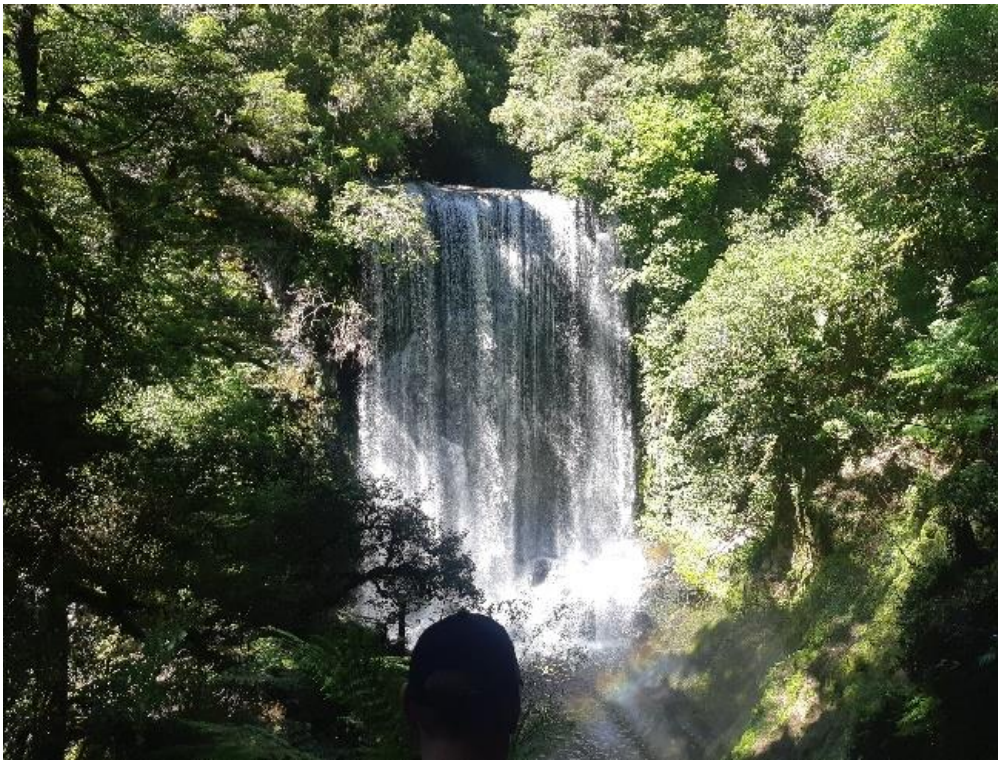
Recently my sons and I walked around Lake Waikaremoana. May I tell you some highlights?

First, of course, is the four-day walk itself! The steep climb to the hut on the bluff; a wonderful descent through ancient beech forest back down to the still blue lake; then

two more days wandering along the lakeside through hypnotically beautiful bush.

Second is the welcome we received from the Tuhoë hut wardens. Since Te Urewera has been returned to the local people, Tuhoë have highlighted a desire for friendship and partnership with the people who come to visit. For us that included a powhiri/welcome and evening meal storytelling at the first two huts. A wonderful sense of welcome and belonging.





Thirdly, on day 2 we took the side track up to Korokoro Falls – O my goodness! If you get a chance, I do recommend it. You can hear the waters roar long before you see the falls.

And lasly, and by no means least, the lake is full of rainbow trout – you can see them in the water as you walk by!

With rod, lure (and permit), Joseph fished a trout for lunch. We begged butter, salt and pepper from other trampers, and Ben cooked the fish in the open fire wrapped in horopito (pepper tree) leaves and foil. The whole hut shared the feast!



What a privilege to walk amongst this ancient land and forest.

Mission Aviation Fellowship - Scenic Flight



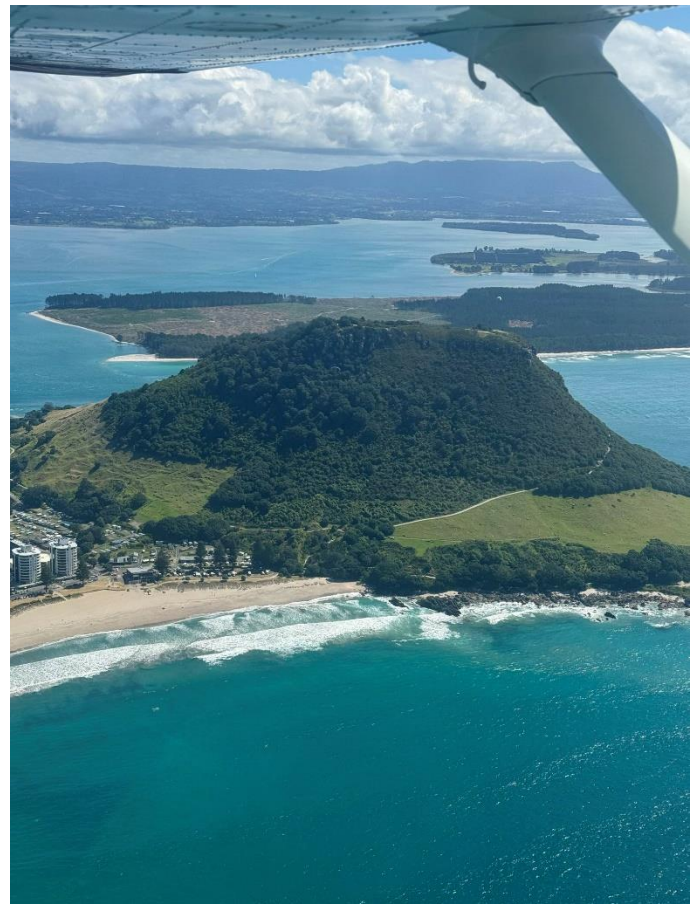
I was given the opportunity to take a scenic flight with Mission Aviation Fellowship recently. Being in a small plane again did give me a few jitters initially, as it reminded me of the plane I was in for my solo parachute jump in Waitoa, Matamata at the age of 32.

I said a few prayers when we experienced some turbulence in the air but needn't have worried as the pilot kept the plane steady and we carried on our flight towards Omokoroa and back to the Mount, taking in the spectacular scenery along the way. I was

in good company as James, the young pilot, was very experienced despite him being just 24. I was joined by the pastor from Freedom Church and two ladies from St Enoch's in Tauranga.

Seeing the Mount and Papamoa beach from above is breathtaking along with our beloved Mauao. We flew over Matakana Island and I realised how long this island is with its forests, great surf and pockets of housing for the locals. The weather was perfect for the afternoon's half hour flight.

I enjoyed learning where Hunters Creek was located as my two brothers used to go out there in their cabin boat fishing. I was too young to join them but always wondered where they went.



We are so blessed to live in this area as the views are spectacular. It was great flying over Pilot Bay and the Port, seeing first-hand the busy operations happening there as well as seeing all the pleasure boats lined up at Sulphur Point. I can see why it is a popular tourist destination with its ocean, harbour and mountain views.



On our return to Tauranga Airport, we were given a delicious afternoon tea and listened to the CEO of the organisation talk about the importance of Mission



Aviation Fellowship in transporting essential aid, medicines, food and water to isolated islands in the Pacific and beyond. It is a very good cause and they were happy to share what the mission is about and encourage our church family to support them in any way, whether through donations or any other support.

Thank you John and Charmaine for encouraging me to take this opportunity to explore our area from the air. Being a local for many years at Mt Maunganui, it was a pleasure to recognise many familiar places and to

acknowledge how special our place is, in the Bay of Plenty.

It was magical.

Maggie McIntosh

For Ukraine

On Tuesday 20th February 230 Tauranga residents attended a very special event held at the Citz Club. It was organised by Tauranga Moana Lions club as a fundraiser to aid work in Ukraine. This was an opportunity to hear Tenby Powell (our former Mayor) speak about his work in Ukraine. Tenby is the founder of Kiwi K.A.R.E. a Kiwi Aid & Refugee Evacuation organisation. Along with medical and other support, they delivered 7 ambulances to Ukraine and are working to get 10 more currently in Australia over there.

A video showing current work in Ukraine was running prior to the event beginning, showed the work of Kiwi K.A.R.E. and the dreadful conditions being endured by the people over there.

The evening was to specifically provide funds for heaters/stoves to help provide warmth and cooking facilities in areas without power in the upcoming severe winter. The appliances are made out of recycled metal components and cost \$160 for a heater and \$260 for the combined stove/heaters.

Tenby talked about his experiences within the Ukrainian Red Zones and what the organisation wanted to continue to do over there. His qualifications and experience certainly enable him to carry out the worthwhile work he and his organisation has undertaken. He is a true humanitarian and someone New Zealand can be proud of.

Half the ticket price of \$30 for the dinner and talk and the proceeds of the auction went to this cause. The auction alone raised \$7,900 which will provide enough heaters for an entire village. The total funds raised was over \$10,000. Six members of our parish attended along with two city commissioners, two former city councillors, members from three of Tauranga Lions clubs and many locals.

Well done to Tauranga Moana Lions for enabling so many of us to have this special experience and opportunity to contribute to such a worthy cause.

Faye Mayo

Remember Ukraine

My 12 Years at Gate Pā

Vicar John Hebenton

I have been asked to write some reflections on the last 12 years. As I look back I have an overwhelming sense of joy and gratitude at the privilege of being Vicar of Gate Pā. There are so many highlights.

The first is the pancake meal before my installation. So many people were there. Bishop David insisted that he actually cook some pancakes rather than just eat, which took a little organising. And he helpfully told everyone at the service how I knew nothing about “vicaring” – which was a little rude but also had more than a grain of truth to it. It has been fun working with you all as I slowly figured out what being a vicar entailed. Thank you for your patience and support.

John at his inauguration at St George's Church 2012



When I arrived the vestry already had a strategic plan for the parish. Over the last twelve years I have enjoyed helping vestry work towards some of those goals and develop new ones as many of those initial goals were met. So, let's start with the boring ones.

As I look around the church plant, I can say we have done well. One of the skills I had was knowing how to access various community funders. One of the first things we did was get funding to put in an infinity gas hot water system to replace the very small hot water cylinder. For the 150th commemoration Buddy Mikaere asked if he could organise the painting of the hall, and once that was done, we accepted the very good quote Debbie McCauley had obtained for us to sand and resurface the hall floor. The lounge was repainted. Then I was able to persuade the mayor to pay for the grass block pavers around the back of the church after the trucks churned up the driveway. A suggestion to repaint the kitchen slowly expanded to a complete revamp, which involved a lot of funding applications. But so worth it. And amid all that we achieved the goal of putting a

data projector in the church, except we didn't. We put television screens in instead, which are way better. We also redid the sound cabinets and bought new lapel and wireless microphones. And an accident one Palm Sunday involving candles and scarves and scorched carpet meant we had to replace the carpet on insurance. And so much more. Boring, but you can see tangible results which make you feel good. I will leave my mark.

All this boring stuff allowed us to be another goal on the plan – a centre for the Gate Pā community. I have really enjoyed the number of groups who use our facilities, including the City Council, iwi meetings, and four churches. We play a role in the wider community. Allowing Kai Aroha to use the Centrepoint carpark and power was another way we have played a significant role. I am proud to have been part of such a church, living the gospel in creative ways.

***John speaking at a 60
Bells Service***



Another goal was to further honour our setting, sitting on the wahi tapu or wahi pakanga of the Battle of Pukehinahina-Gate Pā. It is an enormous responsibility and a gift. I listen to other vicars struggling with what their parish's mission might be, and ours is right there under the floor and on our doorstep. Above the door to the church is "All who enter here be reconciled." That has been our point of difference. How then do we honour the story of this place and bring healing and reconciliation, and how do we build relationships with mana whenua and tikanga Māori? This work was already happening when I arrived. The parish had already done a lot of work building good relationships with ngā Hapū o Ngāti Ranginui in particular.

Our willingness to be involved in the preparations for the 150th commemoration of the battle was one of the highlights of my time here. We provided the venue for representatives of the three iwi to meet and organise the events of the day. We became the wet weather venue for the kura haka – haka schools happening out on the domain, as well as providing power, toilets and kitchen facilities for the carvers working on the two totara trees. An abiding memory was the tap tap tap of the carvers working on Good Friday as we held our morning service, and the sound of haka coming up the domain during Sunday services. The hall was used for the art competition, the church for a display of images, and on the day we were the media

centre and the toilets at the top of the hill. And what a day it was – 5.30am in the rain to bless the new flag pole after the pou had all been blessed; memorial service at the Mission Cemetery with Bishop Helen-Ann Hartley and Pihopa Ngarahu Katene; and then joining the official party as we marched up Cameron Road to the Domain to be greeted by an 800 strong haka party. One of the more nerve-wracking moments was giving the 'Reconciliation Speech' to the Governor General and Government ministers, and Kingi Tūheitia and his advisors and other dignitaries. Luckily the 800 strong haka party had left by that point. The following year we thought we could offer a 'Remembering the Battle' or 60 Bells service, which has continued since. It has been an honour working with you to provide this event for those who wish to mark this anniversary every year.

John speaking at the 150th Battle of Gate Pā Commemoration in 2014



Cliff Simons and I ran our first lecture series in 2014 and thought that maybe 60 people might turn up. Well, 270 come to the first lecture and 230 to the second. A grand start. Thankfully we have not come close to repeating those numbers. We have offered these lectures most years since then, which is appreciated by many. Hori Tapu - St George's has become known for our voice on issues of reconciliation

and taking our history seriously. I hope that ministry continues. It is needed and valued. One of the great joys of this role has been talking to groups, mostly school groups, about the Battle of Gate Pā.

This parish has a long history of standing with those who are sometimes marginalised. For some time, the Muslim community held Friday prayers in the hall. It is remembered. After the Mosque shooting in 2019 many of you joined me in support of the Muslim community here in Tauranga, and I was surprised at the depth of their gratitude for that support then and in the past. The embrace I received from Imam Ahmed after prayers the next day that all who gathered at the mosque were invited to join in was so heartfelt. And again, we went after church on Sunday, and again for Friday prayers.

This parish has also been vocal supporters of the LGBTI+ community for many years. When I was rung in 2012 by the Bay of Plenty Times for a comment on the drawing of the Marriage Equality Bill from the hat, I was able to trust that history and offer an honest response of support. Your encouragement of me in that, with many of you joining me in developing a submission in support of the Bill was a proud moment. When so many churches were so visible in their opposition it was life giving to be part of this church.

Baptism of Charlotte McCaw 8/12/2019



each other and others in our community. And at All Souls Andrea Andresen offered

Covid times also stick out for me. We were one of the few parishes that had done some planning for how we might operate, and those who came to church just before lockdown were willing to help keep in contact with people during the next few months. We already had an email list. People were creative in how they supported each other. Patirica Price took it on herself to publish a weekly “Parish Web” of stories from the parish office on her kitchen table. Many of you were willing to record yourselves doing readings, prayers or parts of the liturgy. We learnt how to create online services. We learnt how to do Zoom. We cared for

to run an accessible service for all those who have lost someone, all those still waiting to have funerals and memorial services or who had been unable to attend the services that were held. We tried to advertise it widely, and ended up on the national news. There were so many grateful people.

That is something that I will cherish when I leave, the care of people and the creativity many of you have brought to all kinds of needs and events. The All Souls service is one example. Moving the Carol Service outside to become the Carols on the Lawn allowed more people to attend, vaccinated or not. Following the Star Christmas Eve service was another attempt at being inclusive and creative.

John with David Elliott and his son Grant, ex Blackcap, who was the keynote speaker at our church fundraiser in 2018



That care is also seen in the ministry of Centrepoin, and your support of Merivale Whanau Aroha childcare. Being on the Management Committee meetings is not everyone's idea of fun, but I have enjoyed that, and enjoyed playing a role in the development of those ministries. It allowed me to learn about net and gross leases, something I hope I will never need again to be honest. And I slowly learnt about trying to take church services at Whanau Aroha on a weekly basis. It is a crazy time. I am still trying to work out how to do it, which is great. Those young

people keep you honest. And I am in awe of those who work there. And all those who volunteer at Centrepont. The dedication and commitment of so many over so many years is inspiring.

As an introvert I like to hide in my office. But all those things have pushed me out and made me the richer for it. Very early on I visited Trevor Southee, and he advised me to try and visit at least one person in their homes each week. I have often failed, but his advice, and making myself visit you in your homes has enriched me. I so appreciate your welcome and your sharing of your lives with me. One of the great privileges in this role is accompanying people on the big moments of life – preparing for weddings and organising funerals to say goodbye to loved ones. Luckily, this is a parish that cares for each other. Ainsley Max has kept a careful eye ensuring that people are contacted and cared for. Knowing all that is happening in the background and knowing that I will be told when I need to know things has been so helpful. That care has been expressed in the small team that offer home communion every month, and those who meet weekly to pray. That base of caring and prayer has been freeing. For most of my ministry I was a youth worker – passionate for the place of young people in the life of the church, and our role in their lives. I don't know if I have done well here, but some of my highlights have been in my involvement with younger people. It was a shock to find I not only

John and Muffy at a SPCA Blessing of the Animals service



attended the preschool music sessions on Fridays, but I ran them. They became the highlight of the week. When the families suddenly stopped coming after one Christmas holiday, I was so sad. I had become quite knowledgeable about children's music, and drumming, moving with lycra and all kinds of other things. I still miss it and wonder what I could have done differently. It was so much fun. Thank you Jan Beer and Edward for your help and support. I was a bit relieved when Bonnie decided to come join me here at St George's in 2013. She gave our children's

ministry a real lift. We had run children's events before Christmas and Easter which were pitched at the wider community with mixed success. With Bonnie's creativity we held family fish and chip meals once a term for all the families and any parishioners that wanted to join us. Some of those were quite large. But as children grew up and some moved away, they became harder to sustain. My role was to invite people and organise the fish and chips from Merivale Fishtown. A tough gig. We began offering more interactive services on 5th Sundays, in part to provide a place where people of all ages to work together on an activity and talk to each other. Our young people are the most important people in our midst, and I think we need to be constantly thinking about how each of us help them grow in faith. I am not talking about Sunday school here, or organised programmes, but how we take time to get to know them and journey with them. How do we value them so that they know they are valued and loved by God. I made a commitment to offer a 'talk' if younger people were present and I have tried to honour that. It has been stretching at times and I am not sure how well I have done. But I am glad I tried.

John being collated as Archdeacon at Synod 2022



My master's thesis was on how we use the Anglican liturgical tradition with young people. That meant I had done a lot of reading about what this liturgical tradition is and how it works. I have so appreciated the chance to put all that into practice every time we gather as a community. I have really enjoyed the freedom you gave me to be a bit creative, and how many of you were willing to work with me to curate some wonderful services. Andrea's All Souls services is one example. We have run some wonderful Palm Sunday services, St George's Day services, the

annual SPCA Blessing of the Animal's service and Christmas Day services. Others have decorated the church for Palm Sunday, Harvest Festivals, St George's Day, The Good Friday three hour service and on so many other occasions. What a gift it has been to have so many of you willing to share your gifts and creativity. It has been life giving to be in a parish that takes its liturgical life so seriously. And it has been life giving to be able to try new things and see what happens. Marvelous! Which brings me to the last section. The people. I have got to know some great saints over the years. When I arrived, I was told by Jose that I was supposed to choose all the music. I thought that was dumb as I didn't know that much about music. So, I invited Malcolm Blow and Marion Verhaegen to meet with me to choose it. Those two saints are no longer with us, but they so enriched my life. I miss them both and feel their presence. Our meetings often were long as we talked about the parish, music in general, how they were both going, and answering Malcolm's theological questions. One of Malcolm's gift's was the Christmas choir. Singing in that choir with James Mollison (and Drew when he was able to be part of it) and Clark Houltram was one of the highlights of my year. I am not sure that Malcolm, or Bonnie once Malcolm retired, appreciated the fun we blokes were having. I so appreciated the time taken to choose the music and then teach us and mould us into a choir. And the joy of then offering that either in the carol service or carols on the lawn. I will miss all this. Thank you Malcolm. His picture still hangs on the wall next to my desk.

Luckily for me, one of the things this parish is known for is hospitality. We do that well. People know that if they come here for the 60 Bells service, for example, the refreshments afterwards will be wonderful. It makes such a difference knowing you are inviting people to wonderful food after the event. That is not always true in other places. Ainsley's cheese rolls are legendary in my view. I will miss them!

There are so many more I could mention. The wardens I have worked with and met with regularly. All those who have been on vestry. Paula Simons' careful and tireless work as treasurer. The Parish Administrators I have worked



with. The 9.30 am Team Leaders who did such a great job organising teams for each Sunday and helping me organise the more creative service. I miss those teams. I so appreciate the other priests who have joined me in ministry, Joyce, Debbie, Adrienne, and Wendy.

The parishioners who were here 12 years ago that are no longer here. It is a wonder the parish is still operating when I look at the list of parishioners I was given when I arrived, with all the regulars carefully ticked by Maureen Hope so I knew who to visit. So many have died, have moved away or have had to stop attending due to age and ill health. More than anything else, it is all these people and all of you that I will take away with me.

It has been an enormous privilege being among you as vicar. You helped Bonnie and I celebrate our 30th wedding anniversary, and me my 60th birthday. You have freed me to be involved in things like the Tauranga Moana Interfaith Council, and to hold roles in the Third Order, Society of Saint Francis, which took me away for several weeks many years. Not all parishes are that generous and I appreciate that gift.

There is so much more I could talk about. And this is way too long already – kind of like my sermons. I am grateful for all this and so much more. Thank you for these last twelve years.



Interregnum (time between John leaving and the next vicar being appointed)

I thought it would be useful to let everyone know what happens after John retires and a rough outline on the time taken, when the Parish goes into interregnum.

As you all know, John's last services are on the Sunday 12th May. There will be one service that morning, at 9.30 am and will be followed by a morning tea and farewell from the parish. On 26th May there will again only be one service in the morning, and then a service with the Bishop at 3 pm in the afternoon to mark John's official finishing and retirement.

Paula and Terry have been working on a 5-year budget which we will have to present to the Diocese to convince them that we can afford a full time vicar. This budget is now complete and will go to the Diocese shortly for discussion with Colleen Kaye, the Diocesan Registrar.

In order to have a full time vicar we have to prove we can cover the stipend and allowances. As it is most likely any person taking the role will not come from Tauranga, we will need to provide housing. Otherwise, we might have a part time priest in charge.

We have to decide if we want to offer the current vicarage and remove the tenants or find a suitable rental. Vestry is working on this at the moment and will let you know their decision when made.

Once John has left the parish, the Bishop will convene a parish consultation meeting which is our time to state what we would like in the replacement for John. Our views will be taken into account and we will be asked to nominate four people to represent the parish with four from the Diocese on the board of nominations. The people's warden is automatically on the group with three others elected at the consultation meeting.

The position will be advertised nationwide and possibly overseas. We need to be praying now that suitable people are called to this role, and for wisdom and discernment for the nominators.

Once replies have been received and reviewed by the board of nominators, interviews will take place. After the interviews, a candidate will be selected and it is likely if they come from another parish they will need to give three months notice. If they come from overseas it could be longer.

So the time line might look something like this:

John retires end of May 2024.

Bishop might appoint a Priest in Charge – hopefully straight away.

Bishop calls a meeting of the parish June 2024, but probably in July 2024. The parish members for the Board of Nominators are elected.

Advertisement of the position August 2024, at least 4-6 weeks for replies to come in.

Assuming we have applications, interviews probably start November 2024 or re advertise position, at which point the process goes back a couple of steps.

Assuming suitable candidates have applied, the board of nominators select a suitable person, possibly December 2024 but most likely after Christmas.

Everything stops for Christmas.

Successful candidate sent letter confirming selection end of January 2025 allow a month for consideration February 2025.

If accepted, candidate gives three months notice effective May 2025. Would be longer for an overseas appointment.

So if everything works well 12 months but most likely this could well extend out past May next year.

We're a bit thin on the ground for priests to take services during this time. With Debbie likely to be moving to Australia at some point either late this year or early next, she is only likely to be available in the short term.

Bishop Andrew has provided a pastoral letter to the parish which provided some more detail and has been emailed to the congregation and is available at the parish office.

Clark Houltram
Vicar's Warden



Prayer for our time of Interregnum

God our Creator,
when you speak there is light and life,
when you act there is justice and love;
you have welcomed each one of us in Jesus
and called us to be his body in this place.
We give thanks for John's leadership and ministry among us,
And we pray for God's blessing on him in retirement.

Send us your Holy Spirit,
at this time of uncertainty and change,
to fill us with vision and energy;
make us faithful in prayer and worship,
that we may be true to our calling
to bring new life to our community.

We pray for grace and the guidance of the Holy Spirit
that God will call and equip the next vicar of Gate Pā.

Guide with your heavenly wisdom
those who are to choose a new vicar for this parish,
that the one whom we receive
may be a wise shepherd of your people:
ready to serve us with joy, to build us up in faith,
encourage us in God's mission of healing and justice,
that your Kingdom may come,
in this city, and in the world.

Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.



Wishing everybody a blessed and safe Easter
The next Web will be out in July 2024

Vicar	John Hebenton	021 679 202	john.hebenton@waiapu.com
Priest Assistant	Rev'd Debbie Garrett	021 868869	
Ministers	The Congregation		
Parish Administrator	Charmaine McMenamin	578 7916	admin.gatepa@waiapu.com
Vicar's Warden	Clark Houltram	543 2366	
People's Warden	Faye Mayo	543 3369	
Prayer Circle	Rev'd Joyce Crawford	579 4363	
Website			www.stgeorgesgatepa.com
Facebook Page			https://www.facebook.com/GatePaAnglican
Vicar's Blog			http://colourfuldreamer.blogspot.co.nz/