

St George's Anglican Parish of Gate Pa
 All who enter here be reconciled
22nd March 2020 with The Rev'd John Hebenton Lent 4

There is morning tea in the church lounge after the 9.00am Service and the AGM. Please join us. Visitors are very welcome.

Liturgy page 456

Psalm: 23		NZPB Page 221
First Reading:	1 Sam 16:1-13	Bible Page 226
Second Reading:	Eph 5:8-14	Bible Page 951
Gospel:	John 9:1-41	Bible Page 871

Sentence: I am the light of the world, says the Lord; those who follow me will have the light of life. John 8.12

Prayer for the Day
God of healing and sight,
we long to see with eyes of faith.
Heal all that blinds us,
renew our vision,
and grant us to see afresh
all that you are doing;
For you are alive and reign with the Father
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever. Amen.

All are welcome to receive communion
Prayers and anointing for healing are available during communion
in the chapel, at the back of the church.

Theme for the Week

These are very unsettling times. Each day brings more grim news and uncertainty. It is very difficult to imagine what the next weeks or months hold in store. Many of you will be concerned for the health and safety of those you love, and for yourselves. These are difficult times. But the current crisis is also an opportunity to grow more deeply into this Lent and to more fully live out the resurrection life.

Into all this we are given John 9 as our gospel reading, the story of the blind man healed by Jesus. Some commentators suggest we should add John 10: 1-21, Jesus' commentary on what has happened. In the Greek Jesus ignored the question about who had sinned that the man was born blind. The man is blind. Now that Jesus has seen him it was time for God's works to be revealed in him. It is important that we not dissolve into blaming others for what is happening – as easy as that is. It is important that we join crucified and risen Jesus in doing the works of God. Just as Jesus is the light of the world, we are invited to be light. What does that look like for us at this time?

Jesus sees the blind man. He offers healing. The blind man hears Jesus, the good shepherd, and obeys. Later Jesus seeks him out and invites him into the deep trusting relationship he offers all who would become disciples. He invites him to be like Abram and Sarai and to leave all he knew of life including his identity as son of his father and blind beggar; and see himself as a disciple of this rabbi, with these others who were learning to see the pain around and to offer healing.

A real question in all this is how might we continue to be church during the darkest of days? If our identity is built around Sunday, we might be in trouble. But I would suggest that this story of the healed blind man has much to offer. What invitation do you hear as you look ahead to all that might unfold? Care for each other. Stay safe. Stay calm. Wash your hands.

Prayer

Our community - We pray for the communities of Gate Pa, Greerton, Pyes Pa and Merivale. We pray for those who live without hope, and all those who seek to bring your hope. We particularly pray for the ministry of Centrepont, Whanau Aroha Centre and Merivale Community Centre.

We pray for those who are dying, sick, in hospital or in any other kind of need, parishioners in rest homes and those who receive home communion. We especially pray for any others you hold in your hearts.

Our Church: Today we pray for Hui Amorangi ki Te Tairawhiti: Bishop Don Tamihere, and Rohe of Ngati Porou, Turanga/Whangara, Kahungunu kit te Wairoa.

Wider Church: Today we pray for Pakistan.

NOTICES:

Tuesday 24th March 9.30am Holy Communion Service - Cancelled
- Parish Coffee Meet: 10.30 Le Chat Noir, Chadwick Rd, Greerton
Wednesday 25th March -
Thursday 26th March
Friday 27th March 9.30 Prayer Group
Sunday 29th March 8am and 9.30am Holy Communion Services
- Lenten Studies resume after 9.30am Service in Lounge

Service Next Week 29th March – Lent 5

Liturgy page 404

Psalm: 130

First Reading: Ezekiel 37:1-14

Second Reading: Romans 8:6-11

Gospel: John 11:1-45

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