



St George's

Anglican Parish of Gate Pa

All who enter here be reconciled

29th March 2020 with **The Rev'd John Hebenton**



Passion

Sunday

LENT 5

Psalm: 130

NZPB Page 355

Psalm Response: Glory to God – Creator, Word and Spirit

As God always was, is now, and will be forever. Amen

First Reading: Ezekiel 37:1-14 Bible Page 704

Second Reading: Romans 8:6-11 Bible Page 919

Gospel: John 11:1-45 Bible Page 873

Sentence: I am the resurrection and the life, says the Lord; whoever lives and believes in me shall never die. John 11.25-26

Prayer for the Day

God of hope,

in you we see a life that never dies.

Surrounded by death and violence may we
never give in to despair,

But rest in you

our resurrection and our life.

For you are alive and reigns with the Father,

In the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

Theme for the Week

On Wednesday night last week, vestry discussed how we might continue to be church if and when we were put into lock down. I am now very grateful for that conversation. A lot has changed in 9 days. Covid-19 is now being transmitted in the community and we are in lock down. For many of us this is a deeply unsettling time, full of uncertainty and fear about the future, either because of our work situation, our health or our age; or some combination of the above.

Just when we needed the support of our church family we can no longer gather. But church is NOT cancelled. Lockdown means that we must find new ways to be church. Church is not just the gathering on Sunday morning at our services. Our gatherings are important, but they are not the point. The point is that when we gather, we remember we are God's community. Together we are shaped by the words of the liturgy (most of which come from scripture), the scripture readings set for that day, maybe the sermon, and our prayers. We are also shaped in the radical act of gathering around the table as equals remembering not only Jesus' last supper, but every time he gathered with and fed or was fed by the poor, the gentile, the excluded. We are invited to join the crucified and risen Christ in God's mission of generosity, compassion and justice. We are still invited to gather, even if we are not physically present in the same building, so that we can still be God's community being shaped to be people of God's mission of generosity and compassion.

This week we are offered some powerful stories. Firstly, the vision of the dried-up bones of the nation of Israel being raised with God's life. And then we have the story of the raising of Lazarus – like all signs/miracles in John pointing beyond itself to Jesus death and resurrection.

Howard Wallace offers us these thoughts.

“Today's gospel reading, the story of the raising of Lazarus (John 11:1-45), has obvious and clear parallels to the Ezekiel passage. Together, they challenge our thinking about the full significance of resurrection in Jesus Christ. Resurrection is not simply a matter of being raised from the dead, and in Lazarus' case it is a unique case for presumably Lazarus would have died again at some later time. Resurrection is not simply concerned with the 'after life' but with the raising of broken spirits, of bodies as good as dead, of hearts that lack strength and courage, of communities that are fractured, of relationships that have waned or become fractious, of peoples who have lost hope etc. While Ezekiel's vision may not have direct connection to resurrection in the way we might normally see it, it does remind us that the resurrection that is in Jesus Christ and the risen life in him reaches to this side of the grave too giving new life and hope where there has been only 'dry bones' in the past.”¹

May we know Christ's risen life in these hard times, giving new life and hope in the dry bones of our fear, uncertainty and anxiety as we find new ways of being God's community.

Please look out for one another. Look out for your neighbours. Be kind to yourselves and each other. Stay calm. Stay safe. Wash your hands.

¹ <http://hwallace.unitingchurch.org.au/WebOTcomments/LentA/Lent5A%20Ezek37.html>

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.

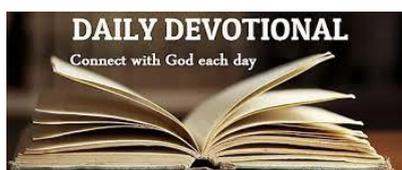
Our Church: Today we pray for the Diocesan Mission Committee, Anglican Missions Board: Robert Kereopa, NZCMS/SAMS: Rosie Fyfe, Anglican Church in Aotearoa, New Zealand & Polynesia including the General Secretary: Michael Hughes,
Church Army: Monika Clark, NZ Anglican Pension Board and staff, Social Justice Commission, Religious Orders, Missions to Seafarers, Oceania Region: Lance Lukan, (Director), Viti Whippy (Secretary).

Wider Church: Today we pray for the Sisters and Brothers of the many religious orders in the Anglican Church of Melanesia.

Notices.

Patricia is still working from home during these weeks of lock down. You can ring the parish office and leave a message. Or you can email her at admin.gatepa@waiapu.com. Her personal mobile is 021 0292 1498. [John is also working from home. You can contact him on 021679202, or by emailing mailto:john.hebenton@waiapu.com.](mailto:john.hebenton@waiapu.com)

Phone contact - [Hopefully everyone has been rung now. If you would like more regular communication, please contact John.](#)



Together in Prayer - Even though we can no longer physically gather somewhere, we can pray together. You are invited to join me in praying at 9.30 each morning in our own places, knowing that although we are apart, we are together in prayer. We are using the [Daily Devotions](#) for the day from A New Zealand Prayer Book | He Karakia Mihinare o Aotearoa. You can find these starting at p.104 in the Prayer Book, or on the internet at <https://anglicanprayerbook.nz/104.html>. Or you can email Patricia for the Service Booklet of Daily Devotions sent out this week. If you have not got one, please email me on and I will send you a pdf. format one to print out or read from, or John can post one out to you.

Together in Prayer on Sunday. At 9.30 on Sunday mornings we will use the service starting at p.476 in the prayer book. This can be found at <https://anglicanprayerbook.nz/476e>. Or you can email Patricia for the Service Booklet sent out this week. Again, you are invited to join with me in your own home praying the service and reading the lessons together. I will provide some notes for the sermon each week.

We will also try livestreaming the Sunday service from John's house. We will be using our [Facebook page](#). Go to <https://www.facebook.com/GatePaAnglican/>. And hopefully you will see us and you can join us in the service.

Praying with our Province. The Archbishops and bishops have asked us all to join them in prayer at 7pm every Sunday that worship services are suspended. Please light a candle in your home and pray with and for others. Pray for your families, your neighbours, our country, and those ill with the virus. Pray for our health professionals and all those on the frontline who are working tirelessly to care for our community. Pray for the lonely and the frightened. Pray for the courage and grace to be a comfort and a light to the world.

"I roto i te pōuri te mārama e whiti ana; heoi kihai i mau i te pōuri / The light shines in the darkness and the darkness did not overcome it." John 1:5

Being Church differently - John has also been joining with ADJust: Diocese of Auckland Young Anglicans for Social Justice who are livestreaming The Daily Offices at 7.30am, 12.30pm and 8.30pm. I am joining them for Night Prayer at 8.30pm – a nice way to finish the day. As Anglicans of the Church of Aotearoa, New Zealand and Polynesia, these offices will be sourced from A New Zealand Prayer Book He Karakia Mihinare o Aotearoa, which is available online at <http://anglicanprayerbook.nz>.

Connecting via the internet. John is hoping to have set up a zoom chat for Thursday morning using our computers. He will send out the link early next week for any that might want to join us. If you are interested look out for that email.

For more information about the COVID-19 Alert Level 4

For updates on council services during COVID-19 Alert Level 4 please visit:
Tauranga City Council: <https://www.tauranga.govt.nz/business/health-and-safety/covid-19>

Western Bay of Plenty District Council:

<https://www.westernbay.govt.nz/community/covid-19>

For official advice on essential services, self-isolation, looking after your mental wellbeing, vulnerable communities and other information visit the NZ Government [website -https://covid19.govt.nz/](https://covid19.govt.nz/)

If you are unable to find what you need, and are not sure who to contact for help, call the free government helpline on 0800 779 997 or on 0800 22 66 57 (8am–1am, 7 days a week).

For more resources from the Diocese – go to the [Facebook page](#) or the Waiapu Diocesan [website](http://www.waiapu.com/) at <http://www.waiapu.com/>

Readings for the next week are:

Monday 6th April - John 12:1-11

Tuesday 7th April - John 12:20-36

Wednesday 8th - John 8:31-42

Thursday 2nd April - John 8:51-end

Friday 3rd April - John 10:31-end

Saturday 4th April – John 11:45-end

Martin Luther King, Prophet, 1968

Sunday 5th April - 6th Sunday in Lent: Palm Sunday

Te Rātapu Tuaono o Rēneti: te Rātapu Nikau

- Isaiah 50:4-9
- Psalm: 118:1-2, 19-29
- Philippians 2:5-11
- Matthew 21:1-11

Collect for the Sixth Sunday in Lent: Palm Sunday

Jesus, when you rode into Jerusalem
the people waved palms
with shouts of acclamation.

Grant that when the shouting dies
we may still walk beside you even to a cross.

For your loves sake we pray.

Amen.



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