



# PARISH WEB

September 2020

St. George's Anglican Church

Gate Pa, Tauranga



## *The Spring Edition*



### Vicar's Blog:

Kia ora tatou katoa.

I am writing this as we wait in level two, in hope that we will soon drop down to level one. Our celebration of St. George is on hold for a few more weeks, and our plans for events in the future have an element of uncertainty. It is a little frustrating. But in our decisions about all this vestry has been mindful to use the diocesan guidelines and to place both your safety and that of all those who use our facilities first. We continue to monitor the situation at our meetings.

For many this year has been difficult. On a recent zoom clergy training event we talked about what helps us during difficult times and times of change. And the image of trees was suggested. Trees have strong yet flexible trunks which allow them to bend with the wind. They usually grow in groups so that they can support one another in the wind. And their roots below ground intertwine and communicate and feed each other, allowing strong and thriving trees to support and help damaged trees have a better chance of recovery. The same is true for us. Communities at their best act in the same way. One of the gifts of being part of a community like St. Georges is that it can provide the support we need in times like this. Please continue to be that kind of support for each other, and to ask for help if you need it.

In Epiphany we spent several weeks exploring Matthew's version of the Beatitudes and the Sermon on the Mount. It is an important story in Matthew's gospel and shapes how he tells his version of Jesus life. In essence Jesus is living out what he taught on that hill overlooking Capernaum, inviting others to live in a similar way. Jesus and his followers were overlooking their world, overlooking all they had known of life. And gesturing at this world he invites them and us to imagine another world: a world where the most important people are the poor in spirit, those who mourn, the meek, those who hunger and thirst for God's justice, the pure in heart,

the merciful, the peacemakers, and those who are persecuted for the sake of God's justice. He invited them into the Kingdom of Heaven, the Reign of God. This is a world where all flourish and where the common good is held as paramount. This is a world where the needs of the poor are placed first, and where ALL are treated with honour and respect and given what they need to thrive.

It is a grand vision. And I would say we have seen glimpses of it during this year, both in the government's decisions around lockdown, and in the guidelines offered by our diocese. They have put the common good first and have said that a healthy economy comes out of people being healthy and confident to come out and engage in community life. It saddens me to see so called Christians demanding their right to do whatever they want without any concern for others. The Beatitudes invite us to a different way. To be a follower of Christ is not about my needs, but the needs of all. When all thrive, I thrive.

Last Sunday we started the annual Season of Creation. I wrote more extensively about this last year. In summary from September 1 through October 4 we join the worldwide Christian family, including Catholic, Orthodox, Anglican, Lutheran and many other denominations, for this celebration of prayer and action to protect our common home. This year we are invited as followers of Christ from around the globe to reflect on our relationship with not only each other but also God's creation.

We do so in the shadow of COVID-19 pandemic. There are a number of scientists who are warning us that this pandemic and the groans of creation under man made climate change are all symptoms of the same thing: our broken relationship with this world and our rapid unravelling of the web that sustains life on this planet. "This web is a complex, interconnected system in which each part plays an important role. When one component is changed—or removed—the entire system is affected, and this can produce positive—or negative—consequence." <sup>1</sup>

While nature prevents and responds to many of the most pressing challenges faced by humans today, we are increasingly experiencing the damaging impact of human action on our world. "The emergence of COVID-19 has underscored the fact that when we destroy biodiversity, we destroy the system that supports human life. The more biodiverse an ecosystem is, the more difficult it is for one pathogen to spread rapidly or dominate; whereas, biodiversity loss provides opportunity for pathogens to pass between animals and people. Human actions, including deforestation, encroachment on wildlife habitats, intensified agriculture, and acceleration of climate change, have upset the delicate balance of nature. We have changed the system that would naturally protect us and have created conditions that allow

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.worldenvironmentday.global/biodiversity-coronaviruses>

particular pathogens—including coronaviruses—to spread... Nature is sending us a message.”<sup>2</sup>

The Season of Creation offers an opportunity to remember that this is God’s creation. It offers an opportunity to repent of having replaced God at the centre of creation with our economic needs. We have placed our wealth and comfort ahead of both God’s delight in this world, and of the needs of our brothers and sisters around the world including all plants and animals. Now we are having to live with the damage we have done to this planet with climate change, biodiversity loss, COVID-19, and crippling debt for many countries.

The Season of Creation also offers an opportunity to see the care of creation as an integral part of living the vision of reign of God as described in the Beatitudes and Sermon on the Mount, and to see creation as God’s gift to all in which this vision is lived out. Over the next month or so may we take time to re-evaluate our own priorities and lives. Let us pray and live for the kingdom of heaven where all flourish; where the common good, including the good of all created beings, is held as paramount; a world where the needs of the poor are placed first; and where ALL, including all plants and animals, are treated with honour and respect and are given what they need to thrive.

Theme of this year is Year of Jubilee. According to the Book of Leviticus, this was to happen every 50<sup>th</sup> year (after 7 cycles of 7 years). In this year, all Hebrew slaves and prisoners would be freed; all debts would be forgiven; all land was returned. It was a time to take stock and start again. Our world so desperately needs this. I listened to a podcast today with the Catholic Archbishop in Fiji talking about the economic consequences of Covid-19 and climate change, and the push by the IMF and World Bank for countries like Fiji to cut spending on development and infrastructure; like health, education, communications and roading, and instead pay debt. All this while their economy crumbles due to no tourists. So many in our world are calling for a Year of Jubilee.

This year is also an election year. As we prepare to vote both for the government and the referendums, we are invited to remind ourselves of our common role as caretakers of creation and to see that our wellbeing is interwoven with the wellbeing of all and of this planet. May that be one of the overriding concerns as we decide how to vote.

At this point I would normally detail all that is coming up, including the St. George’s day celebration, SPCA animal blessing service, Taize, Art Exhibition fund raiser, and All Saints. And we hope they will happen in some way. This year we will offer a non

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<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

eucharistic service on All Saints/All Souls for all who are grieving this year and who have been unable to attend the funerals of loved ones and friends.

So, for now we keep calm, wash our hands, and carry on. Be kind to yourself and others.

I offer this prayer to conclude.



Holy God,  
earth and air and water are your creation,  
and every living thing belongs to you:  
have mercy on us as climate change confronts us.  
Give us the will and the courage  
to simplify the way we live,  
to reduce the energy we use,  
to share the resources you provide,  
and to bear the cost of change.  
Forgive our past mistakes  
and send us your Spirit,  
with wisdom in present controversies  
and vision for the future to which you call us.

Te pai me te rangimārie (peace and all good)

John Hebert PSSF.



## Taizé Service at St George's



**Join us for our next Taizé Service!  
Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> October at 7pm, in Level One  
for a quiet, candle lit, contemplative service.**

**The following service will be 29<sup>th</sup> November – Advent**



**All Souls Day Remembrance Service,  
Sunday 1st November –both 8am and 9.30am  
Services**

*A Candle still burns for you...*

On this Sacred Day we mark both All Saints and All Souls. This year, we will offer a non eucharistic service for all who are grieving especially those who have been unable to attend the funerals of loved ones and friends due to Covid-19 restrictions. We remember all those who have died in Christ on whose shoulders we stand today. We especially remember those **we love** who have died over the last year. We light a candle for each person to the light that was their life and the belief we have in the resurrection to eternal life. We give thanks for all they meant to us, the important role in our lives. We also acknowledge our sense of grief and loss and give space to recognise the presence of the crucified and risen Christ during our grief bringing the hope of renewed life.

# Vestry Notes

Well, here we go again. We all thought but didn't want to think too deeply about Covid 19, but it just won't go away, and we find ourselves in lockdown level 2 with no face to face church.

The load once again falls on John and Bonnie to do online church. Unfortunately, not all our parishioners can access the online services and that makes it difficult for them to engage in services. There is no easy fix to this, but hopefully after Sunday this week we will be back at lockdown level 1 and we can again do church.

The problem with church under level 2 lockdown is not so much the separation distancing, but the cleaning of surfaces before and after each service and the fact we can't do morning tea without it being served rather than collected from the kitchen counter.

The St George's day commemoration, the celebration of our church becoming a separate parish, had to be postponed till we can once again meet. Hopefully, this will be on Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> September.

Vestry met just prior to the new lockdown and discussed what we might need to do in lockdown again and has been meeting via zoom online, as we did last time just to keep the parish ticking over.

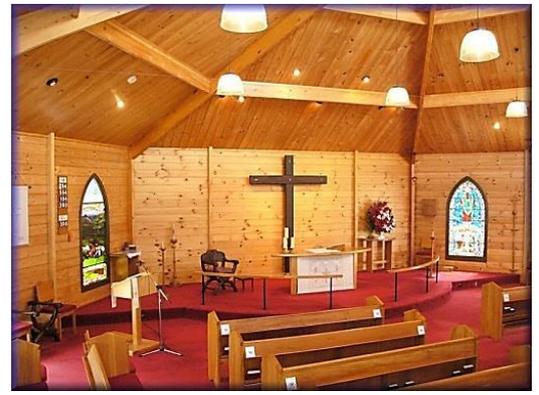
On a non Covid level, we have accepted the quotation from Snowden Electrical and Haden plumbing for the removal of the existing gas heaters and the installation of the air conditioning units. We still don't have the money to pay for them but John has sent in applications to TECT and Legacy and together with money already in hand we hope to be in a position to get the work done before the summer heat hits.

The art show planning is still advancing and is planned for the 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> of October. So hopefully Covid is suitably diminished before then.

Well that's all for now.

Stay well, keep safe, wear a mask when out, be kind, wash your hands and we will get through this.

Clark Houltram  
Vicar's Warden



# St. Matthew Green Team



## **50** *easy ways to care for creation*

- 1 **Avoid single use products** such as plastic or Styrofoam cups, bottles, cutlery, straws.
- 2 **Use reusable bags for shopping.** Recycle plastic ones at most grocery stores.
- 3 **Refill a reusable water container** instead of buying bottled water.
- 4 **Ride a bike or walk** instead of driving.
- 5 **Buy fair trade products** that are ethically and sustainably sourced.
- 6 **Turn off the car engine** if sitting idle for more than 10 seconds.
- 7 **Use washable napkins** at mealtimes.
- 8 **Bring your own coffee mug** to the local café. Some even give discounts.
- 9 **Take part in a community garden.** Save unused water for plants.
- 10 **Carpool** with a group to an event.
- 11 **Buy only what you need.** Buy local. Buy ethical. Buy organic.
- 12 **Organize a neighbourhood clean-up** on your street or community park.
- 13 **Choose energy-certified appliances** and products.
- 14 **Go to the library** instead of buying books, DVDs and CDs.
- 15 **Start a compost bin in your backyard.** It's easier than you think.
- 16 **Buy produce/goods with little or no packaging.**
- 17 **Rent a boat without a motor:** a kayak, rowboat, canoe and get some exercise.
- 18 **Reduce junk mail by opting out.** Go paperless and subscribe online.
- 19 **Pick up litter when you see it.**
- 20 **Donate unwanted blankets, towels, pillows, or stuffed toys** to an animal shelter.
- 21 **Water your grass** at cooler times of the day, such as morning or evening.
- 22 **Minimize water use** when brushing teeth, cleaning, and washing dishes.
- 23 **Be mindful of animals and their habitats** when exploring the outdoors. Do not touch or remove them.
- 24 **Ban Styrofoam.** It contains a known carcinogen. Use plant-based products.
- 25 **Plan a volunteer or ecologically focused vacation.**
- 26 **Buy wood products, cards, and paper** FSC certified or responsibly sourced.

- 27 **Buy fresh, local, unpackaged food** with real ingredients and no chemicals.
  - 28 **Take unwanted clothing** and other items to a donation center.
  - 29 **Recycle used electronics and video games** at Best Buy. [Bestbuy.com/recycle](https://www.bestbuy.com/recycle).
  - 30 **Have a picnic** with reusable plate ware and utensils and cloth napkins.
  - 31 **If you cannot recycle it, don't buy it.**
  - 32 **Avoid gas spills, yard chemicals and other street run off** that goes into storm drains and ultimately into lakes and rivers.
  - 33 **Donate unwanted furniture** to a refugee center or Restore. [Habitat.org/restores](https://www.habitat.org/restores).
  - 34 **Dispose of hazardous cleaning agents, oils, and paint** at Hazardous Drop Off or Recycle Center.
  - 35 **Repurpose used hand wipes** for house cleaning chores.
  - 36 **Buy from companies** with eco-friendly, sustainable, and ethical practices.
  - 37 **Buy free-range eggs** or local farm eggs, meat and even milk. Check out local delivery options from local farms.
  - 38 **Donate unused paint** to a school or charity project. Dispose of properly, not in sinks or drains.
  - 39 For Halloween and costume parties, **make your own** with vintage or borrowed items.
  - 41 **Supply a recycle bin** at your next community event.
  - 42 **Use natural wrap, reusable fabric, or recycled material for wrapping gifts.** Avoid metallic décor paper; it's not recyclable.
  - 43 **Frequent restaurants that offer fresh foods from local farms.** Visit [Eatwell-guide.org](https://www.eatwell-guide.org).
  - 44 **Try a mixture of vinegar and water with lemon** for a fresh biodegradable cleaning agent.
  - 45 **Subscribe to Earth911.com** for the latest news on recycling.
  - 46 **Recycle or dispose of batteries properly;** they may have toxic contents.
  - 47 **Buy plates, cups and utensils** made from earth-friendly, sustainable or plant-based materials.
  - 48 **Recycle old appliances, vacuum cleaners, answering machines** and more at your electric retailer.
  - 49 **Take baths less frequently** and shorten your shower time.
  - 50 **Calculate your ecological footprint** on the planet at [earthday.org/footprint-calculator](https://www.earthday.org/footprint-calculator).
- Please recycle this flier or take a photo on your smart phone to share.

# Merivale Whanau Aroha Centre- Waiapu Kids



We had a lovely dinner out to celebrate and farewell, Tayla and Pozie. Thank you Tayla and Pozie for the past years that you have contributed to the centre and all your support. Wishing you well on your new paths.



And we welcome to the Whanau Aroha family, baby Luan. Congrats to Miri and Charlie.

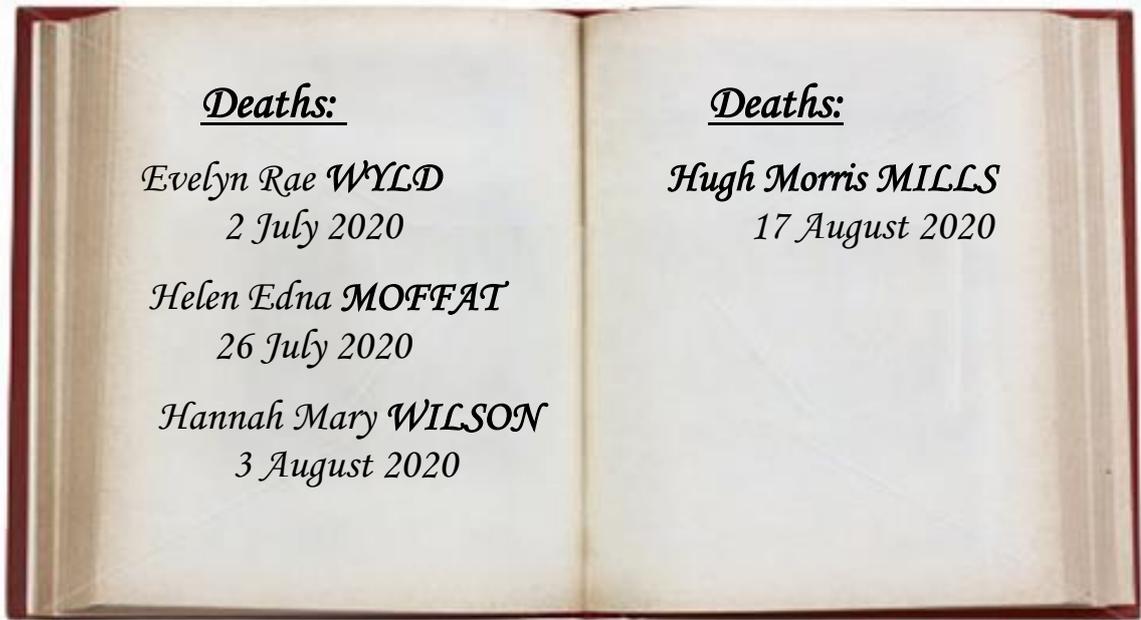
Saskia Dean

Centre Manager

Waiapu Kids Merivale Whanau Aroha



*From The Registers*



Deaths:

*Evelyn Rae WYLD*  
2 July 2020

*Helen Edna MOFFAT*  
26 July 2020

*Hannah Mary WILSON*  
3 August 2020

Deaths:

*Hugh Morris MILLS*  
17 August 2020



# Centrepoint Catchup

Early memories of Centrepoint:

Before St George's Church became the owners of the Centrepoint building, upstairs was leased as a gaming parlour and it was of concern to the volunteers that some children used to pound upstairs in school hours to play games. The parlour later shut down and a Church took up the lease, lasting for several years, which was a much more comfortable arrangement.

I recall the excitement when the possibility arose that our Church might be able to purchase the building and later did.

The most vivid memory when first I started, was the warmth and welcome I received from the staff members, and for new volunteers. This is still the norm to this day.



Generosity of the donors has continued over the years. Many older customers have continued to support Centrepoint for a very long time. What many people appreciate is the fact that Centrepoint also donates part of our own proceeds to the Greerton community such as

schools, pre-schools, groups, etc.

At first Barbara Webb and I used to sort and pack clothing down in the basement under the doctors' rooms next door. There was only the roller door, no windows, cold concrete brick walls – now highly illegal – but acceptable at the time. One of Barb's jobs was to fill saucers with mice poison each working day as the mice decided that the boxes of clothing made wonderful warm nests in which to raise their young. Too bad if you feared them. Also, my pet hate is cockroaches and there were quite a few of them too.



Some of the donations received are real puzzles as to their



use. Once a thick, short, round heavy piece of metal came in. Looked pretty useless until a man suddenly yelled out "look what I have found – been looking for this for ages" – still don't know what it was – did he? I usually could work out what things were used for, but have to say

with the new electronic age, what some of the donations received are, is now quite beyond me.

There have been problems at times with shop lifting, or people telling us as we have been given items, why should they pay and so forth. However, most people are pleased with the extent of goods available and the reasonable pricing, the children's clothing range is excellent and really sells well.

There are many instances over the years where Centrepont has offered help to those in hardship. One, in particular, when a young solo mum lost her home and all her belongings in a fire overnight. Centrepont set her up with clothes for her and her children, together with the necessities for starting over – we were humbled by her heartbroken gratitude. Centrepont is not only a great op-shop but also a compassionate place for those truly in need. One shop lifting episode involved a person who was caught in the act. However, by the supervisor handling this situation with insight and compassion, this person remains a valued customer. Centrepont's outreach was greatly assisted by the drop-in centre – one of the major principles for welcoming our customers. People were invited to enjoy a free cup of coffee and biscuit while out shopping. Some homeless people took advantage of this offer and in return, performed small jobs for Centrepont as an example of their thanks for this outreach, but problems arose in the Greerton community so this goodwill had to stop as staff members were becoming anxious about the situation. I would hope this service could be continued in future as such interaction is helpful for these people and encourages understanding between us all.

One of the side-lines in Centrepont was the hire section. It had been a feature from early days yet when Shirley managed it, her flair for fashion of all ages saw this sector flourish. She was able to clothe children to adults in all sorts of outfits suitable for a particular function. School balls, retro, private parties whatever was required.



Attitudes towards op-shopping have mellowed over the years and now is seen as an adventure by any people. One never knows what one may find – one person's trash quickly becomes another's treasure. Also, the wonderful quality and quantity of donated goods has continued to surprise and humble us. Covid 19 level 2 has made a difference to the manner in which our shop operates. Limited of 10

people in the shop at any one time requires some customers to have to wait

outside. Most are considerate and obey the rules. However, everybody is welcomed on arrival as usual, and business is brisk.

So what has kept the two Barbara's and me, dedicated volunteers for so long? As we age, our activities become more limited. It is satisfying to know we can still serve in our Church and community and observe the positives that Centrepoint offers to all, and which still gives us a sense of worth.

*Thanks to Shirley Scott for your memories. Shirley has been with us for over thirty years and Barbara Livesey and Barbara Webb are not very far behind. Their experience and expertise are invaluable to us and we are very grateful for their help*



## Volunteers wanted

### **Volunteer in your community**

If you or you know of someone looking to give back to your community and have a few hours free each week then we would love to hear from you.

***Call into the shop, have a coffee and speak to Kate or phone: 578 7298***

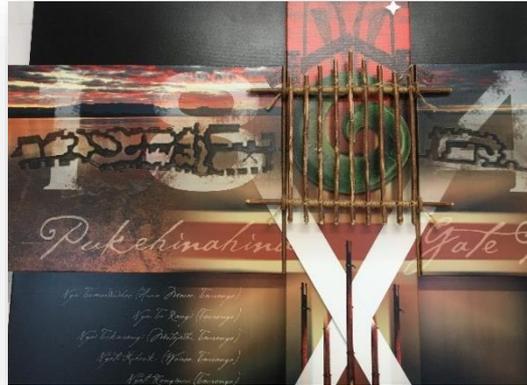
No retail experience required, because there are so many other areas you can help and make a difference in the shop. You'll also join an amazing group of people.

Flexible hours and days

Able bodied people to assist in the shop, picking up donations, opening and closing

# St George's *Art Show*

Friday 9th & Saturday 10th October



Mark these dates in your diaries. The Social Committee has been working hard on planning for St George's very first **Art Exhibition** as the major fundraiser for this year.

We are also supporting *Awhina House* with a portion of the sales going to this very worthwhile community initiative.

*Awhina House* helps homeless women in Tauranga to get their lives back together again by providing shelter, care, and life skills. They have celebrated their 1<sup>st</sup> Birthday this year.

- We have over 30 professional and amateur artists from around the Bay of Plenty exhibiting works in a variety of media.
- **Centrepoint** will have original artworks for sale.
- Some of our parishioners are among the artists.
- *The Phoenix Friends Creative Embroiderers* are also exhibiting.
- If you have original art works that you would like to donate please contact Faye, we would love to have them to sell.

Friday night is our *Gala* evening **7.00pm-9:30 pm**. There will be refreshments provided by *Happy Puku catering*, raffles and a Mystery Auction, plus a chance to get your glad rags on !

Tickets are **\$25** from the office or through Eventfinda shortly. Saturday's entry is by Koha. 9.00am-4.00pm. Purchased works are collected on Saturday, at the close of the show.

We are asking for donations towards the purchase of the drinks. If you can help please leave your donation at the office. Come and support our major Fundraiser.

On behalf of the Fundraising Committee. **Faye Mayo**



## BLESSING SERVICE:

We will celebrate St. Francis of Assisi's love for animals with the SPCA Animal Service, **Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> October.**

We shall be having two services on that day. One at 8am and the Animal Service at 10.00am. Dogs on leads, cats in a carrier, birds in a cage, Alpaca and horses on leads.

Please bring a small plate of delicious fare to share at morning tea (with the humans).



*With our upcoming Blessing of the Animals service in October, I think this article from The Ark Autumn/ Winter 2015 is an interesting reflection on Christian attitudes to animals. Paula Simons*

### WHY ARE CHURCHES NEGATIVE ABOUT ANIMALS?

*We have seen from the previous quotes from Laudato Si' that Pope Francis criticises the Church's anthropocentrism time and time again. So why is the Church so anthropocentric? This is a question that David Clough, Professor of Theological Ethics at Chester University, has been investigating and writing about. Professor Clough is President of the Society for the Study of Christian Ethics, Co-chair of the Animals and Religion Group of the American Academy of Religion and is a Methodist preacher. He is author of 'On Animals' (London: T&T Clark/Continuum, 2012). He shares the results of his research with us here.*

### BY PROFESSOR DAVID CLOUGH

**As a Christian who has been convinced for most of my faith has direct relevance to how I treat non-animals, I have regularly been disorientated to find other Christians do not see the link.** This has made interested in asking why many consider that their belief gives them faith-based reasons *not* to be



**my life that human that most me Christian concerned**

about animals. In this article I explore four of the answers I have encountered most, with most focus on the first, which I take to be the most influential.

## ***Why Are the Churches Negative about Animals?***

### ***Answer 1: 'It's all about us' theologies***

A strong strand in the Christian tradition has focused on God's grace in creation and redemption as wholly directed towards human beings, holding that creation is 'all about us'.<sup>1</sup> This is an anthropocentric view of creation, where humans are the centre of God's project. Philo of Alexandria (c. 15 BC–50 AD) was a Jewish philosopher and theologian, one of the earliest commentators on the Genesis creation narrative and perhaps the most theologically influential advocate of the 'It's all about us' position concerning the purpose of creation. He was strongly influenced by Platonism and sought to interpret the Mosaic Pentateuch as a philosophical book. Philo's commentary on Genesis clearly has Plato's *Timaeus* in mind as a point of comparison. In the *Timaeus*, creation takes place in two stages: first the eternal world and world soul are made by the deity, then demiurges are charged with the task of making human beings within a second creation that exists in time. Beginning with immortal souls, they create different bodily parts to encase it, but then find that placing it in the hostile environment of the fire and air, their creature quickly perishes. The demiurges therefore make 'another nature' to grow: trees, plants and seeds, to create an environment more congenial to the new mortal creature. In Plato's account, women, birds, animals, and fish then descend from mortal creatures that are deficient in some respect: unjust or cowardly, simple-minded, wild or stupid, respectively. Here is a universe with the immortal soul of man - used in the gender-exclusive sense - placed clearly at the centre.

### **Reconciling Genesis with Platonic Anthropocentrism**

Philo is frequently troubled by discrepancies between this Platonic account and the Genesis narrative, and one of his first questions is why, in Genesis, human beings were created last of all the creatures, suggesting their inferiority, in contrast with the Platonic account. To answer this pictures God as the host at a banquet who does not summon his guests until the feast is prepared, or organizer of a gymnastic contest who does not spectators until the performers are ready.

Philo states, God ordered things 'so that, when being entered into the cosmos, he would encounter both a festive meal and a most sacred

*The weight of theological opinion that human beings are God's aim in creation, therefore, is not matched by a similar weight of theological argument*

point, he not the gather. Similarly, the human immediately theatre'.<sup>2</sup>

Philo's interpretation of this point in Genesis has had a significant influence on

Christian commentators on Genesis who followed him. Early Christian theologians, such as Lactantius, Gregory of Nyssa, and John Chrysostom, give the same answer to the question of why human beings were created last and, at the Reformation, both Martin Luther and John Calvin adopt a similar position.<sup>3</sup> In reflecting on the import of this tradition of reflection on why human beings were created last by God, we need to note that, the reason so many thinkers commented on this issue, was that the Genesis 1 account of creation did not seem as anthropocentric as they thought was necessary. These discussions are therefore an attempt to explain away the Genesis 1 affirmation that God’s work of each day is declared by God to be good in its own right, without reference to its utility to human beings. In short, the doctrine that human beings are the aim, centre and goal of creation is being read into the Genesis text in order to make it congruent with a view of the place of the human in creation derived from other sources.

### **The Stoic Influence on Anthropocentrism**

The Genesis narrative is not the only focus of theological arguments suggesting human beings as the purpose of creation. One of the most thoroughgoing statements of this view is found in Origen’s disputation with Celsus. Origen cites Celsus’s argument that, contrary to the Christian view ‘that God made all things for man’, ‘everything was made just as much for the irrational animals as for men’.<sup>4</sup> As Henry Chadwick notes, however, this is a rehearsal of a well-established argument between Stoic and Academic philosophers: the latter regularly attacked Stoic anthropocentrism on the basis of arguments similar to those used by Celsus, and most of what Origen says in reply are standard Stoic responses.<sup>5</sup> The best that can be said of Origen’s position here, therefore, is that he recognized and took advantage of common ground between Stoicism and

### **Modern Theologians Apply Anthropocentric View**

Early modern theologians were quick to apply these anthropocentric texts to justify the exercise of new-human power over the natural world. Of the many examples cited by Keith Thomas in *Man and the World*, the most striking is Henry More’s opinion in that cattle and sheep were only given life to keep meat fresh until we need to eat them.<sup>8</sup> It is clear from this brief survey that it is not difficult to find Christian theologians stating that human beings are God’s sole or primary purpose in creation. It is harder, however, to find good theological argument in defence of this proposition. The weight of theological opinion that

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found  
Natural  
1653  
their

human beings are God's aim in creation, therefore, is not matched by a similar weight of theological argument.

The best response to 'all about us' theologies is that positing human beings as God's purpose in creation is a theological mistake. For Thomas Aquinas, the goodness and glory of God are the final end of creation.<sup>9</sup> Bonaventure agrees the final end of creation cannot be anything outside God.<sup>10</sup> More recently, the German theologian Wolfhart Pannenberg has offered another answer: 'the creature was not created in order that God should receive glory from it' because God has no need of glorification by creatures. Instead, God's end in creation is God's creatures: 'both the object and goal of creation'.<sup>11</sup> It is a self-centred theological mistake, therefore, to think that God created for the sake of humanity. Instead, God's glory is manifested in the flourishing of all creatures, who find their final end in God.

### ***Answer 2: Human needs take priority***

Many Christians would concede the point that God cares for the wellbeing of all creatures, but argue that humans are of much greater value, so should always be prioritized. Jesus's teaching in Matthew 10 captures this position well: even though two sparrows are sold for a penny, not one falls to the ground apart from God, but humans should be reassured that they are worth more than many sparrows (vv. 29–31). Passages like this mean, in my view, that Christians could never propose a species neutral ethic, which gave equal weight to the interests of humans and all non-human animals.

In response, however, I think it is crucial to recognize that most issues of animal ethics do not weigh similar human and non-human interests against each other. For example, it would be much better for global human food and water security if we stopped feeding a third of global cereal crops to livestock and instead grew food to feed humans directly. In addition, the cheap meat produced by intensive farming has led to an overconsumption of meat, which has played a role in the growing human health challenges of obesity, diabetes, chronic heart disease, and stroke. Intensive farming conditions have also helped incubate new diseases, such as avian flu, that threaten human health globally. The antibiotics that are fed to farmed animals to try to control infection in the crowded conditions - accounting for 80 per cent of antibiotic usage in the US - contribute significantly to the huge challenge of bacterial resistance to current antibiotics.

### **Answer 3: Animals are a secular issue**

The movement for animal rights in recent decades has been a predominantly secular affair, that is strongly critical of the tradition as the basis for moral views that are of concern for non-human animals. In response, have sometimes opposed initiatives aimed at the interests of animals, on the basis that it is an liberal issue, rather than one rooted in their faith. To respond to this concern, it is necessary only to recall the history of the first animal cruelty legislation. This was enacted in the UK in the early nineteenth century through the efforts of evangelical Christians such as William Wilberforce, who saw opposition to animal cruelty alongside other social issues, such as the abolition of slavery, as a Christian concern. The campaigning group the *Society for the Protection of Animals* (later the *RSPCA*) was founded by a group of Christians together with a prominent Jew, and published contemporary sermons against animal cruelty. This followed in the tradition of Christian discussion of the place of animals in God's purposes in the eighteenth century, through the work of figures such as John Hildrop and John Wesley, the founder of Methodism. It is hard to understand why Christians seemed less interested in animal welfare issues in the later nineteenth and twentieth centuries, but it is clear that the promotion of animal welfare was recognized as a Christian issue at its modern origin.

*the promotion of animal welfare was recognized as a Christian issue at its modern origin.*

Christian dismissive Christians promoting atheistic

### **Answer 4: The perceived costs of change**

If we are realistic, a large factor in the maintenance of negative attitudes towards animals, both inside and outside the church, is the fact that the practical implications of a more positive attitude would be significant and far-reaching. The vast majority of meat and dairy products now come from systems of raising livestock that are intensive and prioritize economic efficiency over any respect for the lives of the animals caught up in them. Any recognition that non-human animals are entitled to respect would mean that most of these products would have to be rejected. This is a significant issue for individual Christians, who would have to change their eating habits, for institutions such as churches, which would have to rethink their communal practice, and for the farming industry, which would have to radically reshape itself if the majority of consumers came to recognize that most of what is produced from farmed animals is unacceptable in its disregard for animal life. These radical implications from thinking more positively about other animals are a powerful force against changing minds on this issue and can often lead to good arguments for change being discounted because of the perceived cost of change. Responding to this issue will be an enduring

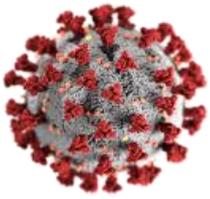
challenge, but the answer can only be to keep highlighting the novel and cruel practices our current disregard of animal lives permits. Anyone who learns that current systems of egg production requires the maceration of 4 billion day-old male chicks each year, or that broiler chickens are slaughtered at 35 days old after a monotonous existence on sawdust floors of crowded and windowless sheds, must recognize the deep wrongness of our current practices in relation to other animals. In time, Christians must come to see that what we are doing is ungodly as well as unethical, and that none of the obstacles I have surveyed can stand in the way, not only of being more positive about animals, but also of making the practical changes in lives of faith that such a change would require. ☸

1. This section is a partial summary of David Clough, *On Animals: I. Systematic Theology* (London: T & T Clark/Continuum, 2012), ch. 1. See the book chapter for a more extensive discussion, with source references.
2. Philo of Alexandria, *On the Creation of the Cosmos According to Moses*, ed. David T. Runia (Leiden: Brill, 2001), ch. 14, §§ 77–84.
3. For more detail and source references, see Clough, *On Animals I*, ch. 1.
4. Origen, *Origen: Contra Celsum*, trans. Henry Chadwick (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1965), bk. 4, §74.
5. See Chadwick's introduction to Origen, *Contra Celsum*, x–xi, and his article Henry Chadwick, 'Origen, Celsus and the Stoa', *Journal of Theological Studies* 48 (1947).
6. Justin Martyr, 'Dialogue With Trypho', in *The Ante-Nicene Fathers: Translations of the Writings of the Fathers Down to A.D. 325*, vol. 1, A. Cleveland Coxe, James Donaldson, and Alexander Roberts (eds.) (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1997), ch. 2, §2.
7. John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, trans. Henry Beveridge (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1989), 1.16.6.
8. All cited in Keith Thomas, *Man and the Natural World: Changing Attitudes in England 1500–1800* (London; New York: Penguin, 1984), 17–20.
9. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, trans. Fathers of the English Dominican Province, (London: Blackfriars, 1963), 1.65.2.
10. See Alexander O. F. M. Schäfer, 'The Position and Function of Man in the Created World, Part I', *Franciscan Studies* 20 (1960), 271.
11. Wolfhart Pannenberg, *Systematic Theology*, trans. Geoffrey W. Bromiley (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1994), 56.

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## COVID FUNNIES or the use of Psychoneuroimmunology

Possibly from Drewe

The quarantine has turned us all into dogs. We roam the house all day looking for food and we are told not to get too close to strangers. Plus, we get really excited about car rides.

Do not call the police about suspicious people in your neighbourhood. They are just your neighbours without hair-colouring, makeup and hair extensions.

They said a mask and gloves were enough to go to the supermarket. They lied. Everyone else had clothes on.

We all live in a yellow quarantine. Good luck getting that out of your head!

2020 is a unique year. It had 29 days in February, 300 days in March and 5 years in April.

Has Covid-19 forced you to wear glasses and a mask at the same time? You may be entitled to condensation.

Remember how we used to eat cake after someone had blown on it? Good times I get most of my exercise these days from shaking my head in disbelief.

This is the year your wheelie bin goes out more than you do.

People who ask me what I am doing tomorrow probably assume that I even know what day of the week it is.

This is it. The day your dogs have all been waiting for. The day they realise their owners can't leave the house and they get to be with you 24/7. Dogs are rejoicing everywhere. Cats are contemplating suicide.

The drop in petrol price during the lockdown is like a bald man winning a hairbrush.

Until further notice, the days of the week are now called Thisday, Thatday, Otherday, Someday, Yesterday, Today and NextDay.

One day you'll be able to tell your grandchildren "I survived the great toilet paper shortage of 2020"

Telling your luggage that there will be no vacation this year can be tough. Emotional baggage is the worst.

So you're staying inside, practicing social distancing and cleaning yourself? Congratulations, you've just become a house cat.

# Frontline Vulnerability

by *Glenn Jetta Barclay.*



Multi-tasked medics of the world, now facing mighty foe of a vicious virus, while under-taking their regular roster, heavily clad in protective gear, may well instinctively pray to God, for endurance and wisdom, for continuing compassion to enable them to nurse, shift after shift, those stricken with the deadly Covid 19 infection. They, too, mourn their victims now dead.

Humanity relies upon all such medics who, exposed and extremely vulnerable, become frontline carers in any deepening global pandemic.

Humanity relies upon Health- Care Systems and Processes requiring the practical work base to be activated by qualified Medical Staff whose faithful focus has gained global gratitude and admiration amid Covid 19's advanced situation.



Undoubtedly these coal-face carers need world-wide prayer support in their enduring fight for patients' lives - for theirs are the hands of Christ today; theirs are the hearts of Christly sacrifice; through them shines Christ's Light.

Diverse medics reflecting Divine Love.  
For them we truly praise God.



# The Garden of Daily Living

*Plant three rows of peas*

Peace of mind

Peace of heart

Peace of soul

*Plant four rows of squash*

Squash gossip

Squash indifference

Squash grumbling

Squash selfishness

*Plant four rows of lettuce*

Lettuce be faithful

Lettuce be kind

Lettuce be patient

Lettuce really love one another

*No garden is without turnips*

Turnip for meetings

Turnip for service

Turnip to help one another

*To conclude your garden you must have thyme*

Thyme for each other

Thyme for family

Thyme for friends



