

**Greymouth and Kumara Anglican Parish**  
**Lockdown Newsletter 3**  
**15 April 2020 - Lockdown Day 21**

**MARGE WRITES**

*The Lord is Risen!*  
*He is Risen Indeed!*  
*Alleluia!*

Robin and I have had two blessed days of rest after the busyness of the last three weeks and feel quite refreshed. Hope you don't mind the slight delay in receiving this newsletter.

What a joy it was again to be "with" so many of you via our ZOOM services on Maundy Thursday, Holy Saturday and Easter Sunday. Our attendances were 37, 32 and 94 respectively and we had people joining from Nelson, Christchurch, Dunedin, California and Texas. We hope that you were able to do the Prayer Walk on Good Friday or another day either literally or from the armchair. Once again, if you tried to connect to a service via ZOOM and were unsuccessful, please ring us during the week and we will happily try and talk you through the process and give you a practice. We were happy to try and help.

I don't know about you, but I find in times like these that the Lord speaks to me most clearly through the Psalms. The Psalms were ancient Israel's prayer book and hymn book, but are just as relevant for God's people in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The Psalms were composed by a variety of contributors some known to us (e.g. David, Moses) and others who remain anonymous. The Hebrew Bible gives the collection of Psalms the title "Tehillim" which means "Songs of Praise". When we look at these "songs" individually, we begin to see that there is great variety to these "songs of praise" including—

- Songs of trust
- Songs of thanksgiving
- Songs retelling the story of Israel
- Songs of wisdom
- Songs for festivals and liturgy
- Songs celebrating God's law
- Songs of praise
- Songs of Lament

So why does the Hebrew Bible lump this great variety under the title "Songs of Praise"? Because every psalm, whatever its genre, is a song that extols and glorifies God. Even the psalms of lament.

I love the lament psalms because they show me that I can cry out to God in my frustration, anger, confusion, and pain. I can be honest before God about my feelings, fears and griefs. In fact, there are more lament psalms in the Psalter than any other type. But look closely at a lament psalm (Psalm 22 for instance) and you will see that in the midst of the pain and confusion, there is a statement of confidence and trust in the faithfulness of the Lord. As Bernhardt Anderson wrote, "laments are really expressions of praise—praise offered in a minor key in the confidence that Yahweh is faithful and in anticipation of a new lease on life." Jesus cried out from the cross the opening line of Psalm 22, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" Yet, when He died, He did so with trust in God as he prayed, "Father, into your hands I commend my spirit"

Maybe you feel like Jesus did. There is so much pain and grief in the world at the moment. Some may not know if there is going to be a job to return to, or a business to reopen, or a retirement fund to see them through. Some are experiencing the grief of losing someone to the coronavirus. May we be like Jesus, unafraid to pour out our deepest pain and confusion in this very strange landscape in which we find ourselves, and, yet, trusting in our God—Father, Son and Holy Spirit—to see us through however, that may be.

With love and blessings, *Marge*

### **THANK YOU**

Again, we want to say thank you to everyone who is doing anything to help folk during this time from working in essential services to making a friendly phone call. And thank you to Caroline Williams, Greville Wood, Mary Findlay, Roger Lavers, and David Hastings for helping out with our Holy Week services.

### **END OF FINANCIAL YEAR GIVING RECEIPTS**

Nicky Hawes is preparing these and will be posting them by the end of the week for you to include with your Tax Credit Claim Form. We were unsure how many of you with emails had the capacity to print out the receipt and/or upload it to an IRD Real Me account. So, we are sending everyone a hard copy. If any of you wish to also receive an electronic copy, please email Nicky directly at [nckyhws@gmail.com](mailto:nckyhws@gmail.com).

### **UPCOMING SERVICES**

Our services this next weekend (18/19 April) will be via ZOOM again—6pm Saturday and 11am Sunday. A link will be sent out by email on Friday.

We wait with all of you to see what the government announces on Monday about whether or not we will move from Level 4 to Level 3. Even if we move out of Level 3, we expect that mass gatherings will still be banned and so we are anticipating that we will continue our corporate weekend worship services via ZOOM for quite some time yet. We will update you of any changes in our parish life as the government allows.

### **VESTRY**

Vestry will meet next THURSDAY, APRIL 23<sup>rd</sup> either via ZOOM or at the church lounge depending on what the government announces. Marge will inform Vestry after the government announcement next Monday.

### **TESTIMONIES**

If you have a testimony of what God is teaching you or how He has blessed you during these past 3 weeks, please contact Marge or Robin so we can include you in our next ZOOM service.

### **CONTACT DETAILS FOR MARGE & ROBIN DURING LOCKDOWN**

Landline phone: 03 768 7508

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