

Greymouth & Kumara Anglican Parish
Lockdown Newsletter 6
2/3 May 2020 – Alert Level 3

ROBIN WRITES

Today, 4th May, I am reflecting on the ministry of Marge as vicar, as I celebrate her birthday. It won't surprise you to hear that there are some differences between Marge and myself.

I tend to focus on a life of structure and routine. I focus on practical tasks, healing of memories ministry, leading a bible study group and very happy to have services that are predictable and relatively simple to organise.

Marge is so different. She has designed and developed the techniques to do the ZOOM services. It is just as well that one of her hobbies is playing with technical equipment like sound systems, recording equipment etc. She researched how to do the intricacies of ZOOM from googling on the internet and then experimenting. She must have spent at least 20 to 30 hours trying to perfect the techniques involved.

She loves variety in life. From day to day I wouldn't know what she will have for breakfast, or even when she will have it. When she preaches or leads a study group, she researches far more fully than I do. She is good at story-telling. She likes to see things done right. I'm more at ease with the occasional mistake! One of the implications of trying to do everything correctly is that it takes a lot of time. I tend to want to do things quicker.

During lockdown our differences really showed. Marge focussed on helping individuals to learn how to find their emails. This took almost 3 days in the early stages, as many of you were not used to this form of regular communication. Few even knew where the junk mail was kept. Life became very complicated technically without offspring or grandchildren to help. I was astounded at the patience of Marge. After that came helping folk to find and use ZOOM. Marge was happy to spend extended lengths of time to make every effort to assist. Many of you have succeeded in using ZOOM and have been thrilled to do so.

What this all shows is that Marge is focussed on people, their welfare, and what will make life better for them. She has an incredible pastoral heart, as well as a clear vision for the future. Marge has seen the need for us all to become more intentional in reaching out to those who do not yet know Jesus. It is a great vision, and she will enable us to achieve this over the next few years with Jesus' help. I will help with the practical details.

We both have our strengths, but today I celebrate the fact that her strengths are what the parish has needed at this time, and definitely needs for the future. My role is to provide any practical help that will assist Marge and the vision. Together we long to see the growth of the Kingdom of God in all its fulness here in Greymouth (and elsewhere in the world of course).

Happy birthday, Marge!

Blessings, *Robin*

WHEN DO WE GET TO PHYSICALLY GATHER AGAIN

This week we remain at Alert Level 3. The government announcement on Monday, 11th May will let us know whether we will get to move to Alert Level 2 or have to remain in Alert Level 3 a bit longer. There will still be a number of restrictions at Alert Level 2 especially regarding cleaning, physical distancing, size of gatherings, and contact tracing. The diocese is working on Health and Safety Guidelines for Alert Level 2 that will be shared with us this week. We have been encouraged to not begin physically gathering for worship at Alert Level 2 until we are confident we have the necessary health and safety protocols in place even if this means postponing restarting services at the church building for a week or so after entering Alert Level 2. We will keep you informed about protocols and when we will be opening the doors of our house of worship again. I say "house of worship" because I don't want anyone to think that we have ever stopped being the church or that what we do through Zoom and Care Clusters is less than being church. The church is the body of Christ, people who love and follow Jesus. The church building is simply a place/house of worship (and then again, so should our homes be).

For this week at least,

- Weekend services will be via ZOOM
- Home groups will still not be able to meet in person
- The Parish Office will remain closed
- The Church building will remain closed
- Marge, Robin and Nicky will continue to work from home
- Care Cluster Leaders will continue to contact their members via phone or other means
- All rosters (e.g. services, church cleaning, lawn mowing, etc.) are on hold

NEXT WEEKEND'S SERVICES

Our services this next weekend (9/10 May) will again be via ZOOM—6pm Saturday and 11am Sunday. A link will be sent out by email. Diana Fensom will be our preacher. To prepare for this coming weekend, you may like to ponder the theme and readings ahead of time--

Our Theme for this coming weekend is— Triumph after Troubles

Our Readings for this coming weekend are— Philippians 1:12-26; Matthew 5:1-12.

UNIQUE STUDY EXPERIENCE DURING ALERT LEVEL 3: GOING DEEP WITH REVELATION

Andrew Burgess, Dean of Bishopdale Theological College in Nelson, is hosting a weekly online teaching event for Nelson Diocese and all interested folk.

Andrew (“Burge”) will be doing a ‘big picture’ overview of the book of Revelation – with a particular focus on the character of living in and for the kingdom of God in a world that is very different to that. Jesus calls His Church to ‘overcome’ (or ‘conquer’) and we will take a broad look at what that looks like in Revelation. We won’t be doing any predictions of when exactly Jesus will return, or looking at different readings around the ‘rapture’, for example – we will just be focusing on some key insights in Revelation about living faithfully in this time between Jesus’ ascension and His return.

The platform is ZOOM. The time is 7:00pm until around 7:45pm on Wednesday evenings, starting this Wednesday 6 May. BTC is looking to run 3 or 4 of these sessions.

Please contact Marge if you are interested and she will send you the ZOOM link and further details.

THANK YOU

Again, we thank everyone who is helping and encouraging others during this time. Our feedback from the care clusters leaders is very encouraging. Also, thank you to Mary McGrane and Pat Cogger for doing intercessions and Terence Morrison and Judy Boland for doing readings during last weekend’s services. It’s great for folk to see people from services other than their normal one.

MUSINGS FROM RUSSELL NIMMO

Those who were able to link in to our ZOOM service this past weekend will remember our chatting point conversation in breakout rooms inspired by observations about the church in the West in pandemic language. I reprint it here for further pondering and for those who were unable to join the ZOOM service. Russell wrote-

“Have just been reflecting on the issue of the Church (in the West) having been, by and large, in **Social Isolation** (Level 3 or 4 Lockdown) for decades... operating in our own **bubble**.

Time for us to start enacting a **plan** to get out of lock-down!

The funny thing is that the Church is supposed to be the virus! The leaven in the dough... and all that. On a positive note - although we have been **eliminated** in terms of apparent relevance to society etc., we are not yet **eradicated**.”

Some very good food for thought as we ponder how we can be more missional right here in our own patch.

CONTACT DETAILS FOR MARGE & ROBIN DURING LEVEL 3

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