

### Unselfish Giving

*The miracle on the River Kwai is one of the most remarkable stories of the Second World War. The conditions for Allied prisoners in the Japanese prisoner-of-war camp on the River Kwai were so abysmal, and the mortality so high, that the men became almost bestial in their selfishness. They did not shrink from stealing food from their dying mates in a desperate attempt to survive.*

*Ernest Gordon, who wrote the book, was himself given up as incurable by the MO, but was nursed back to life by the devoted self-sacrifice of a man in his Company, Dusty Miller. But the 'miracle' was the transformation of attitudes in that camp as people began to understand and respond to the love of Christ. How did that begin to get through to men in such desperate conditions?*

*It all started with a Scotsman, Angus McGilvray, who literally gave his life for his friend. The friend was very ill and about to die. Someone has stolen his blanket. Angus gave him his own. Someone has stolen his food. Angus gave him his own. The result? Angus's friend got better, but Angus collapsed one day from starvation and exhaustion. He pitched on his face and died.*

*His totally unselfish giving was such an inspiration to the rest of the camp that they completely changed their attitude to one another. Rather than focusing on themselves, they focused on the welfare of their fellow prisoners. They, in effect, created a little corner of God's kingdom.*

It has been interesting to observe human nature in these extraordinary times. On the one hand, we have seen people reverting to their basic instinct for survival, manifested by, amongst other things, fighting over toilet rolls etc in the supermarket and generally creating mayhem. Their only concern was for themselves, and to hang with anyone else, including those less able to fend for themselves.

On the other hand, I have been so very heartened by the caring attitude I have already observed from so many, including offers from people, even from those on the periphery of our congregation, to help in any way they can. Fortunately, this spirit of caring far outweighs the other, and this gives me tremendous hope.

At times like this, we need each other more than ever. To twist a well-known phrase, 'When the going gets tough, the caring get going.' We can't visit but we can call. Already, the value of a phone call has been brought home to me by the response I have received from those who have received calls, not necessarily from me but just as much from others. Thank you!

I believe a lot of good will come out of this crisis, but more of that next week. In the meantime, let's spread as much love as we can. As Christians it is the least we can do, as people it is the least we can do. Christ wants us to be good people and to spread that goodness around. That way we can create our corner of God's kingdom.

'Dear friends, let us stop just saying we love each other; let us really show it by our actions.'  
1 John 3:18

## **YouTube**

I have put together a short YouTube presentation – the link is <https://youtu.be/mUfNCue0ov0> Being our first attempt, there a few rough edges, such as some wind interference. I intend to produce a weekly clip, so hopefully we can polish things up a little as we go. Huge thanks to Onosai, who did the editing, and Joseph, who set us up for YouTube and WhatsApp. Being technologically deficient, I am in their hands!

## **Phone Calls**

Just to elaborate on what I referred to in the opening article, I have been heartened by the response to our phone tree, and also as I hear of so many keeping in touch via the phone. It is one thing we can do towards helping to make people feel cared for, and it is vital at a time like this. It is one of the most productive uses of our time, something we tend to have in abundance at the moment.

## **Need Help?**

Naturally we are very limited in terms of what help we can give, but please let me know if there is anything we can do within the restrictions we have. Could be shopping, could be an extra phone call. We are here for you.

## **Simnel Cake**

Rhys Bean was about to bake her simnel cake for Easter, but has had to put that on hold. However, she has promised to make it for our first Sunday we are allowed to congregate. Something to look forward to! A big thank you to Rhys.

## **Citizenship**

We have had some good news on the home front – Mervis has been granted her NZ citizenship. She is now a Kiwi!

## **Word for Today**

I have ordered some extra copies of the current Word for Today. If you would like a copy sent to you, please let me know.

## **Prayer**

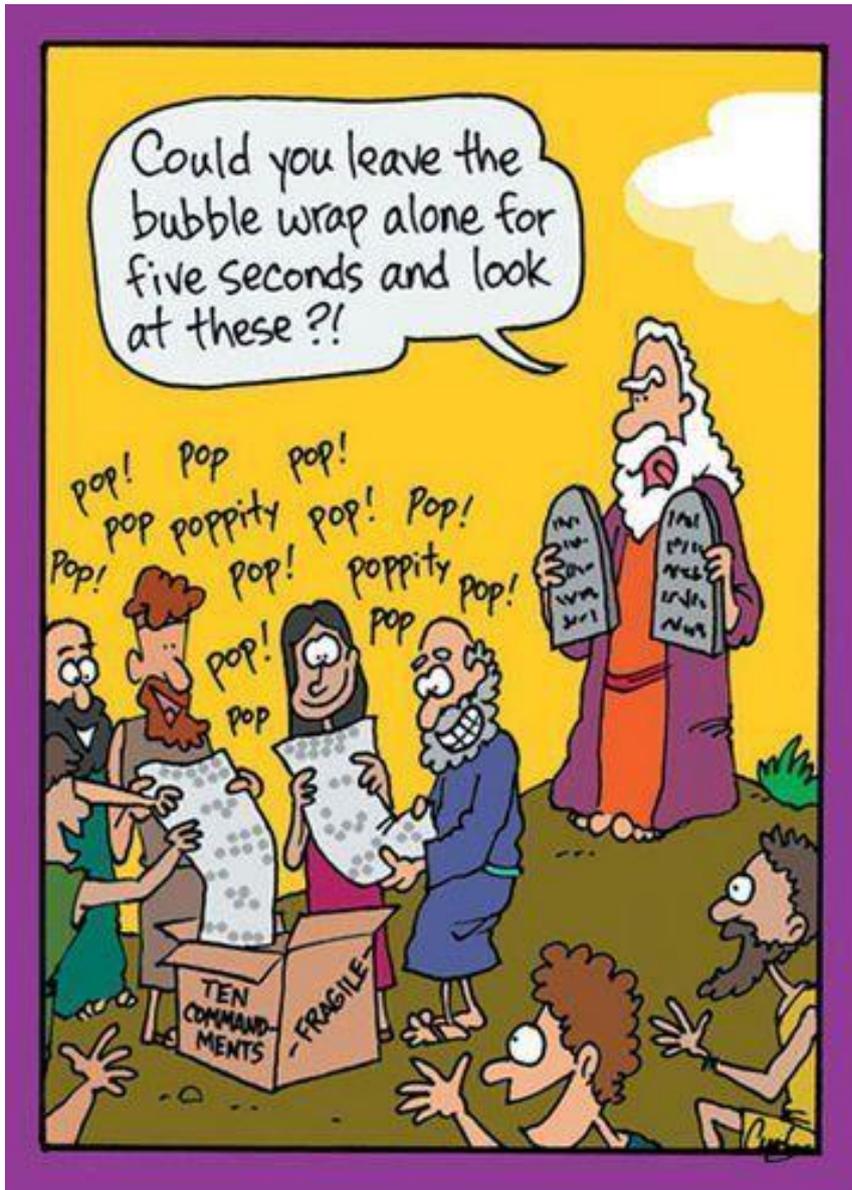
I would like to share a prayer with you that was posted by Rhys Bean on WhatsApp.  
*God of many names, we, your loving community of St Paul's in the Park, ask your blessing on us and the rest of your worldly family, as we face this pandemic together. Give us strength to fight our fear of this virus and remain with us till we are able to meet again in our lovely church. We ask this in Jesus name. Amen.*

## **Youth Group**

We had the first meeting of our Youth Group last week and then promptly had to go into recess, but at least we are under way!

## **Time for a Smile**

A man goes into the doctor's and says, 'Doctor, my hands keep shaking.' 'Do you drink much?' asks the doctor. 'Not really,' says the man, 'I tend to spill most of it.'



**To Ponder**

'We make a living by what we get.

We make a life by what we give.'

Winston Churchill

**Reverend Warner Wilder**

021 548 407

warnerwilder30@gmail.com