

St Paul's in the Park Newsletter 25 February 2021

The story goes that one day St Francis of Assisi laid his hand on the shoulder of a young monk and said, 'Brother, let us go into the town and preach.' The young man was very excited about having the opportunity of observing the great man at work, preaching to the crowds.

They went into the town and walked around the streets, talking to people and generally interacting with them, but not once did St Francis actually address the crowds. The young man was disappointed and said so to St Francis.

St Francis replied to him, 'My son, we have walked a long way and seen many people. They have observed how we have interacted with them. We have been preaching while we were walking. It is no use walking anywhere to preach unless we preach as we walk.'

We can lecture, teach and preach until we are blue in the face, but in the end people will be influenced more by what we do than what we say. Albert Einstein said, 'Setting an example is not the main method of influencing people, it is the only method.' If we are to wear the label of 'Christian' with any sort of pride, our actions need to reflect that.

'Mark out a straight path for your feet. Then those who follow you, though they are weak and lame, will not stumble and fall, but will become strong.' Hebrews 12:13.

Lent Discussion Group

Our Lent discussion group is under way. We meet in the hall on Mondays. Pizzas are served from 6.30pm and we get under way at 7.00pm, finishing at 8.00pm. We are looking at the Parable of the Prodigal Son and exploring how it relates to us in our everyday lives. You are most welcome to join us.

Land Swap (Church build)

Over the past week John McClean has made very good progress resolving challenges preventing final implementation of the land swap with the Council that we need before we can start our building project. Before the boundary changes can be finalised, we needed to agree how the building would be serviced – power, water supply, phone cabling, sewer connection, storm water disposal and access road. The church currently has none of these that are code compliant or acceptable for a new development. Obtaining agreement from interested parties and achieving technical approval has been a major undertaking. Still some way to go but we now have agreement in principle and the Council has provided us with process to bring this to conclusion. This part of the work has been stalled for many months but now we can see a clear way forward to completing it.

This has been a major headache for John, so well done, John!

Church Build

On that note, the position at the moment is that we are nearing the point when we can ask for tenders (from selected builders). However, we still need to raise another \$3 million. Having said that, the Diocesan Council has given us approval to begin construction when we have raised another \$2 million; in other words, a total of \$5 million. Confused? Total cost of project is \$6.1 million. Total raised to date is \$3 million. We can begin construction on stage one once we have raised \$5 million.

Two Services

As we have moved back to Level 1, we will return to church this Sunday. However, there will be a significant change as we will be holding two services. The first service will be at **9.00am** and will be a conventional Holy Communion service. The second service will be at **10.15am**. There will be more of a focus on singing at this service, but Holy Communion as usual. I will say more about these two services over the coming weeks. I do want to make the point that these services will no doubt evolve as we respond to your feedback.

Time for a Smile

A man goes into the doctor's and says, 'Doctor, I think I'm a pony.' 'Nonsense, man!' says the doctor. 'You're just a little hoarse.'

World Day of Prayer

To be held at Howick Presbyterian Church Chapel, Vincent St 10'.30am Friday 5 May. This year celebrates Vanuatu, the service written by women of that country. Offerings go towards the Bible Society, the Interchurch Council for Hospital Chaplaincy NZ, and the CWS. Everyone welcome!

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(See Jonah 1-4)

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To Ponder

'Being happy doesn't mean that everything is perfect. It means that you've decided to look beyond the imperfections.' Anon.

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