



ST COLUMBA PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

# THE VOICE OF ST COLUMBA

VOLUME 24

ISSUE 1

FEBRUARY 2021



DEAR FRIENDS,

Greeting Everyone. It is my privilege to work with you as your Moderator in the interim period before you call your next Minister. Essentially the Interim Moderator offers the leadership normally provided by the Minister without doing all of the work of ministry. One of the reasons I was willing to take on this role was because there is such an able group of lay and ordained leaders in the Church.

It is often said that a vacancy is good for a congregation because it encourages greater lay participation. I believe the next few months can be an important time in the life of St Columba. May I offer you these two thoughts for your consideration:

Firstly, if you see a need it is often God's way of inviting you to respond and do something about it e.g. if you feel your Church lacks love, give it your love.

Secondly, when someone volunteers their services, one of the most motivating things we can do to encourage them is to say, "I believe in and appreciate you."

May I record my gratitude to those of you who have already stepped up to carry on the good work previously done by your Minister. May I be the first of many to say it. "I appreciate you. I believe in you."

As you know the MSB has been working steadily, with Session, to do the work required by Presbytery to find your next Minister. We are excited by the possibilities but also challenged by what we have learned.

For example, we have learned that Nationally Ordained Ministers are a diminishing breed. Only two ministry students graduated last year with similar numbers due to graduate this year. We have learned that we may have to be creative in the way we fill the vacancy.

One option that may be available to us is to participate in a ministry training scheme. In place of an ordained minister, St Columba would employ a ministry intern with the prospect that they would then be available to receive a call to St Columba when they graduate.

If this option becomes available, with a suitable candidate, we will of course seek the support of the Congregation and the Presbytery.

Please continue to pray for us as we seek to discern God's will and embrace God's provision for this vital role.

Finally, as we approach Easter two thoughts come to mind.

Jesus the Christ became as we are in order that we may become as he is. *"For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sake he became poor, so that you through his poverty might become rich."* 2 Cor.8:9 NIV

Christ's love for the Church is to be our inspiration and example. *"Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her."* Eph. 5:25

The Church needs people who share the same passion that Christ, 'The Lord of the Church', has for his Bride.

Thank you for your welcome. I'm looking forward to working with you.

Grace and Peace

Keith Hooker **Interim Moderator for St Columba**

## QUARTERLY COMMUNION

*An invitation is extended to all who love our Lord Jesus Christ to join us for the Communion Service*

**Sunday 14th March 2021 at  
9.30am**



## RUTH'S ROSY RAMBLINGS

A humble spirit

This week my family celebrated my Dad's would be 78th birthday. With love and memories appearing on Facebook and calls from around the world my Mum and I went out to Pyes Pa and placed a little posy of fern, rosemary and a rose done up with purple ribbon, on my Father's plaque.

Here lies the ashes but not the man; the physical but not the spirit, the six foot height but not the stature of the man whom I adored.

It's been 4 years since the man who had been a canary breeder, a sheep, beef and poultry farmer, a horticulturist, a carpenter, lay preacher for 30 years, scholar of Hebrew, and husband/father/grandad/great grandad died. The list is endless of who and what he meant to those around him.

My Dad was tall, dark and very handsome, hilarious and gentle. His prophetic giftings and passion for prayer and intercession meant he was not always popular but was always needed by the community for his ability to help mend, create, and heal.

His love for the Lord Jesus Christ was evident in his daily walk. It often started at 5.30am with the reading and searching of God's Word - a well-worn, leather-cased step-by-step Word - a time of waiting, a time of praying, intercession, a walk, then home to make Mum coffee and toast nearly every morning of their 50 years of married life.

This man preached his beloved Lord's heart for 30 years, and loved the people, entwining God's life with theirs.

As Dad to the 3 of us, he made our lunches for school, prayed for us, joked with us, and was very cuddly. He was also amazing example of a full participatory husband.

My special connection with him was our mutual love for apple shortcake - only the middle bits - Cadbury chocolate marshmallow fish. And our mutual non love of chicken livers and mutual love of whitebait fritters.

"Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and eat with him, and he with me." Rev 3:20, that was what was knocked on our bedroom doors all of our teenage years to get us up in the morning.

He prayed for us and our spouses and our children (often) daily, and could be depended on if asked to pray. He would often ring us for a chat on the phone, just to connect.

What legacy is left is a gentleness of spirit, a spirit of compassion that loves to help and is very loyal.

What more can a girl ask for ??

*Ruth Scott*

## NORA'S STORY

If each member of St Columba shared how they became a Christian, it would be such an encouragement to us all. Here is a little of my story:- I was so fortunate to be born into a Christian Family! We attended the little Methodist Church at Russell every Sunday morning and evening. Sadly, two of my brothers rejected the Christian faith.

But I believed that the Bible was true, and when I was eight years old I gladly signed the Scripture Union pledge to read the Bible every day for the rest of my life. When I was seventeen I went to my first Easter Camp. It was a girl's camp, held at Whangarei. Our leader was Ruth Swindells, my cousin, and sister in law of Yola Swindells (much loved past elder of St Columba.) When we sang, "When I survey the wondrous cross," Ruth challenged us to think about the words, "Love so amazing, so divine, demands my love, my life my all."

A few weeks later one evening I cried out to God, "Please show me how to become a Christian!" He did. He brought to my mind the words of Jesus, "I am the way, the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father, but by me." (John 14:6)

Right there and then I believed in Jesus as my Saviour. But there was a problem. Romans 10:9 says that besides believing, we must confess with our mouth that Jesus is Lord. I was extremely shy and didn't think I could possibly tell anyone. All I could do was to plead with God to help me. I went and sat in the lounge where my mother was reading a book and my father was reading a Christian newspaper. After a few minutes my father read out aloud a short poem about Jesus being the way! All I had to say was, "That's what I found out tonight."

Since then I have known that when my body dies I

will begin the next chapter of my life, in heaven. For now, there is so much to learn about getting victory over sin, finding the courage to witness and striving to live a life pleasing to God.



## SOLOMON ISLANDS TRAINING UPDATE

Rosalie and I want to give another hearty THANK YOU to all of you at St Columba for your generous gift last year which is making a difference in the Solomon Islands. Hopefully, by the time you read this, Äiwoo translator Luke Gitakulu will have resumed his Advanced Studies (Biblical Languages) at IBM (Islands Bible Ministries); classes were set to begin on 8<sup>th</sup> February. Luke was scheduled to fly from the Reef Islands to the capital Honiara on 3<sup>rd</sup> February, but the heavy winds and rain from the cyclone make travel difficult. So, as of this writing, we are awaiting news of his travel. Thanks for your role in advancing the cause of Bible translation in the Solomon Islands!

Please pray that God will:

- Enable Luke to reach Honiara in good time;
- Give him a thirst for knowledge of God's Word;

Provide for his wife and children remaining at Reef Islands.



## EASTER STUDIES IN APRIL

### *The Unfinished Story* . . .

As many of you are aware, Session has made the decision for St Columba to offer Easter study groups this year, in lieu of the usual Lenten studies, and the study for this year is **The Unfinished Story**: the story which began with God's covenant to Abraham, and was fulfilled in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus, is an 'unfinished' story. Over the past two millennia Jesus' followers have had the privilege of 'finishing' the story by responding to Jesus' command to make disciples of all nations. Now, more than ever before, that goal appears attainable, as the number of 'reached' peoples grows, while the number of 'unreached' peoples shrinks. Our generation – or perhaps our children's -- may be the one which sees the gospel penetrate those remaining groups who have not yet had the opportunity to embrace the gospel.

How can Christians in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century respond to Jesus' command? Well... it could begin with asking questions about the task remaining: Who are these people? Where are they found? What efforts are currently underway to make the gospel known to them? How can we at St Columba be involved in 'finishing the story?' Participating in **The Unfinished Story** will give us the opportunity to explore answers to these questions. You can read more here: <https://simplymobilizing.com/courses/the-unfinished-story/>.

The studies will commence the second week of April. As with the Lenten study groups, the Easter groups will meet at different times: some during the day, others in the evening; some during the week, others during the weekend. The study, produced by **Simply Mobilising**, includes four sessions, about 1¼ hours each. The groups will be advertised over the coming month. Watch this space! Will you join us as we intentionally seek to

## JOKE

- \* How can you tell which is the trendiest spider?



## Sudoku medium no.2

	7				9		4	
2		3	1	4				6
							3	
8							7	
	1		5	6	2		9	
	5							4
	4							
7				2	4	8		1
	6		7				2	

It's the one that has it's own Web Site!

- \* What did Cinderella say when the chemist lost her photographs?  
Someday my prints will come.....
- \* England has no kidney bank, but it does have a Liverpool!
- \* A thief who stole a calendar got 12 months...
- \* A will is a dead giveaway...
- \* Acupuncture is a jab well done. That's the point of it.
- \* I didn't like my beard at first. Then it grew on me...
- \* A bicycle can't stand up alone; it's just too tired...

- \* The guy who fell onto an upholstery machine last week is now fully recovered..
- \* I'm reading a book about anti-gravity. I just can't put it down.

## GOD OF ALL LIFE....

May your love and light shine in and through me  
today

In a way that no mask can hide.

May my eyes dance with the laughter and joy

Replacing my hidden smile.

May my actions of care and concern

Speak louder than my muffled voice ever could.

And may the generosity of my heart

Radiate out through who I am

And how I respond to the world around me

So that others may not see my mask

But your image shining out

Moving in and through me today.

Amen

*Br Michael Herry fms - Y WAWR*

*The magazine of the Melbourne Welsh Church*

## 7 WAYS TO MAKE YOUR DAY BETTER

- 1 Send an uplifting text to a friend or family member.
- 2 Let the person merge into traffic with a wave and a smile.
- 3 Include intentional moments of kindness, laughter and delight in your daily routine.
- 4 Go slightly outside your comfort zone at least once a day to make someone smile.
- 5 Share a compliment with a friend or coworker.
- 6 Reach out to a family member you haven't spoken to in a while.
- 7 Treat someone to a cup of coffee (a stranger, a friend, or even yourself.)

## ANTIDOTE AGAINST COVID.

**Make sure you test positive**





## THE CLOCK OF LIFE

The clock of life is wound but once,  
and no man has the power  
To tell just where the hands will stop,  
at late or early hour.



To lose one's wealth is sad indeed,  
to lose one's health is more;  
To lose one's soul is such a loss  
that no one can restore.

The present only is our own -  
to seek God's will:  
Tomorrow holds no promise, for  
The CLOCK MAY THEN BE STILL.

So why not this very minute,  
prepare for your eternity  
by trusting your soul to Jesus Christ  
Who died at Calvary.

It only takes a sincere minuet  
to confess Who He really is

And then  
clock of life  
Your eternal  
will be.

Jesus loves you  
has a plan for  
Jeremiah 29 : 11

TIME'S PACES  
When as a child  
and wept, Time



when the  
stops,  
peace

and God  
your life .

I laughed  
crept.

## SO TAKE YOUR TIME

So take your time, enjoy it at your leisure,  
Relish your hours, yet watch them pass away,  
Or save time, and relinquish every pleasure  
In mourning for a morning or a day,  
Or, keep time, and tap out its subtle measure,  
Dancing in rings until steps go astray -  
But give time, and receive time's finest treasure,  
Visions of stars and galaxies at play.  
Move though time's inner rooms and corridors,  
And die imprisoned behind solid walls,  
Trace each of time's results from its first cause  
And hear time's hidden echoes and footfalls



Then listen to  
time clapping its  
applause

And beg for  
time for extra  
curtain calls.

*By Richard Burns*



## ECUMENICAL WORK CAMP BERLIN - AUGUST 1961

Before my friend and I embarked on our youthful OE more than 50 years ago, we had decided that one thing we wanted to do, was to take part in an Ecumenical work camp. The camp we were assigned to was in Berlin and our project for the month-long stay was to repair and redecorate the homes of impoverished people in a poor area of the city. These homes were, in fact, just one or two roomed flats in large dilapidated buildings. Most had no hot water or facilities for bathing. We had to plaster up holes in the walls, wash off the old whitewash and apply new whitewash, paint and in some places wallpaper.

The campers - about 30 of us - came from 11 different countries. Very quickly an amazing bond developed between us, and it didn't really matter when we were among people who had no common language. What we did have in common was our Christian faith; a faith that was soon to be challenged, as eight days after our arrival, the border between East and West Germany was closed. The date was 13th August, 1961.

In horror and disbelief we watched the wall being built - concrete block upon concrete block. We saw dozens of armed police and armoured vehicles. We saw twisted barbed wire barriers. I remember standing some distance back from a wide intersection. The road that had been a busy thoroughfare before, was now deserted - apart from police standing guard in the middle of the intersection. On either side were groups of people, people in the East staring silently across at the people in the West. There was no way they could move across. The barrier was there even before the building of the wall.

Of immediate concern on the morning of the closure, was the welfare of our six East German campers. They crossed over with day passes, and had not obtained the documents necessary for a longer stay. That morning they had to make a huge decision, either to stay in the West, with its freedom, or to return to an uncertain future in the East. They all returned, feeling it was their Christian duty to live and witness for Christ in the place of their birth. They made it safely through the frontier, and for some days we were able to visit them in East Berlin.

In spite of the very tense situation, we were able stay for the remaining three weeks, though we did have some restrictions placed on us. At the border crossings we were interrogated, and on one occasion had to empty our purses.

My memories of that special month in Berlin are many. On the one hand I remember fun, laughter and the sheer exuberance of youth. On the other hand I recall the dreadful political situation. To Edith and I, used to the freedom of our own privileged land, it was awful.

Some weeks after our return to London we received a letter from Canon Edward Patey of Coventry Cathedral asking whether we would be prepared to appear on his BBC television programme 'Seeing and Believing.' We joined six others, all selected because we had attended work camps in troubled regions of the world. Canon Patey's theme was 'Unity in Christ.' He spoke a little about each of us and where we had been. We then grouped around the piano and sang a hymn, the first verse of which I'll share with you.

'In Christ there is no East or West,  
In Him no South or North,  
But one great fellowship of love,  
Throughout the whole wide earth'.



The three campers from New Zealand  
Avis Johnston, Jennifer Carpenter, Edith Snodgrass

I have so often thought how different our world would be if countries were united in the bond and fellowship of Christian love.

The Berlin wall stood for 28 years, and perhaps the message we should draw from this, is that barriers, once created, take a long time to break down. As it was in Berlin, so it is with us if we allow a rift to develop in our families, or in the groups to which we belong.



Avis Johnston New Zealand  
Benedicta, Denmark  
Edith Snodgrass, New Zealand  
Jennifer Carpenter, New Zealand

Behind:  
Kostos, Greece, Rolfe, Belgium

## BLACK COUNTRY\* POEM.

(\*An area in the West Midlands)

No, this isn't a modern poem, praising the achievements of the Black Country, nor is it one about chain-making or mining. It's about the people, or rather, in this case, the desperate struggle against poverty. Although the Victorian era saw great leaps forward and people marvelled at the innovations, underneath it all was a great swamp, a cesspit of degradation, that remained ignored by the so-called upper classes, who raked in millions and lived a much different lifestyle. The Poem I have chosen was a favourite ballad of my grandparents; indeed, yours may have also had a framed copy, hung on their parlour wall. If anyone needs reminding of the conditions, in almost any Industrial area during the period, please read this one. Back in the 1950s it was recited, without a mistake, in a crowded public house in the Black Country. There wasn't a dry eye in the house, so have a tissue handy; you may need it.

### Billy's Rose.

Billy's dead and gone to glory, so has Billy's sister Nell. There's a tale I know about them, were I a poet, I would tell; soft it comes with perfume laden, like a breath of country air, wafting down that filthy alley, bringing fragrant embers there.

In that vile and filthy alley long ago -- one winters day, dying quick of want and fever, hapless patient, Billy lay, and his sister sat beside him, in the garret's dismal gloom, cheering, with her gentle presence, Billy's pathway to the tomb.

She was eight, this little maiden, and her life had all been spent, in that garret in the alley, where they starved to pay the rent. Where the drunken father's curses, and a drunken mother's blows, drove them out into the gutter, from the day's dawn to its close.

Many a tale of elves and fairies, did she tell the dying child, till his eyes lost half their anguish, and his worn, wan features smiled. Tales herself had heard haphazard, caught amidst the Babel roar, lisped about by tiny gossips, playing round their mother's door.

Then she told some garbled story, of a kind-eyed Saviour's love, who had built for little children, great big playgrounds up above. Where they played and laughed at hopscotch, and at horses all the day, and where Beadle men and policemen, never frightened them away.

This was Nell's idea of Heaven, just a bit of what she'd heard, with a little bit implanted, and a little bit inferred, But her brother lay and listened, and he seemed to understand, for he closed his eyes and murmured, he

brother, yes -- I promise that I will. You are dying, little brother, you are dying -- oh so fast, I heard father say to mother, that he knew you couldn't last. Then they'll put you in a coffin, and you'll wake up and be there, while I'm left down here to suffer, in this garret bleak and bare.

Yes I know, said little Billy, but sister, I don't mind. Gentle Jesus will not beat me, He's not cruel or unkind. Only Nell, I can't help wishing, I would like to take away, something that you gave me, I could look at every day.

In the summer-- you remember, how the Mission took us out, to the great green lovely meadows, where we played and ran about. The bus that took us halted, by a great green patch of land, where bright red blossoms grew, Nell, half as big as mothers hand.

I asked the good kind teacher, what they called such flowers as those, and he told me -- I remember, that their pretty name was Rose. How I wish I had one here, Nell, just to take and think of you, when I wait up there in Heaven, high above the sky of blue.

Not a word spoke little Nellie, but that night while Billy slept, on she flung her scanty garments, and down the stairs she crept. Through the silent streets of darkness, she ran nimbly as a faun, running on and running ever, till the night had changed to dawn.

When the foggy sun had risen, and the mist had passed away, all around her, wrapped in snowdrift, there the open country showed its head above its prison, so she knelt her down and prayed.

With her eyes up-cast to Heaven, she knelt upon the ground, and prayed to God to tell her, where the roses could be found. Just a rose to take to Billy, and as she prayed a carriage came a-rumbling down the hill.

A lady sat there toying, with a red rose rare and sweet, and as she passed, she flung it from her, and it fell at Nellies feet. Just a word her Lord had spoken, caused her ladyship to fret, and the rose had been his present, so she threw it in a pet.

Threw it out into the snowdrift, where little Nellie lay, half dead from cold and hunger, and searching all the day.

But poor half frozen Nellie, thought it had fallen from the skies, and she murmured, -- thank you Jesus, as she clutched her dainty prize. And that night, from out the alley, did a child's soul pass away, from the sin and dirt and misery, to where God's children play. Whilst a wild and cruel snowstorm, fell in fury o'er the land, and by morn



## MEN'S BREAKFAST

Is in recess at the moment, but we hope to start again soon. Watch this space.

## GOLDEN YEARS,

WANTED: Mature females required. Preferably with tea pouring and dishwashing experience but not essential, as tutoring could be given! Sense of humour is essential. Contract 1 year, remuneration to be decided. Please contact Maureen 5785289 for an interview.

## BASEMENT BOUTIQUE

The Boutique is back better than ever!! It is busy and vibrant and we do thank all of our volunteers who work tirelessly to sort, iron, mend, decorate, sell, chat, welcome and count. This is a fabulous ministry to the community of Tauranga but especially to those around us.

We are in need of donations of kitchenware, material for the craft corner and wool. There has been an upturn of people's 'craftiness' and people have been buying up craft materials en masse!

These places thrive on word of mouth, so please feel free to advertise our wonderful Basement Boutique!! Come and find a treasure - a bargain!

## FITNESS FUN - TUESDAYS AT 9.30AM

Come and dance and move and hum and sing! ALL AT ONCE!

This is a very fun group that meets and exercises tastefully in the hall every Tuesday. Fun music, energetic teacher, great fellowship! Come along and see!

## HEALTH AND SAFETY

How blessed and fortunate have we in NZ been over the period of Covid's presence! I for one have become a little complacent and with the summer coming we don't even feel concerned about colds and flu.

I want to encourage everyone to keep a track of where they've been either by using the sign in app. on your phone or physically signing into buildings. I know these are sometimes not available as it is not compulsory, but Covid has a possibility of reappearing, so be aware of your own activities "just in case!"

## ST COLUMBA CALENDAR

**SERVICE OF WORSHIP** Sundays at 9.30 am

**MONTHLY MIDWEEK COMMUNION SERVICE**

First Wednesday of month @ 10 am in the Chapel

**EACH WEEK—REGULAR MEETINGS**

Mondays	7.00 pm Indoor Bowls
Tuesdays	9.00 am Staff Meetin
Wednesdays	9.30 am Care & Craft (excl school hols)
Wed/Thurs/Fri	10.00 am Basement Boutique (till 4 pm)
Thursdays	10.00 am Conversation Café (incl school hols) IN RECESS
Fridays	9.00 am Prayer Meeting
	10.00 am Cuppa & Chat in Lounge
Sundays	8.45 am Prayers

### MONTHLY MEETINGS

1st Tuesday	1.30 pm Session
3rd Tuesday	10.00 am O Team
	2.00 pm Service at Mitchell Court
	3.00 pm Service at Radius Matua
3rd Thursday	11.00 am Service at Bob Owens Village every third month
2nd Saturday	8 am (summer)/8.30 am (winter) WOW Breakfast

Men's Breakfast: in recess

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## PARISH REGISTER

Deaths: "In God's presence is fullness of joy"

Sept 2020 Rebeka Leah Storey

6th Nov 2020 Richard George Burkin

1st Dec 2020 Joan Fowler

6 Dec 2020 Mabel Willhamina Crews

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## CHECK OUT OUR WEBPAGE

[www.stcolumba.co.nz/sermons](http://www.stcolumba.co.nz/sermons)

[www.stcolumba.co.nz/musings](http://www.stcolumba.co.nz/musings)

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## CONTACT DETAILS

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OUR MISSION STATEMENT: To know, enjoy and share Christ.