



ST COLUMBA PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

# THE VOICE OF ST COLUMBA

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MAY 2021



## INTERIM MODERATOR'S MESSAGE

For over twelve months the Ministry Settlement Board, working closely with Session, has conducted a Parish review to determine the future ministry needs of St Columba.

We have agreed that the future needs of the Congregation will be best served by someone who can bring a younger/family focus without sacrificing the rich culture of traditional worship for which St Columba is known and valued.

The Kaimai Presbytery has also instructed us to look for a minister who can bring to the role 'missional gifts and experience.'

Consequently, we believe that God has given us an opportunity to invest in the ministry development of Alec Wallis, a young man, who although not an ordained minister in the Presbyterian Church has had significant parish and other mission experience.

Alec has completed his theological training and plans to apply to become an Intern in the National Ordination Ministry Programme. Our expectation is that, if accepted, Alec will be able to do his training in St Columba. As a ministry intern Alec will be employed on a 70% basis which will also mean a reduced financial cost to the Parish. Internships are for two years but could be less in Alec's case because of his significant ministry experience.

As a graduate intern, Alec will then be available to accept a call to be St Columba's next Minister if this remains the MSB's and Session's recommendation to the Congregation.

The process of student selection will take some time and so Session has offered, with Presbytery's support, a one year 'lay ministry supply' contract,' beginning on 1<sup>st</sup> July.

I will remain as the Interim Moderator until the vacancy is filled. The shortfall in any ministry needs, during the internship stage, will be made up in other ways as they are now.

This way forward has the full support of Session, the Kaimai Presbytery, and the Interim Moderator. There is a sense of expectation that the Congregation has an opportunity to invest in the ministry training of a young man who also has a lot to give. Alec is by no means going to meet every need and everyone's expectation, which can be said of anyone of us. St Columba has been well served by some very capable senior ministers of the Church. It is unrealistic to expect Alec to bring the same level of maturity and experience to this role.

I'm reminded of the motivating power of encouragement. One of the most motivating things in life is to have another person say to us - "I believe in you." Jesus was able to go through the three years of his public ministry because he knew that he had his Father's approval. See Mark 1: 9-11.

Session's prayer is that we, the Congregation, will all enthusiastically get behind Alec, embrace the vision and share in the future ministry and mission of St Columba to the glory of God.

Grace and Peace Keith Hooker.

### QUARTERLY COMMUNION

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

**Sunday 13th June 2021 at  
9.30am**



## ALEC WALLIS – BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Alec is 39 years old, married to Amy and they have a young son Aidan.

His personal attributes listed in his CV are: *'approachable and kind; calm and of an even temperament; team focused by valuing the success and development of others; innovative at finding ways of overcoming obstacles.'*

Alec is theologically trained with a Bachelor's degree in Theology, a Master's degree in Ministry and a post-graduate diploma in Management.



“God blessed Amy and me with the arrival of Aidan in October. We were living in Sydney where I worked for the Bible Society before COVID struck and we had to return to NZ for Aidan's birth.

I had served as a pastor in different churches in NZ and Australia before meeting Amy in her home country of the Philippines.

Our hope is to serve St Columba with our combined giftings and experiences so that people can be both encouraged and supported in their walk with Christ.”

## TESTIMONY FROM ALAN SMITH

In England in 1958 I graduated from Marine College as Marine Radio Officer. At that time, unbeknown to me, in N.Z. a 14 year old girl was daily catching a rural school bus from her parents farm into Te Awamutu to attend College. On the bus she would read and memorise scripture verses put out by the NAVIGATORS. She didn't know it, but God was preparing her to meet a young Englishman so she would be ready to witness to him.

This is how events unfolded.

I commenced my sea-going career in 1958 and even though I liked the life and the occupation there was something missing. I felt that there had to be something better in life.

I subsequently emigrated to N.Z in 1962 at the age of 22, to work for the Union Steam Ship Company as a Radio Officer, having served the previous 3 years in the British Merchant Navy.

I knew no-one in N.Z. It was all a bit of an adventure.

When I arrived in Auckland in June of 1962 things were pretty primitive and the best a restaurant could offer, was meat and 3 veg. - not a Chinese restaurant in town; and the 6 o'clock swill was a revelation!

The ships I served on were plying around the coast, others were Trans-Tasman and Pacific Island traders.

In port as a single man, I found myself in the company of ship's officers going off to a pub and then looking for a meal and a movie before wending our way back to the ship. It got monotonous after a while but there were quite a few lighter moments.

Early in 1964 I had just commenced a long leave period in Auckland when I met two colleagues who, like me, were on leave and were planning a South Island tour. I managed to convince them that I couldn't possibly be left out and a three-some would reduce the cost of the petrol.

When we crossed over to Picton we headed for a Nelson camping-ground where we were to rendezvous with friends of the car-owner.

Unbeknown to us they had picked up two young female hitch-hikers at Picton and brought them to Nelson. So it came to pass that we met up with them and, quickly assessing the situation, asked them out to dinner and a movie....as boys do!

After preliminaries I managed to separate one of them and during the course of conversation she witnessed to me of the saving power of the Lord Jesus Christ.

I had no Christian upbringing and had never heard the gospel. I was taken by her sincerity and readiness to answer questions with more scripture verses (little knowing that she had completed the Navigators course of memorising scripture).

The girl in question is my wife Joy !

We exchanged addresses and I wrote some months later (no mobile phones) and arranged to meet next time my ship was in Tauranga. She traveled over from her home in the Waikato and stayed with her relatives. I had the opportunity to meet a lot of like-minded people and went to church with them on the Sunday morning for the first time ever. My last time in a church was as best man at my brother's wedding in 1959!

I saw in this group of people something that I wanted. My thoughts went back to my reason for leaving the U.K. - *I had wanted something better in life !!!!!*

We sailed from Tauranga for Sydney and on the Saturday in port with no wharf work I went ashore with a few officers to hear a jazz group at a hotel, had a meal and we got back to the ship about 11pm. As I was dropping off to sleep, I was jolted awake with a blow over my heart. This was followed by two more and between the first and the last, I lived my whole life over as in a video clip from my earliest recollections to the present.

In his book *"The Last Enemy"*, Richard Hillary, a Spitfire Pilot in the Battle of Britain wrote: *"It is said that a dying man relives his whole life in one rapid kaleidoscope."*

The last thing I could do was sleep. I woke up the Purser and told him of the event. Next morning I went ashore to the hospital and had a thorough check-up. I was informed that there was no heart disease, heart and lungs were within normal limits with no noticeable problems.

This was fine but I found it very difficult to drop off to sleep thereafter and I had to sail to Auckland via Suva/Lautoka/Apia and Nuku'alofa! I had to wrestle with the question that if I dropped off to sleep..... would it be my last?

Back in Tauranga, I again met up with Joy and her Uncle witnessed to me and gave me a copy of Robert Laidlaw's tract, *"The Reason Why"*. When I sailed from Tauranga, I put the tract on top of my cabin desk.

On the second night at sea we were in mid-Tasman; I came off watch at 10pm and turned in. On my desk I noticed *"The Reason Why"* tract and lying in bed, I read it through. When I got to page 30, I read a verse that arrested me..... Laidlaw presented it this way:

*'God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son' to be "made sin" for us, "that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." (John 3:16)*

When I read that, it impacted me. I felt a welling force rise up through my body as if I had inhaled and stretched at the same time. Paul wrote: *'faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.'* Rom 10:17.

Looking back, to that night on the Tasman Sea, I am drawn to the words in *Genesis 1v2*: *"..... and darkness was on the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters."*

I was ignorant of the fact that Joy, her relatives and many friends had been praying for my conversion for some time. When I gave my testimony in Australia some time later, I was given a verse of confirmation. Another 3:16 reference; This time - *Malachi 3:16*.

*"Then those who feared the Lord spoke to one another, And the Lord listened and heard them; So a book of remembrance was written before him for those who fear the Lord and who meditate on His name."*

My experience of re-calling my life like a rapid kaleidoscope was

The '*Book of Remembrance*' written before me that night on the Tasman Sea.

That was over 50 years ago and He has promised never to leave me nor forsake me. ( Heb. 13:5 )

My wife planted the seed, her Uncle watered, but God gave the increase.

He is still hovering over me!

## “ANOTHER MIRACLE OF GOD’S CREATION - A MEDICAL MIX-UP”

A row of bottles on my shelf caused me to analyse myself.

One yellow pill I have to pop goes to my heart so it won't stop.

A little white one that I take goes to my hands so they won't shake.

The blue ones that I use a lot tell me I'm happy when I'm not.

The purple pill goes to my brain and tells me that I have no pain.

The capsules tell me not to wheeze or cough or choke or even sneeze.

The red ones, smallest of them all go to my blood so I won't fall.

The orange ones, they're big and bright, prevent my leg cramps in the night.

Such an array of brilliant pills helping to cure all kinds of ills.

But what I'd really like to know... is what tells each one where to go?

Isn't that amazing? Such a small tablet can mean so much to those of us who have to take medication each day.

Let us thank God for His Creation, another wonderful medical miracle from the Hand of God.

Blessings,  
Josie Maslin

## YOU'VE GOT TO LAUGH

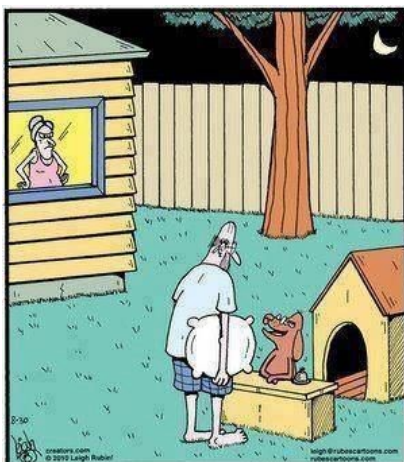
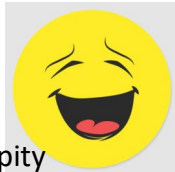
Parallel lines have so much in common - pity they'll never meet.

You're not totally useless, you can always serve as a bad example.

My grandfather has the heart of a lion, and a lifelong ban at the zoo.

What's green and fuzzy, and if it fell out of a tree it would kill you? A billard table!

I tried to catch fog yesterday... I mist!



"Welcome back, sir. Are you planning on being our guest for one night only, or will this be your usual extended stay?"

## NEW VISUAL SCREENS IN CHURCH

We are pleased to tell you that we now have 3 beautiful screens in our church for visual aid on a Sunday morning. These screens are centered for ease of sight. They will enhance viewing and singing. This has been a long process, but we accepted the quotes and professionalism from Satori Technology and Judea Electrical.

Dealing with these companies has been a pleasure and we loved that they respected our wishes and worked hard to get the best effect for us.

We would like to thank Paul Logan and his team and Mike Gerring from Judea Electrical for their care and support of this project.

The 3 screens are situated at the front of the church and one is at the back for the leaders and preachers to use. It is our hope that we can display our songs and power points for your pleasure. They are bright and clear. Enjoy!

## BASEMENT BOUTIQUE

It is so exciting! Our wonderful shop has opened it's doors to the public on a Saturday. Our hours are now Wed to Fri 10-4pm and Sat 10-1pm. We had a wonderful response for getting staff for Saturdays.



The shop not only sells items, it touches the community with interest and care.

Listening is part of the ministry of the shop. By taking an interest in the person in front of you, empathizing, sympathizing, celebrating the good in people's lives.

People come in to browse, to shop, to dream and to connect with others there. It is a great opportunity to bless someone by having them feel heard and interested in.

The shop needs linen like sheets, towels, duvets, throws etc and wool for knitters. Kitchen dishes etc...Check those cupboards....  
In season fruit is always appreciated.

We have created a facebook page named Basement Boutique St Columba. Plus our road signs have the Saturday hours added to them. Our website [www.stcolumba.co.nz](http://www.stcolumba.co.nz) has been advertising too. So please use 'word of mouth' to advertise our enterprise downstairs so that we are known far and wide.



## NEW ZEALAND'S OLDEST CHURCH

Christ Church (Russell) is the oldest existing church in NZ today, and possibly the oldest building still used for its original purpose. Its beginnings go back to the earliest years of Maori European contact in the Bay of Islands when missionaries from across the harbour at the Paihia mission station rowed across to take services in private homes. Russell, then known by its original Maori name of 'Kororareka' was a rough seaport, popular with Pacific whalers, with the nickname 'The Hellhole of the Pacific.'

The missionaries purchased land in 1834 from Kororareka chiefs Rewa, Wharerahi and Moka and agreed that Maori and Pakeha (Europeans) should have equal rights of burial.

The fundraising subscription list for the church survives with names of missionaries, settlers, traders and ships' captains including 'Captain Fitzroy, Mr. Charles Darwin and officers of HMS Beagle.' The building began in 1835 and a simple rectangular chapel with hipped roof was constructed.

According to official records, the first service was on 3 January 1836 when William Williams from Paihia mentions taking one in the 'new chapel'. Services were conducted in both English and Maori languages. Dr Broughton consecrated the burialground around the church in 1839.

On 30 January 1840 Captain William Hobson used the church to make three proclamations. The first was to announce the extension of the boundaries of New South Wales to include the islands of New Zealand. The second was in relation to his own appointment as Lieutenant Governor of NZ, with the third relating to land transactions (and notably the issue of pre-emption). A document recording what had occurred was drafted and signed by 41 witnesses, including a number of settlers, missionaries, and the chief Moka Te Kainga-Mataa (being the sole Maori signatory). Following this event, all other occurrences in relation to the Treaty of Waitangi, including the meeting and its signing, occurred across the bay at Waitangi on 5 and 6 February. The church was also used occasionally as a courthouse.

Reverend Robert Burrows was the first resident clergyman living in a vicarage on the hillside above the church. On 11 March 1845, during the Battle of Kororareka between British forces and Maori dissatisfied with British rule, the church was hit by stray musket and cannon balls. Evidence still is visible today.

In 1871 the church was altered to its present shape with V roof, buttresses, a gallery, porch and belfry, and two years later received its name.



(Photograph courtesy Russell Museum)

By the early 20th Century the church was in a shaky condition so props were set up each side to support it for a time. It was served by vicars based at Kawakawa and from 1953 onwards, Kerikeri.



(Photograph courtesy Russell Museum – taken about 1917)

The church celebrated its centennial in 1936 with an outdoor service, and in 1963 welcomed Queen Elizabeth II and Prince Philip. In 1986 the church marked its 150th birthday in the presence of the then Governor General, Sir Paul Reeves, and Prime Minister David Lange. In 2000 Christ Church was extensively restored and today continues to draw a constant stream of visitors who enjoy its sense of history, its tranquility and its wairua (spiritual atmosphere.)

Among the graves in the churchyard are those of Tamati Waka Nene (a Ngapuhi chief largely responsible for the Maori's acceptance of the Treaty of Waitangi and who fought for the settlers against Hone Heke,) Hannah King Letheridge (now known to be the second European girl to be born in NZ.) Dr Samuel Ford (the country's first resident surgeon,) members of the Clendon family (James R Clendon was the first honorary United States Consul,) the men from HMS Hazard who fell in the battle, and a number of whalers whose headstones often tell of untimely deaths.

People from all countries find a walk around the churchyard fascinating, as they see links with their past. The congregation recognises they have a significant ministry to tourists, and welcome people from all over the world to services.



## I TOLD YOU SO!

Eat whatever you like because -

The inventor of the treadmill died at the age of 54.

The inventor of gymnastics died at 57.

The world bodybuilding champion died at 41.

The best footballer in the world, Maradona died at 60.

And then.....

The KFC inventor died at 94.

The inventor of Nutella died at 88.

The cigarette maker Winston died at 102.

The inventor of opium died at 116 in an earthquake.

The inventor of Hennessy died at 98.

How did doctors come to the conclusion that exercise prolongs life?

The rabbit is always jumping, but it lives for around 2 years. And the turtle that doesn't exercise at all lives over 200 years. SO rest, chill, eat drink and enjoy life!!



## MY GRANDMOTHER ALWAYS SAID....

Don't go where you are not invited.

Don't talk about what you don't know.

Don't interfere with things that are non3 of your business.

Do not open the fridge in someone else's house.

Don't call after 10pm.

Don't go to see someone at lunchtime.

Don't go into a women's handbag.

Don't enter someone else's bedroom without permission.

They were the rules of good manners and they still are, because manners never go out of fashion!



Remember the

## ABC's of Missionary Work

Maintain a positive **ATTITUDE**

Stick to gospel **BASICS**.

Strengthen and lift **CONVERTS**.

**DISCOVER** the best in yourself and others.

**EMBRACE** mission rules.

**FACE** your fears and conquer them.

**GIVE** 100% of your effort.

Be **HAPPY** knowing you're engaged in a marvelous work.

**INSPIRE** others without hesitation.

Turn every day into a **JOURNEY** of service and compassion.

Share your **KNOWLEDGE**, testimony, and spirit.

**LET** go of discouragement.

**MAKE** your **MISSION** the best.

**NEVER** give up and never give in to failure.

**ORGANIZE** your day.

Bring **PEACE** and comfort to everyone you meet.

Spend **QUIET** time pondering the truths of what you study.

Be **READY** and willing to go the extra mile.

**SEEK** answers and direction from the Lord.

**TESTIFY** of the truth.

Seek to **UNDERSTAND** the Gospel more fully.

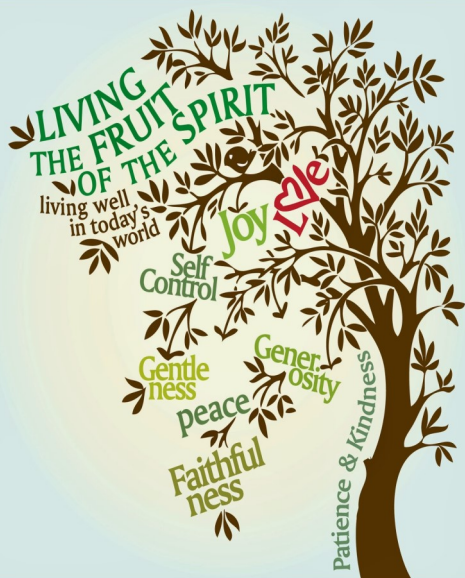
**VALUE** every moment.

Increase your **WILLINGNESS** to serve.

Practice **EXCELLENCE** in all that you do.

**YEARN** to be the best that you can be.

Develop a new **ZEST** for participating in the Lord's work!



## BACK IN THE DAY...

Over 80 years ago, in Greece sixty thousand Jews lived peacefully in Thessaloniki. It was a valued and vibrant community.

Most of these Jews worked in the port, to the point the port was even closed on Saturday or Shabbat, the Jewish day when religion forbids working. Great emeritus rabbis also lived and studied there. Everyone hung out and liked each other.

But on September 2, 1939, with the outbreak of World War II, this peaceful community would one day feel the terror of the Nazis. On April 6, 1941 Hitler invaded Greece in order to secure his southern front before launching the famous Operation Barbarossa and his great offensive against Russia.

Of the 60,000 Jews in Thessaloniki, around 50,000 were exterminated at the Birkenau concentration camp. The massacre of the Jews of Greece was brief but intense. Very few escaped. Among the survivors there was a family known as Bourla.

And after the war, in 1961, a son was born into this miraculous family in the camps. His parents called him Israel - Abraham. He grew up and studied veterinary medicine in Greece. A brilliant student, Abraham got his doctorate in reproductive biotechnology at the veterinary school of Aristotle University in Salonika.

At the age of 34, he decided to move to the United States. He changed his first name Abraham to Albert and met a Jewish woman named Miriam who then became his wife. Together they had two children.

In the United States, Albert was integrated into the medical industry. He progressed very quickly and joined a pharmaceutical company where he became "Head manager". From there, the road was short for little Abraham (Albert) to rise through the ranks to become Chief Operation Officer before obtaining his appointment as CEO of the company in 2019. Throughout 2020 Albert decided to direct all the efforts of the company to try to find a vaccine against a new virus which had just struck the world. He expended great financial and technological efforts to achieve his goal.

A year later his work paid off and the WHO (World Health Organization) and US government authorized his company to produce the long-awaited vaccine ...

Today this vaccine will be distributed in several countries including Germany, which counted thousands of deaths due to the pandemic.

Ironically, this vaccine which will save the lives of millions of people around the world including many Germans, was led by a little Jew from Thessaloniki, son of Holocaust survivors. Most of his people were exterminated by Nazi Germany.

And that is why Israel became the first country to receive the vaccine.

In memory of his grandparents and his parents who gave birth to Israel-Abraham Bourla known today as Albert Bourla: CEO of Pfizer! 🇮🇱

Jeff Holloway

*Submitted by Maureen Cox*

## MELODY IN F

Feeling footloose and frisky, a feather-brained fellow forced his fond father to fork over the family finance.

He flew far to foreign fields and frittered his fortune feasting fabulously with faithless friends. Fleeced by his fellows in folly and facing famine, he found himself a feed-flinger in a filthy farmyard.

Fairly famishing, he feign would have filled his frame with foraged food from fodder fragments.

‘FOOEY! My father’s flunkies fare far finer!’

The frazzled fugitive frankly facing facts, frustrated by failure, and filled with foreboding, flew forthwith to his family.

Falling at his father’s feet, he forlornly fumbled, ‘Father, I’ve flunked.’

He fearlessly forfeited family favour.

The farsighted father, forestalling further flinching, frantically flagged the flunkies to fetch a fatling from the flock and fix a feast.

The fugitive’s fault-finding brother frowned on fickle forgiveness, but the faithful father figured filial fidelity is fine and so the fugitive was found!

What forbids fervent festivity?

Let flags be unfurled, let fanfares flare.’

MORAL: Father’s forgiveness formed the foundation for the former fugitive’s future fortitude.

*Get by yourself and read it over out loud. Then practise it on someone you know.... You will both be laughing by the time you get finished with it!*



## MEN'S BREAKFAST

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

## GOLDEN YEARS

Has been in May - look forward to the next one in July! Come and be entertained.

## WOW - WOMEN OF WISDOM

Morning tea at Chapel St. 12th June. Please book in by email or on the clipboard.

## 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! And the pressure to decide when to get a flu shot or when to make the phone call for making the appointment for the first covid shot is on us.

I want to encourage everyone to keep a track of where they've been either by using the sign in app on their phone or by 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!"

I encourage each person to be responsible for themselves and keep themselves safe. Ensure those nearby are not likely to catch a virus from you because you being are careful. Stay home if you are unwell and see your Dr. if you have symptoms of infection.

Have a happy, healthy and enjoyable winter.

*Mary Findlay*

'Cast your burden on the Lord...he will sustain you.' Psalm 5:22



## 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 Meeting
Wednesdays	9.30 am Care & Craft (excl school hols)
Wed/Thurs/Fri	10.00 am Basement Boutique (till 4 pm)
Thursdays	9.45 am Bible Study in Creche 10.00 am Conversation Café (incl school hols) starting in June
Fridays	9.00 am Prayer Meeting 10.00 am Cuppa & Chat in Lounge
Saturday	10.00 am-1pm Basement Boutique
Sundays	8.45 am Prayers

### MONTHLY MEETINGS

1st Tuesday	1.30 pm Session
3rd Wednesday	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 In IN RECESS Men's Breakfast: is in recess
2nd Saturday	WOW breakfasts

## PARISH REGISTER

Deaths: "in memory"

SIMPSON Ngaire 31st March 2021

WEBSTER Ina 12th April 2021

FINCHAM Greg 6th May 2021

## 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)

## CONTACT DETAILS

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

### OUR MISSION STATEMENT:

To know, enjoy and share Christ.