



VOICE:

ST COLUMBA PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

THE VOICE OF ST COLUMBA

VOLUME 35

ISSUE 4

NOVEMBER 2023



Greetings in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Recently we held favourite hymn Sunday, and we had a great time singing several hymns and also finding out the story behind each one. Some of our best-loved hymns were written in times of great sadness and trials. This also applies to the well-known and loved hymn *What a Friend we have in Jesus* written by Joseph Scriven.

Joseph was born in 1819 and died in 1886. He was educated at Trinity College, Dublin, Ireland, and then enrolled in a military college to prepare for an army career. But due to poor health he was forced to give up that idea. Soon after this his fiancée died in a drowning accident on the eve of their wedding in 1844. Later that year Joseph moved to Ontario, where he taught school in Woodstock and Brantford. Then once again his plans for marriage were destroyed when his new bride-to-be died after a short illness in 1855.

Joseph knew the comfort of the Lord firsthand and wrote this hymn after experiencing a number of the heart-breaking events in his life.

It was the friendship that he had with Jesus which helped him through all this grief and pain.

***What a friend we have in Jesus, all our sins and griefs to bear!
What a privilege to carry everything to God in prayer!
O what peace we often forfeit, O what needless pain we bear,
all because we do not carry everything to God in prayer!***

In this last year many of us have had to face difficult situations, and throughout these challenges the Lord has been supporting and comforting us. This hymn reminds us that our friendship with Jesus helps us through life's trials.

As we are reminded in Paul's letter to the Philippian Church:

Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. Philippians 4:6-7

May the Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Love of God and the Fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

Sandra

QUARTERLY COMMUNION

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

10th December 2023



RUTH'S RAMBLINGS

The Tree.

Who decided where a tree should go?

Who decided the variety of the tree?

Who planted the tree - was there a ceremony?

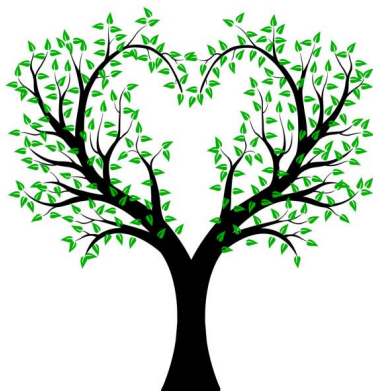
Was there consideration about the shade it would shelter us from? Or the beauty we would cherish? Or the leaves it would shed that need to be constantly removed from the guttering, or the concrete that would lift, or building that it would distort.

What we decide to do now, will always impact those in the future. Whether created by a sharp tongue, or ill placed fist, fear is often the result. Whether we ignore the plea, or walk away from the tears, scarring occurs.

With the ones we love or have embraced, what legacy are we leaving them now or in 50-80 years? Will it be a drag on them or a rope that ties them down with no rescue in sight... or will it be something they will share in love and gentleness? What will our imprint on life be? One of hope, comfort and love of life, or one of despair, bitterness and a despising attitude. Will the scars be healable or telling?

Let us love as the Father has loved us. Fully, without scorn or shame.

His only question -
Will you love me?



HE CARES FOR YOU

*Never a single day goes by
When God forgets to care for you,
Never the sun wakes in the sky,
Without an answered prayer or
two.*

*Never we see the old year end
Nor welcome in the new,
Without Him there to help,
befriend,*

In everything we do.

*Never we see the velvet sky
Nor watch the evening star alight,
Without the knowledge, He's close
by,*

To hold us through the night.

Never we see the ebbing tide

*Now watch the sun depart,
Without His love to guard and
guide*

And fill each waiting heart.

*Never despair, what e'er you do,
Never forget: God cares for you.*

Iris Hesselden

Sept 1987

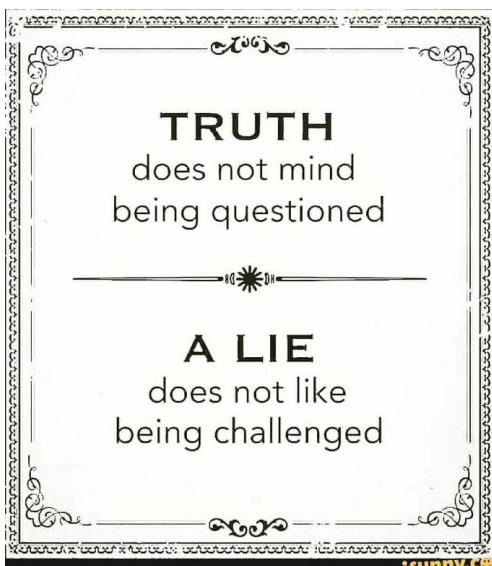
The Apostles

W	B	N	Q	V	C	N	W	Y	Q	L	R	Z	O	D	P	H	X				
W	A	L	G	C	S	I	M	O	N	P	E	T	E	R	T	T	X	T	N		
U	Z	O	Q	K	R	S	E	K	A	N	D	R	E	W	H	L	P	A	B		
H	T	A	P	R	B	J	U	G	P	Q	N	F	N	L	A	P	V	C	Q		
D	G	M	P	A	T	P	H	O	P	T	T	R	V	T	D	H	E	O	X		
T	U	Z	L	U													D	I	T	I	W
G	O	Y	F	W													E	L	O	F	K
L	V	P	R	K													U	I	X	Z	X
C	X	G	R	Q													S	P	J	D	X
N	N	T	B	O													J	A	M	E	S
N	Y	J	A	M	E	S	S	O	N	O	F	Z	E	B	E	D	E	E	K		
I	A	C	C	X	P	M	A	T	T	H	I	A	S	T	H	O	M	A	S		
D	Z	B	A	P	O	B	A	R	T	H	O	L	O	M	E	W	B	G	T		
E	M	A	T	T	H	E	W	O	S	Z	A	J	M	I	L	H	X	G	B		
T	K	P	Y	H	D	I	W	T	L	A	N	B	B	M	M	O	B	E	P		
D	R	X	N	Z													C	F	I	S	R
L	O	U	V	J													Q	W	Z	U	W
L	E	L	M	P													J	O	H	N	D
E	B	F	Z	U													U	U	X	X	Z
E	K	J	F	Y													Y	P	I	H	G
O	C	T	K	Q													U	Y	N	P	E
H	S	W	R	L													V	B	T	L	L
R	I	M	C	C													P	O	B	I	U
C	E	M	G	O													A	Q	I	T	P
S	I	M	O	N													J	U	D	A	S

- | | | |
|---|---|--|
| <p>1. () Peter's brother; He told Jesus about the lad with the fish and bread.</p> <p>2. () Nathanael</p> <p>3. () Known as the less, James, son of Alphaeus</p> | <p>4. () Herod had him killed with the sword</p> <p>5. () He was exiled on the isle of Patmos.</p> <p>6. () He betrayed Jesus.</p> <p>7. () He was a tax collector.</p> <p>8. () He took Judas' place.</p> | <p>9. () He brought Nathanael to Christ.</p> <p>10. () The Zealot</p> <p>11. () Jesus told him to feed His sheep.</p> <p>12. () Surname of Lebbeus</p> <p>13. () The Doubting one</p> |
|---|---|--|

Answers on
page 9

They met on line....



I finally remember what Zoom meetings remind me of.



A NEW LOOK AT THE OLD

The United Kingdom of Israel is understood to have reached its zenith during the reigns of David and Solomon, about 1000-922BC. Making Jerusalem his royal capital, David brought the whole nation under one central, efficient, benevolent government. Solomon succeeded his father about 961, and was granted the privilege of building the first Temple. His reign was, for a period, outwardly magnificent and successful, but it rested on a corrupt foundation. Solomon's licentiousness and immorality eventually led to a plethora of foreign wives flooding the royal palaces; they were responsible for the introduction and spread of their heathen idols and religions. Furthermore, big, grandiose building schemes demanded forced labour, high taxation, and growing social unrest. Sadly, David's legacy went downhill from there, and it was to have a catastrophic effect on the subsequent history of the nation and its people. (1Kings 11)

No sooner had Solomon died (922) than the political structure fell apart, **to be replaced by two rival states of second-rate importance.**

Solomon's foolish and arrogant son, Rehoboam, refused to heed the advice of older, wiser counsellors to lower the burden of taxation, **whereupon tribes occupying the northern half of the country withdrew from the monarchy to form their own kingdom of Israel under Jeroboam** (1Kings:12). Unless this historical development is clearly understood by readers, the second half of the Old Testament can remain a bit mystifying, and largely unread. And so, for the next two hundred years the two newly formed states of **Judah** in the south, capital Jerusalem/Zion, and **Israel** in the north, capital Shechem/Samaria, continued to live side-by-side with moderate success till a new superpower began stirring in the east. The "Golden Age" had passed, and a death struggle would soon begin.

The new superpower was Assyria, strangely rejuvenated by the preaching of the prophet Jonah. Both Amos and Hosea tried to keep the flame of faith alive in the north, but their efforts, it seems, had little success. Assyria invaded in 721, captured Samaria, and, in accordance with the practice of the day, deported its people into exile. Thus, the ten tribes comprising the northern kingdom of Israel effectively disappeared from human history. This is briefly related in 2 Kings:17 v1-6. It is probable, however, that small, scattered communities remained.

The sequence of events in the southern kingdom of Judah is strikingly similar. The prophets **Isaiah** and **Micah** proclaimed that it, too, was corrupt with sin, and that only through repentance and a return to faith and worship of the true God would the nation be saved from a similar fate. Sennacherib of Assyria attempted to besiege Jerusalem, but was unsuccessful due to a sudden scourge that swept through his army, and was forced to retire. Remember back to your schooldays and the poem "The Destruction of Sennacherib" by Lord Byron. Isaiah's policy of quiet reliance on God was dramatically vindicated.

Isaiah was succeeded by **Jeremiah** who with the help of **Zephaniah**, **Nahum** and **Habakkuk** pleaded with the nation to return to God before inevitable judgement. But to no avail. Judah attempted a hopeless revolt against Babylon, the new superpower, and paid the price. Nebuchadnezzar, besieged, and finally entered Jerusalem in 586, and wreaked fearful havoc. The Temple was destroyed. Jerusalem's king was blinded and led in chains to Babylon as were multitudes of his subjects. (2 Kings:25, Jeremiah:52) The long-propheesied seventy year exile had begun, during which **Daniel** and **Ezekiel** endeavored to keep a candle burning in the darkness of despair.

Then, the impossible happened. Proud Babylon was, itself, overrun by Cyrus of Persia in 537 who eventually gave the exiled Jews permission to return home to Jerusalem. A scene of absolute desolation met their eyes, but under the spirited ministry of **Haggai** and **Zechariah**, and the leadership of **Nehemiah** and **Ezra** the foundations of the second Temple were laid, the city walls rebuilt, houses renovated, and the Law of God reinstated. Contemporary prophets **Obadiah**, **Joel** and later, **Zechariah**, outlined a brighter future for the nation on condition of repentance, and outpouring of the Spirit of God, and final judgement on all the other nations that had wronged God's chosen people over the proceeding centuries.

The Old Testament closes with the searching challenge and gracious promise of Malachi addressed to the priests and people of the new nation, - and to you and me - "Unto you who fear my name shall the Sun of Righteousness rise with healing in his wings" (4.2) After that, four hundred years of silence till a new voice announced in the desert, "Prepare the way of the Lord, make straight paths for him". (Mark:1.3)



Images From our Past St Columba Choir, circa 1984



4th Tauranga Boys' Brigade Company, St Columba, 1984 (at left)



Church Parade, 1982 (right)

TRUE STORY FROM SHIRLEY MACDONALD The mystery of how a postcard sent by a First World War soldier to a boy in South Taranaki was found 106 years later in a Queensland shopping centre is solved.

In 1915, Bert Cooke was in his early 20s and serving with the Anzacs in Turkey when he sent the postcard to his brother-in-law Roy Coombridge, of Te Kiri, who was aged 14 and living on the family farm near Opunake.

But earlier this month the postcard was found in a Townsville ATM by a cleaner who thought at first it was a discarded shopping list, ABC News reported.

Now, thanks to help from social media users, the postcard is on its way back across the Tasman to Coombridge's descendants.

It turns out the postcard had been delivered all those years ago, but had been on a new journey after years of lying forgotten in an old tin of photos.

"It definitely arrived. It hasn't got lost somewhere for 100 years," Roy Coombridge's daughter, Doris Elphick, said.

Elphick, a Methodist minister in Stratford and New Plymouth for many years before retiring to Matamata, discovered the card some time ago when she was sorting through her late father's photos.

The front of the card has a map of Malta, where Cooke received medical care before returning to the fighting. He wrote that he was "going back to have another go at the Turks in a few days."

"It might be a long time before I can write again."

Elphick passed the postcard on to her cousin Shirley McDonald, 93, who is Bert Cooke's daughter.

"She photocopied it for her family, and they decided to give the original to one of Bert's grandsons who had been in the army and served in Afghanistan."

The grandson's mother, who lives in Townsville, had the postcard in her bag to show to another family member, and did not realise she had lost it until hearing that it had been found.

"She doesn't know how it happened, and she feels terrible," McDonald, of Tauranga, said.

The rediscovery had caused quite a stir in the family, she added. "It all goes back so far, I feel very emotional."

Her father had not liked to talk about the war after he returned. Doris Elphick said the family was delighted to learn the postcard was on its way back to them.

"All the family have been thrilled to hear about it. We have caught up with people we hadn't heard from for years." Elphick said she remembered her Uncle Bert, who was quite a few years older than her father.

PTO

After his war experiences, Bert Cooke had poor health in later life. His injuries included shrapnel in his left thigh, which was removed at Hawera Hospital, according to the Taranaki Daily News March 2022.

More of the story....

The postcard is now on its way across the Tasman to the son of its original recipient , thanks to a flurry of interest from social media users after news of the postcard find was published in Australia.

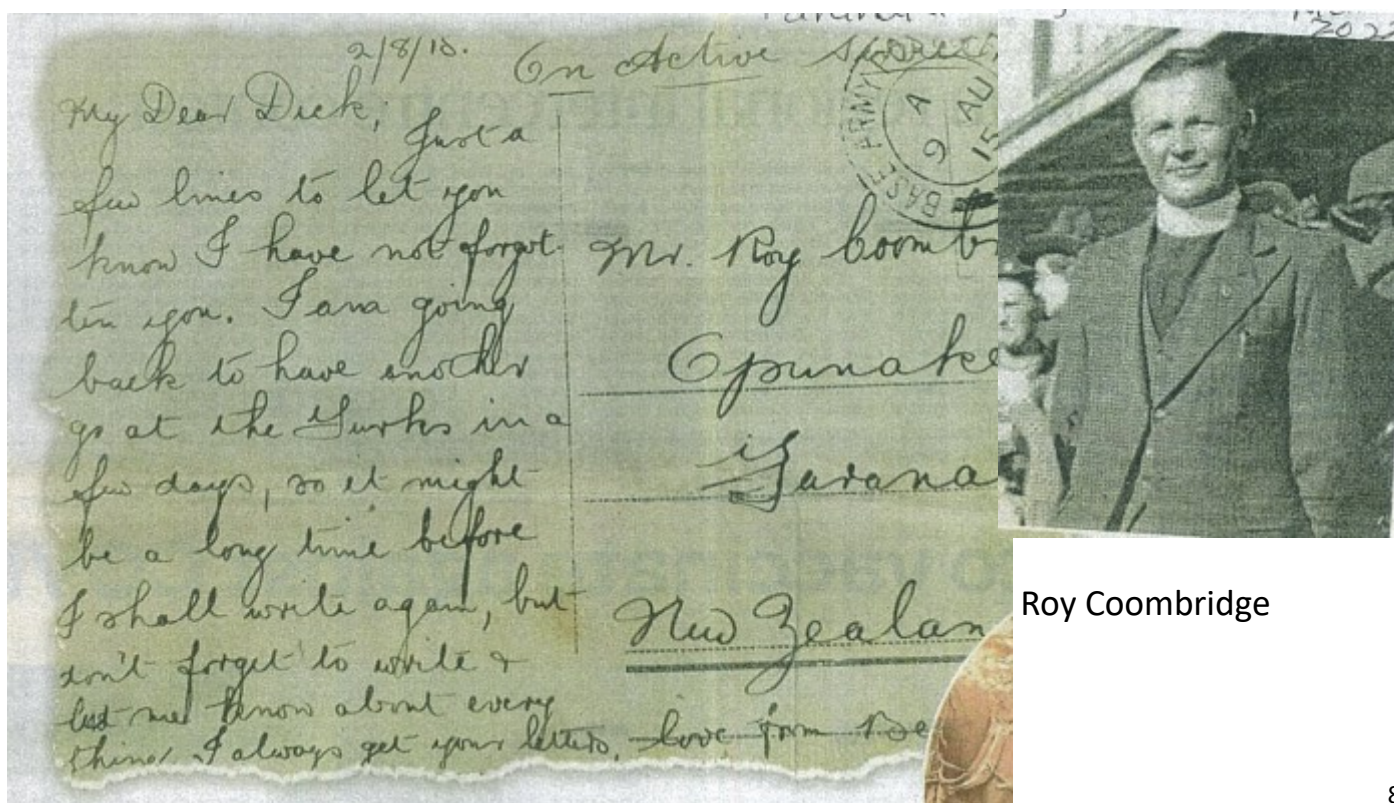
Cleaner Stephanie Schultz found the wartime postcard . 'I thought it was just another receipt and was ready to chuck it in the bin. Then I noticed there was writing, so I started reading - "Why was he talking about the Turks?" A colleague pointed out the date stamp, which read 1915. I realised it was over 100 years old and I got the chills. We were shocked that a card that old was still floating around.

After reading the message, Schultz took to social media to try and track down the family. Within 24 hours we knew who it belonged to. One of those "lovely people" was former Taranaki man Martin Garcia a keen family historian, who discovered a link to his own grandchildren when he tracked down Roy's son Kevin Coombridge.

The Coombridge family had a farm in Waiteika Road; 200 acres which they were breaking in from heavy bush. At 14 Roy had been working on the farm for two years, after leaving school at 12.

They were pretty much early settlers. He walked 3 or 4 miles barefoot to school over rough metalled and mud roads, after getting up at 5am to help milk the cows. Every member of the family had to do their chores.

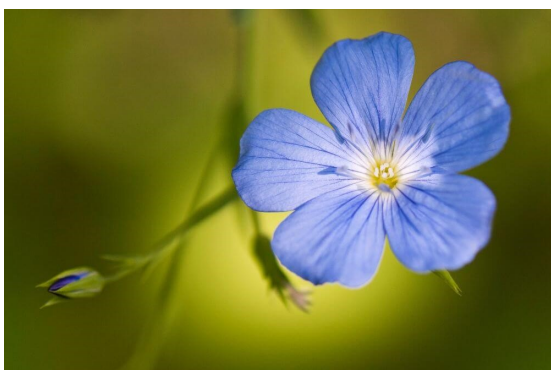
Roy dedicated his life to service as a Methodist minister. He died in 1985 at the age of 85.



Roy Coombridge

If the mountain seems too big today,
 Then climb a hill instead.
 If the morning brings you sadness,
 It's ok to stay in bed.
 If the day ahead weighs heavy
 And your plans feel like a curse,
 There's no shame in re-arranging,
 Don't make yourself feel worse.
 If a shower stings like needles
 And a bath feels like you'll drown,
 If you haven't washed your hair for days,
 Don't throw away your crown!
 A day is not a lifetime,
 A rest is not defeat.
 Don't think of it as failure,
 Just a quiet kind of retreat.
 It's okay to take a moment
 From an anxious, fractured
 mind.
 The world will not stop
 turning
 While you get realigned.
 The mountain will still be
 there
 When you want to try again,
 So climb it in your own time
and love yourself 'til then.

Via The Irish Way



BRAIN TEASER.

A lady is dressed in a grey two-piece
 costume.
 She is sitting eating her meal alone in a
 restaurant.
 Describe this scene using only one
 word.

Answer on page: 10

I am taken from a mine, and shut up in
 a wooden case, from which I am never
 released, and yet I am used by almost
 everybody. What am I? **A pencil lead**

I left my campsite and hiked south for 3
 miles. Then I turned east and hiked for
 3 miles. I then turned north and hiked
 for 3 miles, at which time I came upon
 a bear inside my tent eating my food!
 What colour was the bear?

**White, since the only place you can do
 that is the North Pole and polar bears
 are the only kind of bears that live
 there.**

Answers from page 3

1. Andrew
2. Bartholomew
3. James
4. James Son of Zebedee
5. John
6. Judas
7. Matthew
8. Matthias
9. Philip
10. Simon
11. Simon Peter
12. Thaddeus
13. Thomas

NEWS FLASH....

The European Commission has just announced an agreement whereby English will be the official language of the EU rather than German which was the other possible choice.

As part of the negotiations, Her Majesty's Government conceded that English spelling had some room for improvement and has accepted a five year phase-in plan that would be known as Euro-English.

In the first year "s" will replace the soft "c". Certainly this will make the civil servants jump with joy. The hard "c" will be dropped in favour of the "k". This should clear up confusion and keyboards can have one letter less.

There will be growing public enthusiasm in the second year, when the troublesome "ph" will be replaced with "f". This will make words like fotograf 20% shorter. In the third year, public acceptance of the new spelling can be expected to reach the stage where more complicated changes are possible.

Governments will encourage the removal of double letters, which have always been a deterrent to accurate spelling. Also all will agree that the horrible mess of the silent "e" in the language is disgraceful, and should go.

By the fourth year, people will be receptive to steps such as replacing "th" with "z" and "w" with "v". During the fifth year, the unnecessary "o" can be dropped from words containing "ou" and similar changes could be applied to other combinations of letters. After this fifth year, we will have a really sensible written style. There will be no more troubles or difficulties and everyone will find it easy to understand each other, i.e. **ZE DREM VIL FINALI KOM TRU!**

FROM GLYNNIS AND NEVILLE WILSON'S DAUGHTER.

I just want to say a huge thank you to yourself, Sandra and the whole of the St Columba Family for the love and support everyone has given Mum and Dad. From the phone calls, the visits Mum has had at home, people visiting Dad in hospital, the food and flowers given to Mum, it's that love, support and prayers that are helping them both get through each day and Dad's dogged determination to get better.

After going to Church with Mum on Sunday – and I will admit I don't usually go to Church – I felt the love from everyone that came to talk to us, not just to ask how Dad was but also asked Mum how she was doing. A lot of people forget about the ones that aren't sick or in hospital but not the St Columba Family, you are all making sure Mum is OK too. I so appreciated even the hugs I got. Mum and I were both in tears at times.

In tough times worldwide it is fantastic to know and see with my own eyes there are absolutely amazing, wonderful people that will do anything for someone else. A huge thank you from the bottom of my heart to you all.

"When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and through the rivers, they will not overflow you. When you walk through the fire, you will not be scorched, nor will the flame burn you."

Isaiah 43:2

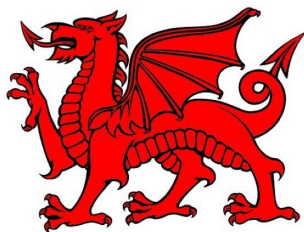
ANSWER: Ingratiate.

From page 9

BEING WELSH

Welsh is not a place.
It is not something you can become
or can buy or inherit.
It is something that you are.
From the moment you are born.
It is there with every breath you take
And every emotion that you feel.
With every tear that you shed and
Every rage that you roar,
It is your home that you will never leave
No matter how far you might roam,
I am Welsh and proud to tell the whole
world

There is no place like the "Land
of Song".
"The home of the Dragon",
The place that I call home!



A MEDITATION FOR LENT

Fast from pessimism; feast on optimism
Fast from criticism; feast on praise
Fast from self-pity; feast on joy
Fast from bitterness; feast on forgiveness
Fast from idle gossip; feast on purposeful
silence
Fast from jealousy; feast on love
Fast from discouragement; feast on hope
Fast from complaining; feast on
appreciation
Fast from selfishness; feast on service
Fast from fear; feast on faith
Fast from anger; feast on patience
Fast from self-concern; feast on
compassion for others
Fast from discontent; feast on gratitude

CREED OF THE BELOVED

I'm not what I do.
I'm not what I have.
I'm not what people say about me.
I am the beloved of God.
It is who I am.
No one can take it from me.
I don't have to worry.
I don't have to hurry.

*I can trust my friend Jesus and share His love with
the world.*

AN ADVENT PRAYER

*Lord Jesus, it sometimes seems too good to be true that you really are coming back to take
us to be with yourself.*

*At other times, I confess, life here on earth seems so good that I don't want you to come
back yet. Forgive me, dear Lord, for my doubting and my coldness.*

*Fill me with awe this Advent as I contemplate again the mysteries contained in your Word
which assure us that you will return and that you want us to be ready. Then give me the
resolve to change my lifestyle so that, no matter when you come, I shall be ready to greet
you with joy and thanksgiving. Ready, too, to drop everything to come to you.*

Joyce Huggett

MINISTER

Rev Sandra Warner

OUR ELDERS

Neville Wilson

Keith Bradbury

Pam Brown

Ken Camp

Elizabeth Hockly

Janet Freeman

Avis Currie

Romy Morgenrood

We give thanks to these wonderful people who pray for us, and for St Columba, and direct us with Christ's help. They head up our pastoral care, with kindness and compassion.

Please pray for them as they listen to the Lord's voice, for guidance to lead us through 2023..

OUR O-TEAM

Neville Wilson

Ken Camp

Keith Bradbury

Phil Sinclair

Mel Monk

Mary Findlay (H and S)

Ruth Scott (Scribe)

We give thanks to these wonderful people who keep our buildings and assets and staff all ticking over. They consider the next project, the next challenge. Please pray for them as they listen to the Lord, the PCANZ, and the Govt, so that we may have a safe, comfortable building in which to meet with others and to worship Christ.

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

Tuesdays 10.00am Justice of the Peace

Wednesdays

Wed/Thurs/Fri 10.00 am Basement Boutique (till 4 pm) Sat 10-1pm 2.00 pm Home Group

Thursdays 9.45 am Bible Study in Creche

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

1st Wednesday 9.40 am Prayer

1st Wednesday 10.00 am Communion

3rd Wednesday 10.00 am O -Team

3rd Thursday 3.00 pm Service at Radius Matua

2nd Saturday WOW Breakfasts

PARISH REGISTER SEPT OCT NOV

Deaths: "in loving memory"

Turner - Margaret



CHECK OUT OUR WEBPAGE

www.stcolumba.co.nz/sermons

www.stcolumba.co.nz/musings



CONTACT DETAILS

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minister@stcolumba.co.nz

Session Clerk: Neville Wilson 576 4814

Office Phone: 07 576 6756

Office Hours 9 am-noon Monday-Friday

Email: office@stcolumba.co.nz

Website: www.stcolumba.co.nz

OUR MISSION STATEMENT:

To know, enjoy and share Christ.