

HOON HAY PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Welcome to today's service, the Third Sunday of Easter, 26th April 2020



Hello Everyone,

The lockdown is still with us but changes are at hand. Tomorrow evening (27 April) we move to Alert Level 3 and hopefully, Level 2 is not too far away. If we move too quickly and have further outbreaks of Covid-19 we'd effectively be back at 'square one' and have to repeat the process. Understandably, however, business owners are very keen to get the economy restarted. Please pray for wise and timely decision-making and for God's mercy the virus will not spread.

We continue with a further message in the 'Anchored in Christ' series. Today we're considering forgiveness. This is an important topic and in a short message only a broad coverage of it can be offered, but hopefully, it will provide a framework for your own reflection and prayer.

Blessings, *Michael*

Billy Graham's Last Message:

*Still in the Easter season, this is a further reflection on the Cross.
It also ties in with our message about forgiveness.*

OPENING PRAYER

Almighty God,

We begin today giving you thanks.
Your love endures forever, it never fails.

Though there are many ways we have failed, we have not exceeded the supply of your mercy and grace.

We thank you for revealing yourself to us through your Word.

As we open the Bible today, we pray we will hear your voice.




We ask that your Holy Spirit will be at work, opening our ears to hear and our hearts to receive what you want to say to us.

May we be transformed into your likeness.

Through Jesus Christ our Lord,

Amen

To zoom in on any part of this document, hold down the Control Key and use the mouse roller, or you can use buttons on the toolbar.

Clicking the icons    alongside songs & message will open them on a new screen, either in YouTube or 'Bible Gateway' for the Bible Readings. After viewing, click the 'Back' screen to return to this document.

OUR APPROACH TO GOD

Psalm 103: 1-13 (NIV)

- ¹ Praise the LORD, my soul;
all my inmost being, praise his holy name.
- ² Praise the LORD, my soul,
and forget not all his benefits —
- ³ who forgives all your sins
and heals all your diseases,
- ⁴ who redeems your life from the pit
and crowns you with love and compassion,
- ⁵ who satisfies your desires with good things
so that your youth is renewed like the eagle's.
- ⁶ The LORD works righteousness
and justice for all the oppressed.
- ⁷ He made known his ways to Moses,
his deeds to the people of Israel:
- ⁸ The LORD is compassionate and gracious,
slow to anger, abounding in love.
- ⁹ He will not always accuse,
nor will he harbor his anger forever;
- ¹⁰ he does not treat us as our sins deserve
or repay us according to our iniquities.
- ¹¹ For as high as the heavens are above the earth,
so great is his love for those who fear him;
- ¹² as far as the east is from the west,
so far has he removed our transgressions from us.
- ¹³ As a father has compassion on his children,
so the LORD has compassion on those who fear him;
- ¹⁴ for he knows how we are formed,
he remembers that we are dust.

Hymn: 'In Christ Alone' 

A Celtic version of the contemporary hymn

A PRAYER OF CONFESSION, PARDON & INTERCESSION

Almighty God & Heavenly Father,

We confess we have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done, and by what we have left undone.

We have sinned against others in what we have said or done, and what we have not said or done, when we knew it needed to be. We fall short of your righteousness.

We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbour as ourselves.

We humbly repent, for the sake of your Son Jesus Christ, have mercy on us and forgive us; that we may delight in your will, and walk in your ways, to the glory of your Name.

We pray for our world and nation at this difficult time. We pray for a hand of restraint over the virus that is gripping our world; and your blessing on all those who are working to provide care or seeking to find a vaccine. We ask also that those currently afflicted will recover, and for families who have lost loved ones; that they will know your presence despite their grief. Lord have mercy.


We pray for our government, health, and other public sector leaders. May they have wisdom, compassion and insight to manage our nation through this crisis. And we pray also for business leaders, employees, and others facing an uncertain future economically. Lord have mercy.

Help us, O God, to be a people of faith that confidently proclaims hope even in the midst of despair; may we be a people who know your love and share it in ways that are attractive and caring within and beyond our Hoon Hay community.


Amen





NOTICES



Hymn: 'Rock of Ages' 
*Graham Kendrick's version of the classic 18th century hymn.
No lyrics shown on screen but sit back and enjoy this tasteful
rendition.*


Scripture Readings:

Numbers 14: 1-20 

Colossians 3:1-17 

Hymn: 'Praise, my soul the King of Heaven' 
A stirring hymn of faith.

Message: 'Anchored in Christ' 
Part 5 – The Triumph of Forgiveness
w/ Teaching Notes 
Time of Quiet

Hymn: 'Come, O Fount of every Blessing' 
*A nice version of the traditional hymn proclaiming God's
goodness and faithfulness.*

Benediction (2 Corinthians 13:11)

Finally, brothers and sisters, rejoice! Strive for full restoration, encourage one another, be of one mind, live in peace. And the God of love and peace will be with you.

Amen



Services are not cancelled even though we can't physically meet at church. Please keep informed and connected by checking our [website](#), the Facebook [page](#), and please encourage wider family and friends to view our services. We have some folk who don't have the internet and can't follow services online. If you know someone in that situation a suggestion is to phone and share about the service with them.

You can recap earlier messages; these are available on our YouTube [Channel](#).

We need to continue to heed all official advice from the Government and Ministry of Health re the Covid-19 pandemic. Please pray for each other and especially those we know are vulnerable.

Anne Edgar is kindly sending out the Word for Today devotional as an email. If you are not currently on her list but would like to be please contact [Anne](#).

Please email the church office with celebration notices. We want to share these milestones with the church community.

Thanks to all who are maintaining regular giving. Income from hire of our facilities has ceased and of course there is no plate giving. Please pray for our finances and if you need help with internet banking please contact Shilo via the [office email](#).

HELPFUL LINKS

Moderator's Online Devotions each Sunday: Right Rev Fakaofu Kaio is currently leading weekly devotions each Sunday during the period that public worship is suspended. The devotion will be available on the [Moderator's Facebook page](#) by 9am each Sunday. The devotions will last for approximately 20 mins.

Steady As You Go Exercises: Age Concern Canterbury has published some [exercises](#) to try at home, these are gentle exercises but please take care when practicing them.

PASTOR'S REFLECTION

This week I want to reflect on the Sovereign's (Queen Elizabeth's) birthday, which as you may know, was on April 21, when the Queen has reached the grand old age of 94. My own mother was born just five days later in the same year (1926) and she was always a keen supporter of the Queen and felt some connection with her. Whatever we think of the Queen or the monarchy itself, we must admire Elizabeth's calm, collected leadership and consistency across decades and scores of international, national, and family crises.



Many of us will have first-hand memories of the Queen on one or more of her several visits to New Zealand. The most notable was early in her reign when she and Prince Phillip visited in December 1953 and January 1954. This was the first time a reigning English monarch had visited our shores and the country put on a grand display of pomp, pageantry, and patriotic fervour. Being the height of summer, local councils were even instructed when to plant flowers along the streets the royal cavalcade would pass so they would bloom on the day! Quoting New Zealand playwright Bruce Mason, the historian Jock Phillips referred to the tour as the 'End of the Golden Weather'. It was in terms of the British Empire and fever-pitch support for the monarchy, but a scaled-down and modernised version of empire did emerge in the form of the Commonwealth.

There has been much talk in recent decades about dispensing with the monarchy and becoming a republic. It may happen, but I want to suggest we pause and consider what the English monarch stands for - and not just value the present Queen's personal qualities (impressive though these are). She understands herself and her reign as *authority before God* ('Defender of the Faith'). And, as a person of genuine Christian faith, she has a humility before God and the people ('subjects' if you prefer). She rules with respect to the higher authority of Almighty God; the God of the Scriptures. We should be thankful for that because if there is no higher authority than the state we can lose sight of accountability before God and get lured into the humanist (Promethean) belief that 'man is the measure of all things' and in turn, this has easily led to dictatorships. Authority is of God but that does not mean *all authority is godly* or that any individual is especially virtuous (this is why we should always pray for our leaders). However, when a person such as Queen Elizabeth professes faith in Christ and affirms transcendent authority, that's not only a good thing but actually a blessing!

Have a good week - keep in touch and stay safe.

Michael