

# HOON HAY PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Welcome to our Mother's Day Service, the Fifth Sunday of Easter, 10<sup>th</sup> May 2020

## ANCHORED IN CHRIST

### WE GATHER IN WORSHIP

**Hymn:** 'Nearer My God to Thee' 

*We perhaps think of the 'Titanic' with this hymn but let's remember God is with us in life as well as death. Andre Rieu leads a massive ensemble of musicians and vocalists in Amsterdam. Note the audience reaction (let op de reactie van het publiek). Be moved!*

### OPENING PRAYER

*Almighty God and Heavenly Father,*

It is our privilege and pleasure to come before you today in worship.

We acknowledge your greatness, your goodness, and your grace towards us.

Help us to still our hearts and minds so we can hear from you.

We ask these things through Jesus Christ our Lord, *Amen*

Kia Ora, Hello Everybody,

It's hard to believe we are now well into May and it is only around five weeks to the shortest day and the depths of winter. Almost half the year has gone!

Despite this reality, we could be excused for losing track of normal life as the restrictions associated with COVID-19 continue. It is hoped we are poised to move to Alert Level 2, but even with that (if it happens) life will be far from back to normal. At that point the Parish Council will meet and decide what services will look like as it may be possible - with restrictions - to resume meeting at church. Let's hope so but we'll have to wait and see. Meanwhile, as always, please keep in touch with each other, pray for our world, nation, and church, and stay grounded in the faithful promises of God.

Today we look at the theme of Fellowship as part of the 'Anchored in Christ' series. We have all felt the pain of isolation but God understands and is with us, and when we remain connected with each other, God is still working his purposes in and through us.

It is also Mother's Day today and I encourage you to pause and give thanks for your mother. If she is alive, ring her, and if not, recall all she did for you with prayerful gratitude. The National Moderator of the PCANZ, Right Rev Fakaofu Kaio has written a thoughtful Mother's Day reflection which is well worth reading (see the link in the notices).

Blessings,

*Michael*

OUR LOVE TO GOD IS MEASURED BY OUR EVERYDAY

FELLOWSHIP

WITH OTHERS AND THE LOVE IT DISPLAYS

ANDREW MURRAY (1828 - 1917) 



## OUR APPROACH TO GOD

1 Chronicles 16:23-36 (NIV)

*David's Psalm of Thanks*

<sup>23</sup> Sing to the Lord, all the earth;  
proclaim his salvation day after day.  
<sup>24</sup> Declare his glory among the nations,  
his marvelous deeds among all peoples.  
<sup>25</sup> For great is the Lord  
and most worthy of praise;  
he is to be feared above all gods.  
<sup>26</sup> For all the gods of the nations are idols,  
but the Lord made the heavens.  
<sup>27</sup> Splendor and majesty are before him;  
strength and joy are in his dwelling place.  
<sup>28</sup> Ascribe to the Lord,  
all you families of nations,  
ascribe to the Lord glory and strength.  
<sup>29</sup> Ascribe to the Lord the glory due his name;  
bring an offering and come before him.  
Worship the Lord in the splendor of his  
holiness.  
<sup>30</sup> Tremble before him, all the earth!  
The world is firmly established;  
it cannot be moved.  
<sup>31</sup> Let the heavens rejoice, let the earth be glad;  
let them say among the nations,  
"The Lord reigns!"  
<sup>32</sup> Let the sea resound, and all that is in it;  
let the fields be jubilant,  
and everything in them!  
<sup>33</sup> Let the trees of the forest sing,  
let them sing for joy before the Lord,  
for he comes to judge the earth.  
<sup>34</sup> Give thanks to the Lord,  
for he is good; his love endures forever.  
<sup>35</sup> Cry out, "Save us, God our Savior;  
gather us and deliver us from the nations,  
that we may give thanks to your holy name,  
and glory in your praise."  
<sup>36</sup> Praise be to the Lord, the God of Israel,  
from everlasting to everlasting.  
Then all the people said "Amen" and  
"Praise the Lord."

## PRAYER OF INTERCESSION

*Heavenly Father,*

We come before your throne of grace in  
prayers for others.

We remember all people affected by the  
COVID-19 Virus and pray for recovery and  
healing of those receiving treatment. We  
ask for your blessing, strength and wisdom  
to be with front-line and support health  
workers. May their skills be used effectively  
to alleviate suffering, and we ask for  
containment of the virus and the discovery  
of a vaccine. We pray for all medical and  
scientific researchers working in this area.  
Lord have mercy.

We pray for our government and health  
officials; for wisdom and timing in the  
making of important decisions. It is difficult  
to know the right course of action for our  
nation, but we pray that what is decided  
will be wise and balance health concerns  
with the needs of the economy. Lord have  
mercy.

We pray for our local Hoon Hay and  
Spreydon communities. May there be peace  
and harmony in homes as people spend  
more time with each other. But there are  
also those suffering in unhealthy and even  
violent and abusive families. We pray for  
restraint, peace and hope and a  
supernatural protection of vulnerable  
children. Lord have mercy.

Finally, we pray for the on-going work and  
witness of this church. As we slowly  
emerge from the present crisis may we look  
to you, O God, and know your guidance  
and provision. What we thought were our  
plans for the future will now change. May  
your Holy Spirit give our Parish Council a  
sense of peace, harmony, even joy, as we  
seek new directions.


We pray these things through Jesus Christ  
our Lord, *Amen*

**Song:** 'Great are you Lord'



*A modern worship song of high exaltation.*



**Video:** 'You are not alone'   
*In tough times it's good to remember God is with us. This short video reminds us we are never alone.*

## SCRIPTURE READINGS

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Ecclesiastes 4:9-12



Acts 2:42-47



Ephesians 2:14-22



**Hymn:** 'It is well with my soul' 

*A stunning a capella version of a song we sing often but need to hear – again!*

**Message:** 'Anchored in Christ' Pt 6 – The Fellowship Factor



w/ Teaching Notes



*Time of Quiet*

**Song:** 'Blessed Assurance' 

*The Worship Circle brings us a fabulous version of the classic chorus.  
The full video is 10 minutes but you may want to stop around 5:30.*

## BENEDICTION

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*May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him,  
so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.*

*Amen. - Romans 15:13*

# HAPPY MOTHER'S DAY

## HELPFUL LINKS

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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 9.00 am 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.

Some helpful, local, information is available through the Waihoru/Spreydon-Cashmere [newsletter](#). This is a Christchurch City Council supported initiative.

## PASTOR'S REFLECTION

I was privileged this week to watch an interview with John Lennox, a Professor of Mathematics at Oxford University. John is also a known Christian apologist (one who defends the faith publicly). He has a close connection with Christchurch and visited here after the earthquakes. He was asked what faith can contribute to our understanding of COVID-19. The pandemic, he contends, is like the earthquake in that it is a 'natural evil'. I find that a helpful description because 'natural' implies no individual has caused it, and 'evil' inasmuch as vast numbers of people have been affected and killed worldwide. And here is an important point: often as believers we like to seek and attribute blame for these things quickly searching for an identifiable sin or sinner. It is true sin has affected the creation adversely and 'all creation groans' awaiting redemption (**Romans 8:22**), and there are cosmic causes for every 'natural' event, but we as mere mortals will seldom – if ever – understand these things. And, we can hastily speak of divine judgement too; again without clear evidence. It is true that God executes judgement and it can and has come upon specific places and peoples in Scripture. As New Testament believers, however, Lennox's point was that we should not jump in, judge, or try to second guess God.

He sees COVID-19 as exposing important questions. Citing **Luke 13:1-5**, he explains Jesus was teaching about repentance. It was not that those who had died in a grisly pagan massacre under Pilate had sinned; any more or less than those who died when a tower had fallen on them. Even if a person survives while others perish in an accident or natural event is not a measure of righteousness. Death will come, that's part of being human. Jesus was teaching about the repentance that leads to new life (**John 3:16**). Lennox emphasised our vulnerability and mortality, and COVID-19 has certainly done that on a global scale. This he believes (rightly) leads thinking people to consider issues of eternal value (which presents churches post-COVID with new opportunities). A parallel might be the role of churches and national prayers for deliverance when the British Army had to evacuate the beaches at Dunkirk in 1940. Back then faith had a very real public utility and value and churches were full. And, as we know, God heard those cries for deliverance – even though five further years of war lay ahead.

In his earthly ministry Jesus sometimes healed miraculously; other times he suffered with people, e.g. Mary and Martha who wept over Lazarus. We know that Lazarus was raised but before then Jesus simply wept (**John 11:35**). Deliverance will ultimately come, perhaps not as we would like it in this life, but Jesus suffers with us, and calls us to walk with others showing his grace and mercy.

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

*Michael*

# NOTICES

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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](#).



We are pleased to celebrate the Essential Service provided by the Tooth Fairy this week; she was kept very busy in visiting Joshua Macklin twice, in as many days.

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](#).

**Mother's Day Moderators Message:** In recognition of Mother's Day, please follow this [link](#) to find some special words from Right Rev. Kaio reflecting on Motherhood and the Mums in our lives.

LIFE DOESN'T  
COME WITH A  
MANUAL

IT COMES WITH A  
**MOTHER**

