

# HOON HAY PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Welcome to our Trinity Sunday Service, the First Sunday after Pentecost 7<sup>th</sup> June 2020

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*To those at home - we look forward to seeing you soon!*

**As we gather:** 'In Christ Alone'



*A violin version of the modern standard*

Kia Ora, Morena, Hello Everyone,

Today is a special day in the life of our parish! For those who can join us, this is our first time together, on-site in 11 weeks (our last service was on 22 March just prior to the COVID-19 lockdown). In that time, like every church, we have had to re-adjust to an entirely new and unforeseen set of circumstances. No other crisis in living memory has had quite the effect the Corona virus pandemic has had on churches. However, I believe we have coped well and tried as best we could, to keep in touch and offer services online. A big thank you to everyone who has phoned, written cards, letters, and emails to keep in touch during our time of isolation.

Writing services and preparing sermons for a 'virtual church' initially felt strange, and there was a lot to come to terms with technology-wise. Shilo and I have refined our presentation techniques over the lockdown and the experience has provided many us with many skills and insights we would not have otherwise had.

Life together will be different to what we were previously used to, and not only because of the Level 2 restrictions and regulations. I have found the COVID experience a useful 'circuit breaker' to think differently about a lot of things, and despite the severe limitations of the lockdown period, I think the aftermath presents us with new potential and opportunities. I have more to say on this in my reflections.

Blessings,

*Michael*

**Video:** 'Of lightsabres and the Holy Spirit' 

*A children's bible story explaining the Pentecost story, part of this weeks All Age Teaching*

It is the Holy Spirit's job to convict,  
God's job to judge and my job to love.

-Billy Graham

## OUR APPROACH TO GOD

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A Canticle of Praise

Glory to you, Lord God of our fathers;  
you are worthy of praise; glory to you.  
Glory to you for the radiance of your holy Name;  
we will praise you and highly exalt you for ever.  
Glory to you in the splendor of your temple;  
on the throne of your majesty, glory to you.  
Glory to you, seated between the Cherubim;  
we will praise you and highly exalt you for ever.  
Glory to you, beholding the depths;  
in the high vault of heaven, glory to you.  
Glory to you, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit;  
we will praise you and highly exalt you for ever.

*Amen.*

**Song:** 'Great is thy faithfulness'



*This favourite seems very appropriate as we join again to celebrate God's goodness*

**Psalm 8 (NIV) For the director of music. A psalm of David**



**Song:** 'Ancient Words'



*As we listen, let us meditate on Jeremiah 6:16:  
"This is what the LORD says: "Stand at the  
crossroads and look; ask for the ancient paths,  
ask where the good way is, and walk in it, and  
you will find rest for your souls.""*

## PRAYER OF CONFESSION

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Merciful and gracious God,

As we take stock of our lives in the light of your glory, we realise we fall short; our sins are too heavy to carry, too real to hide, and too deep to undo.

Forgive what our lips tremble to name, what our hearts can no longer bear.

Forgive our sins of neglect; those times we failed to act when we know we should have.

Set us free from a past that we cannot change; open to us a future in which we can be changed, and grant us grace to grow more in your likeness and image, by the power of the Holy Spirit, and through your Son, our saviour, Jesus Christ, the light of the world.

**Amen.**

**Hymn:** 'O, That Will Be'



*An acapella version of a lovely hymn.*

# OUR PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

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*Heavenly Father,*

We bow before you in reverence of who you are: the creator and sustainer of all life. Your constant love reaches to the heavens; your faithfulness extends to the skies. Your righteousness is towering like the mountains; your justice is like the depths of the sea.

We bring before your Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, our Great High Priest, and sole mediator, prayers for your world, the nations, our own land; our community, our parish, and ourselves.

We pray today

for calm in the United States...

for those suffering from the corona virus...

for those places in the world where oppression is the norm...

for Christians in these lands...

for our own government and all members of parliament...

for the many folk in our own church community who are shut-in, lonely, struggling, in pain, or facing uncertain days ahead...

We commend these people to your mercy, O God. Hear our prayer.

We bring these and all other needs before you, and we pray in the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord, Saviour and soon-returning King; the One who will right every wrong, restore what is broken, and bring us and all the saints through the ages, into restored and re-created life, in a world without end.

*Amen*

## SCRIPTURE READINGS

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### Old Testament

Judges 6: 14-35 (NIV)



### New Testament


John 14: 15-31 (NIV)



**Message:** 'And the Spirit of the Lord Came Upon Them'



*Time of Quiet*

**Doxology:** 'Praise God from whom all blessings flow' 

*The Anthem Lights take us into the week in high praise!*

## BENEDICTION

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*2 Corinthians 13:14*

**Kia tau ki a tātou katoa**

**Te atawhai o tō tātou Ariki, a Ihu Karaiti**

**Me te aroha o te Atua**

**Me te whiwhingatahitanga**

**Ki te wairua tapu**

**Ake, ake, ake.**

*Amine*

And now may the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with us all.

*Amen*



# NOTICES

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If you are joining us at home, we will continue to offer online services for the foreseeable future. We endeavour to ensure that you are able to worship at home as easily as you would be able to in church.

Please continue to keep informed and connected by checking our [website](#), and on [Facebook](#). 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 are able to recap earlier messages on our YouTube [Channel](#).

Please let the office know if you are celebrating a milestone or significant event. We want to share these with the church community.

Anne Edgar coordinate specific prayer points for each week and email them out. Please let her know if you have specific prayer requests.

A very big thank you to all who have continued with their tithes and offerings during the lockdown period. Please pray for our finances and if you need help with internet banking contact Shilo via the [office email](#). Our account number is Westpac 03-1594-0262669-00.

## HELPFUL LINKS

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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.

# SUMMARY OF KEY POINTS

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## 'And the Spirit of the Lord Came Upon Them'

Last week Allan brought us a Pentecost Sunday message, and today we look further at the person and work of the Holy Spirit.

Although as limited, finite beings we are denied a full understanding of the Holy Spirit, we can and must understand God is Triune (Father, Son, and Holy Spirit), and all of God is involved in all of what God does. The Holy Spirit is the third member of the eternal, Triune Godhead (NB. 'third' not in a numerical/hierarchical sense, but relationally). The Spirit is of one essence with the Father and the Son. The Holy Spirit gives glory to the Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. He brings the presence and power of Christ into our everyday experience as comforter, advocate and counsellor.

The Holy Spirit was involved in creation and all through the Old Testament. At times, the Spirit came upon various individuals, e.g. Gideon (Judges 6) who was empowered to rise and defeat the Midianites. The Spirit came upon Jesus at his baptism (John 1:29-33), and note that the Spirit remained on him (v.32). Jesus received, bore, promised and sent the Spirit (John 14); first to the disciples, and later at Pentecost (Acts 2) on all believers, Jew and Gentile. The Spirit indwells every believer, but we need to 'keep in step with the Spirit' (Galatians 5:25). This implies the Spirit's work in us requires an on-going openness to his guidance.

There are several metaphors to describe the Spirit's work in Scripture: water, fire, oil, the dove, wind, dew, etc. These are useful but not fully adequate.

We cannot live the Christian life without the Holy Spirit. There is no Church without the Holy Spirit, no life, love, joy, or hope.

### **Questions to ponder**

1. Why is describing the Holy Spirit as an 'impersonal force' so wrong?
2. Recall a time when you understood a profound spiritual insight. How would you describe the role and ministry of the Holy Spirit in this?

## PASTOR'S REFLECTION

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The lockdown has taught us many things. It was so sudden and comprehensive that it forced us all to do things differently. Everyday things like shopping became an exercise requiring almost military planning and precision, and the queues at the door resembled food shortages in an Eastern bloc nation during the Soviet era. However, I loved the peace and quiet – very few cars, quiet streets, and no planes. This atmosphere seemed to be enhanced by the still, sunny days of autumn. That 'window' between about 10:30 a.m. and 3:30 p.m. on such days, when it was sunny and warm, highlighted the stunning colour of the trees, and even the lengthening shadows were accentuated in the quiet. Like many others I realised how noisy and frenetic so-called 'normal' life was prior to the lockdown.

Being back together again is one of those possibly taken-for-granted activities that takes on a new meaning and purpose. The gathered people of God, the Church (*ekklesia*) is more than a Probus or Sunday Rotary club; it is divinely appointed to bring the gospel of Jesus Christ to the nations and make disciples to fulfil the Great Commission (Matthew 18). Defeating – or at least, containing – the virus is one thing; what our society will look like going forward, is another. It is not scaremongering to predict massive social and economic dislocation in the wake of COVID-19. Some pundits suggest a financial downturn much greater than the GFC (Global Financial Crisis) of 2008, and the likes of which we have not seen since the far-off days of the Great Depression in the 1930s. Already there have been significant layoffs and whole sectors of the economy are struggling. Travel and tourism, for example, may not recover for many years. And we are yet to see the knock-on effects in mental health, housing issues, and poverty, etc.

As has always been the case, Scripture locates the people of God right in the centre of worldly problems: wars, famines, droughts, etc. Israel was to be a light to the nations (Isaiah 49:6), and the early Christians had to contend with the challenges of living under oppressive Roman rule. Here at Hoon Hay, I believe we need to respond to the needs of our community with wisdom, compassion, and a deep desire to bring the love of God in fresh ways. I have been reflecting and praying about this and I invite you to as well. An interesting and possibly revealing exercise would be to place a compass on a map of our area with the centre being on our site and the arm set to represent a 5km radius (10 km area overall), and we then pray earnestly on how we could bless people in the identified area. I wonder what God would show us? Either way, we do need together to discern new ways of being God's people together (in our services), and, reaching out to our community. All the good activities need to resume and continue, but what an opportunity post-COVID to reconnect with our community!

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