



# HOON HAY Presbyterian CHURCH

5 Downing Street, Hoon Hay, Christchurch  
Phone: (03) 338 8901

enquiries@hoonhaychurch.co.nz  
www.hoonhaychurch.co.nz

Today's service is led by: Michael Reid



'Joy comes to us in moments – ordinary moments. We risk missing out on joy when we get too busy chasing down extraordinary moments.' Brené Brown (1965 - )

## Mission Statement

To love and serve the Lord Jesus in the Hoon Hay Community  
Worshiping God as a family  
Offering opportunities to grow in faith  
Sharing God's love with people in our community and beyond

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VACCINE PASS REQUIRED FOR ATTENDANCE TODAY

# ORDER OF SERVICE

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Welcome and Opening Prayer

Notices and Celebrations

Singing: 'God gives us a future'

Dedication of Offering

RESPONSIVE READING:

Psalm 136: 1-16  
(NIV)

<sup>1</sup> Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good.

His love endures forever.

<sup>2</sup> Give thanks to the God of gods.

His love endures forever.

<sup>3</sup> Give thanks to the Lord of lords:

His love endures forever.

<sup>4</sup> to him who alone does great wonders,

*His love endures forever.*

<sup>5</sup> who by his understanding made the heavens,

*His love endures forever.*

<sup>6</sup> who spread out the earth upon the waters,

*His love endures forever.*

<sup>7</sup> who made the great lights—

*His love endures forever.*

<sup>8</sup> the sun to govern the day,

*His love endures forever.*

<sup>9</sup> the moon and stars to govern the night;

*His love endures forever.*

<sup>10</sup> to him who struck down the firstborn of Egypt

*His love endures forever.*

<sup>11</sup> and brought Israel out from among them

*His love endures forever.*

<sup>12</sup> with a mighty hand and outstretched arm;

*His love endures forever.*

<sup>13</sup> to him who divided the Red Sea asunder

*His love endures forever.*

<sup>14</sup> and brought Israel through the midst of it,

*His love endures forever.*

<sup>15</sup> but swept Pharaoh and his army into the Red Sea;

*His love endures forever.*

<sup>16</sup> to him who led his people through the wilderness;

*His love endures forever*

And we pray together the prayer Jesus taught his disciples...

## THE LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father in heaven,  
hallowed be your name,  
your kingdom come,  
your will be done,  
on earth as in heaven.

Give us today our daily bread.

Forgive us our sins  
as we forgive those who sin against us.

Save us from the time of trial  
and deliver us from evil.

For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours  
now and for ever. Amen.

## SCRIPTURE READINGS

Old Testament	Ruth 3 (NIV)
New Testament	Mark 11: 12-14 (NIV)
Epistle	Romans 12: 1-3 (Msg)

## Intercessory Prayer

**Reflection:** 'Celebrating the Ordinary'

**Singing:** 'In Christ Alone

May the Lord, mighty God  
Bless and Keep you forever.  
Grant you peace, perfect peace  
Courage in every endeavour.

## BENEDICTION

*(Tune: Edelweiss)*

Lift up your eyes and seek His face  
And His grace forever,  
May the Lord, Mighty God  
Bless and keep you forever.

Amen

## WHAT IS GOD SAYING TO YOU IN TODAY'S MESSAGE?

# READINGS

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## Ruth 3 (NIV)

<sup>1</sup> One day Ruth's mother-in-law Naomi said to her, "My daughter, I must find a home for you, where you will be well provided for. <sup>2</sup> Now Boaz, with whose women you have worked, is a relative of ours. Tonight he will be winnowing barley on the threshing floor. <sup>3</sup> Wash, put on perfume, and get dressed in your best clothes. Then go down to the threshing floor, but don't let him know you are there until he has finished eating and drinking. <sup>4</sup> When he lies down, note the place where he is lying. Then go and uncover his feet and lie down. He will tell you what to do."

<sup>5</sup> "I will do whatever you say," Ruth answered. <sup>6</sup> So she went down to the threshing floor and did everything her mother-in-law told her to do.

<sup>7</sup> When Boaz had finished eating and drinking and was in good spirits, he went over to lie down at the far end of the grain pile. Ruth approached quietly, uncovered his feet and lay down. <sup>8</sup> In the middle of the night something startled the man; he turned—and there was a woman lying at his feet!

<sup>9</sup> "Who are you?" he asked.

"I am your servant Ruth," she said. "Spread the corner of your garment over me, since you are a guardian-redeemer of our family."

<sup>10</sup> "The LORD bless you, my daughter," he replied. "This kindness is greater than that which you showed earlier: You have not run after the younger men, whether rich or poor. <sup>11</sup> And now, my daughter, don't be afraid. I will do for you all you ask. All the people of my town know that you are a woman of noble character. <sup>12</sup> Although it is true that I am a guardian-redeemer of our family, there is another who is more closely related than I. <sup>13</sup> Stay here for the night, and in the morning if he wants to do his duty as your guardian-redeemer, good; let him redeem you. But if he is not willing, as surely as the LORD lives I will do it. Lie here until morning."

<sup>14</sup> So she lay at his feet until morning, but got up before anyone could be recognized; and he said, "No one must know that a woman came to the threshing floor."

<sup>15</sup> He also said, "Bring me the shawl you are wearing and hold it out." When she did so, he poured into it six measures of barley and placed the bundle on her. Then he went back to town.

<sup>16</sup> When Ruth came to her mother-in-law, Naomi asked, "How did it go, my daughter?" Then she told her everything Boaz had done for her <sup>17</sup> and added, "He gave me these six measures of barley, saying, 'Don't go back to your mother-in-law empty-handed.'"

<sup>18</sup> Then Naomi said, "Wait, my daughter, until you find out what happens. For the man will not rest until the matter is settled today."

## Mark 11:12-14

### *Jesus Curses a Fig Tree and Clears the Temple Courts*

<sup>12</sup> The next day as they were leaving Bethany, Jesus was hungry. <sup>13</sup> Seeing in the distance a fig tree in leaf, he went to find out if it had any fruit. When he reached it, he found nothing but leaves, because it was not the season for figs. <sup>14</sup> Then he said to the tree, "May no one ever eat fruit from you again." And his disciples heard him say it.

## Romans 12:1-2 (Msg)

<sup>1-2</sup> So here's what I want you to do, God helping you: Take your everyday, ordinary life—your sleeping, eating, going-to-work, and walking-around life—and place it before God as an offering. Embracing what God does for you is the best thing you can do for him. Don't become so well-adjusted to your culture that you fit into it without even thinking. Instead, fix your attention on God. You'll be changed from the inside out. Readily recognise what he wants from you, and quickly respond to it. Unlike the culture around you, always dragging you down to its level of immaturity, God brings the best out of you, develops well-formed maturity in you.

<sup>3</sup> I'm speaking to you out of deep gratitude for all that God has given me, and especially as I have responsibilities in relation to you. Living then, as every one of you does, in pure grace, it's important that you not misinterpret yourselves as people who are bringing this goodness to God. No, God brings it all to you. The only accurate way to understand ourselves is by what God is and by what he does for us, not by what we are and what we do for him.





# TEACHING NOTES

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Being near the start of the year and when most of us are re-establishing normal routines and rhythms, I thought it worthwhile to reflect on the spiritual importance of ordinary days. We are conditioned to hang out for special days and occasions; not only for their own significance but also to relieve the tedium of so much of the rest of our lives.

As believers it's easy to compartmentalise life into special days and ordinary days; secular and sacred, and so on. Church and church-related activities are 'sacred' and basically everything else, Monday to Saturday, is 'secular'. This is reinforced by the strong belief in a secular society that faith – especially Christian faith – if it is to be tolerated at all, is a private matter. Well, faith may be personal but it's never private. All of our lives are to be yielded (consecrated) to Christ and brought under his lordship. The plight of the Israelites in the Old Testament was often lived in a secular-sacred dichotomy whereby the protocols of worship were superficially observed but God's people often behaved like the people of pagan nations when not at the temple. This is idolatry and invariably had disastrous consequences. This hypocrisy provoked the wrath of God and judgement, as we see in the historical and prophetic books (Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Amos most readily come to mind).

The challenge in today's message is to commit/re-commit our entire lives to the lordship of Christ. This is the path of true spiritual growth and maturity. In Christ coming to earth God has done everything possible to identify with our fallen humanity; but we have a part to play too, in responding with all our being (Luke 10:27). There is no room for half-heartedness or compromise. Christ is either Lord of all, or he's not Lord at all. So-called everyday life is never ordinary in God's economy; even routine and boredom can be a test of character through which we are being prepared for something significant in the kingdom. I believe the secular-sacred and Chronos (ordinary) and Kairos (special) times are actually more connected than our compartmentalised worldly way of thinking would lead us to believe.

Two of our biblical passages demonstrate how God breaks through in ordinary days and situations to do something extraordinary. The story of Ruth is one example. It is set in the time of the Judges; a very dark period in Israel's history. But here is a faithful non-Israelite woman who had lost everything but adopted the faith of her mother-in-law (Naomi), and through her faithfulness in very ordinary and rather menial service Ruth not only found a new husband, but was blessed, restored – and used by God in the genealogy of Jesus. Ordinary days matter! Being faithful in little things is part of what God is doing through us to work out His plans. The second passage from Mark 11 is the short teaching on the cursed fig tree. Our focus today is on a seemingly insignificant aspect of the story: *it was just an ordinary day* and Jesus was walking with the disciples from Bethany to Jerusalem when he performed an unusual miracle; one of destruction (of the fig tree). This was symbolic of Israel which appeared to be fruitful but was actually ripe for judgement.

The third passage (Romans 12:1-2) is different because it implores us to live consecrated lives (true worship). This is maximised Christian living because when all of our being is yielded to God a renewed mind results and we get an entire new and godly perspective on everything and can truly celebrate the ordinary!

# PASTOR'S REFLECTION

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Today is Waitangi Day; a day to reflect upon the signing of the Treaty of Waitangi and what many consider to be the birth of our nation. Whatever one's views on the Treaty – and it remains a contentious issue – 6 February 1840 is certainly a significant date in our history. For most people, Waitangi Day is a holiday (now 'Monday-ised' if it occurs at a weekend) but it is also an opportune time to consider nationhood, the Treaty, and what it means to be a citizen.

The nation state in Europe came relatively late; after the Congress of Vienna in 1814-15. The objective was to provide a long-term peace plan by settling critical issues arising from the French Revolution and the Napoleonic Wars. The goal was not simply to restore old boundaries but resize the main powers so they would balance each other and remain at peace. Even so, there was widespread revolution in 1848, and war between France and Germany (Prussia) in the early 1870s.

Nation states have borders (obviously so if they are an island or islands) but either way, there are defined boundaries, citizens who live within the rule of law, usually share a common language(s), and agreed values. The first task of any responsible democratic government in a modern nation state is to protect its citizens from an aggressor. Failure to do this means ordinary life, including commerce, work, and freedoms are in jeopardy. These aspects which in our nation are easily taken for granted, have not simply occurred. They are the product of a long constitutional history. If, for example, we look at an historical map of central Europe in say, the 15<sup>th</sup> century (and I have one at hand as I write), it is a blur of different colours and boundaries; each with its own feudal government. This is why castles helped define medieval times as each little fiefdom needed fortified protection. And as we know, warding off an aggressor meant military conflict and often great bloodshed (despite the chivalry).

Nationhood is a disputed concept among historians but it's still a very important one for the person on the street to try and grasp. We need only look around the world and see nations in turmoil and civil war, where corruption flourishes and ordinary citizens live daily in fear of violence, torture, and death. Our own history is far from perfect (we know that) but as believers we are called to pray for our leaders in all areas *and be thankful*. Our national anthem begins 'God of Nations' which is a biblical concept: through Christ it is possible for all people ('Jew and Gentile') to be part of God's Family. Originally of course, divine favour rested on only one people group (the Israelites) but the plan all along (Genesis 12) was for every people group to be included.

So today, we can (and should) reflect on and give thanks for the blessings of our nationhood. Yes, there are many, many problems past and present (including COVID-19) but let's remember that the God of nations is with us and will not forsake us. Destiny is in His hands alone (Psalm 33:10).

Blessings for a good week,

Michael