

**Presbyterian Church of Aotearoa  
New Zealand**

**ST NINIAN'S PARISH NEWS**

**JULY 2024**



**'Woven Together' - artwork created by St Ninian's congregation**

This magazine was delivered by:

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## **Interim Moderator of St Ninian's Resignation**

### **Rev Hugh Perry 2<sup>nd</sup> July 2024**

On the 29th June 2024 I received a letter from Rev Martin Stewart the Executive Officer of the Alpine Presbytery, acknowledging my resignation as Interim Moderator of St Ninians and advising that the Presbytery Council has approved Rev Stephanie Wells as my replacement. The letter also acknowledged that I had asked that the Ministry Settlement Board (MSB) ceases to operate and asked me to thank the members for their service, which I have done.

We came very close to reaching a settlement but unfortunately had to face the reality that, with the rationalization of our site and the building alterations that involved, we could not even guarantee a third stipend. So as this reality brought us to the conclusion that we were in fact not looking for a minister at this stage, there seemed little reason to have a MSB at this time. A new MSB can always be appointed in the future when and if circumstances change.

I can't remember when I was appointed as Interim moderator, but I do remember thinking that it was a privilege, and nothing has made me feel otherwise. Nevertheless, I feel that I have served as Interim Moderator quite long enough and given whatever I may have had to give. It is time for someone new to provide the link to the Presbytery and the wider church that is so much what it means to be Presbyterian. I have every confidence that Rev Stephanie Wells will provide the connection and vision that will lead St Ninian's towards the parish it will become.

The people of St Ninian's are a great congregation, and the office holders carry out their task with dignity and commitment. I have enjoyed being part of this parish with its strong liberal tradition and a unique position in the city and I have agreed to stay on the preaching roster for the second Sunday of the month at this stage.

In stepping down as Interim Moderator I wish the parish all the best in its journey to the future God calls it to.

I ask everyone to remember the words from Fred Pratt Green about the call of St Ninian:

*The facts and mysteries of faith that drove St Ninian on  
Sustain us still, in heart and will.*

### **What's Been Happening?**

Recent Deaths: We have expressed sympathy to Audrey Bush and Evelyn Weir following deaths of a sibling and to Patricia Crumpton following the death of her brother in law, Laurie Richards.

Max Horne, husband of Barbara Horne, died recently. Max had been in poor health for some time and had moved into care at the Ilam Homestead. Our deepest sympathy is extended to Barbara and her daughters Fiona and Meredith.

Interim Moderator: Rev Hugh Perry has resigned as our Interim Moderator, a position he has held since August 2019, after Rev Yvonne Smith departed. We are extremely grateful for the time and leadership Hugh has given freely and once we have the use of the brick lounges again I am sure we will want to hold an occasion to thank him as a congregation. He will continue to lead worship on a monthly basis.

Presbytery has appointed Rev Stephanie Wells as our incoming Interim Moderator.

Worship Roster: Rev Chris Elliot has prepared the worship roster through to the end of the year. Worship leaders are asked to arrange a swap if they are unable to lead for some reason.

Thanks to Rev Don Reekie, Rev Brian Turner, and Rev Dr Geoff King who have led worship recently.

Pastoral Care: Rev Chris Elliot has indicated that she is withdrawing from Pastoral visiting. The feeling is that elders are managing pastoral care and will approach a minister if the need arises. We are

grateful and extend our thanks to Chris for the care and support she has offered our people over the years.

### Insurance:

There is a change in the way the Church Property Trustees are looking at Insurance. In the past they required us to take the maximum insurance that we could. But now they are recognising that the burden on parishes to cover the cost of this is becoming unbearable. Now they are encouraging Parishes to look at individual circumstances when considering what insurance is required. Existing Office & Hall – currently insured for demolition only. Contents of Church including Organ – at present insured for \$482,706. Most of this is for the organ which is valued at over \$300,000. We need to reassess the value of the organ, would it be replaced if anything happened to it. For the contents inside the church– pews, chairs, keyboard, communion table and chairs, communion supplies – we will be looking at indemnity not replacement value.

Church Building - was thought that we wouldn't replace it if anything happened to it. Insure for Indemnity value only.

Brick Lounges – would we replace this building if something happened or do something different?

### Organ repair, maintenance:

We have received a quote for \$30,000 to repair and clean the organ. This is a fair assessment of the work that needs to be done. We need to defer this cost at this point. There was a discussion as to whether we would replace the organ if it was damaged or destroyed. If we are not going to restore the organ, should we insure it?

### Parish Council Meeting:

A meeting is due on 14<sup>th</sup> July. However, as Rev Stephanie Wells is going to chair it we will move it to the 28<sup>th</sup> July.

### Movie Nights:

These will not be held until the lounges are back in use.

### A leaking roof:

It was a catastrophe when the hall roof started leaking again. Some of the new gib board that Ian Fryer and Lance McKeachie put up last year, suddenly collapsed again under the weight of the water. So began the mopping of the floor again. Recently Richard Syme and Lance got up on the flat roof and found 6 tiles had fallen out, a row of 5 tiles had slipped left, and 1 tile up higher had slipped down. Using long poles they were able to reposition the tiles. Hopefully the roof will be weather tight for a big longer and the floor will dry out.



### Use of Buildings:

How exciting!

Work has finally begun on the Brick lounges building. The building company is Consortium, the same group that worked on the church. The existing kitchen is being removed and that area will be remodeled. An accessible toilet is being installed at the back near the big window. A large storeroom will occupy half the front of the remaining area. New flooring will be laid in the toilet and entry area and in front of the kitchenettes.

In each lounge a kitchenette containing a bench and sink, zip and microwave will run along the walls where the doors through to the kitchen were. The stove will be reused in the Riccarton Lounge. We will still use the existing trolleys holding the cups and mugs.



The corners of each room need to be strengthened to bring them up to earthquake safety code. A new switchboard will be installed and an oven hood to meet regulations. There will be a total repaint inside and at a later date we will renew the carpet.

In the meantime, as you will have discovered, Deb has relocated into the smaller office, once used by the minister. The main office has been cleared (mostly) of large furniture and will be used as a mini lounge for morning teas

and Thursday coffee morning (Muffins).

The other groups who use our buildings - AA, Korean New Hope Church, Let Your Light Shine Community Church, and Kingdom Living Ministries, Drs support group, and Inner Wheel will also use the mini lounge, church, or the hall, and the main kitchen. We will need to show some flexibility and tolerance. We are told the work will take 4- 5 weeks.

We have a new worship group, Let Your Light Shine Community Church, who have begun using the church for worship on Sunday afternoons from 3-5pm, and on Friday evenings in the hall from 5-7pm. They are a group of Tongan families who have been meeting in their homes and now wish to use a church. We welcome them and wish them well.

It is great to see our beautiful restored church being valued by other communities.

### **Emergency Evacuation:**

Soon we will have another fire safety evacuation practice so please read through these instructions so that you can exit quickly and safely.

Did you read in the paper recently about a church in Heathcote that had a fire during Sunday worship and had to evacuate?

### **Fire or Emergency Evacuation Plan for St Ninian's Church.**

- Duty Clerk will announce the need for evacuation.
- Door Duty people will check the egress safety from the main exterior doors, signal to the clerk, and hook open the interior doors.
- Minister will check the door by the organ and in the vestry for safety. (pick up the offering plates on the way out!)
- People will exit, in an orderly manner, beginning from the back seats, through the double inside doors, exiting to the right or left.
- People in the front rows will begin exiting through the side front door by the organ, and through the vestry.
- People using walkers exit via the doors that have a ramp.
- If either the front or rear exits are unsafe for use, all exiting will be via the safest exit as directed by the duty clerk.
- Once outside, the church people are warned to be aware of possible falling tiles from the church and the hall.
- People are to assemble on the Puriri St footpath.
- The clerk and the minister will check that all people are out before exiting the church.
- Door duty people will provide assistance to people where necessary.

## Matariki Celebration

St Ninians folks gathered to share a meal last Wednesday. Mid-winter in NZ is not Christmas but the weather invites a celebration, so we had a "But it's not Christmas "gathering. However, our gathering coincided with Matariki.

In the spirit of Matariki we honored the past, remembered St Ninians history, our forebears who established this church and we remembered parishioners who have died recently. In reflecting on the past year, we have had our church restored and now look ahead to the upgraded brick lounges and future opportunities of sharing together and with our wider community.

Suggested ways of celebrating Matariki are to share kai, tell stories, and give thanks for the bounties enjoyed. That is what happened last Wednesday evening thanks to those who generously provided food and entertainment.

A Matariki celebration is a perfect occasion for St Ninians whanau. It could be a permanent date on our calendar.





## The Weaver

by Benjamin Malacia Franklin

*My life is but a weaving  
Between my Lord and me;  
I cannot choose the colours  
He weaves so steadily.*

*Oft times he weaveth sorrow  
And I, in foolish pride,  
Forget He sees the upper,  
And I the underside.*

*Not till the loom is silent  
And the shuttles cease to fly,  
will God roll back the canvas  
and explain the reason why.*

*The dark threads are as needful  
In the Weaver's skillful hand,  
As the threads of gold and silver  
In the pattern He has planned.*

This poem was our inspiration for the service we led on 23 June. The image of the weaving is the result of our congregation who helped to create an amazing work of art.

Imagine life as a loom. The lengths of string composing the warp are pulled taught, stretched out like so many days, months, and years—a suspended vertical calendar. And making up the weft are threads of varying colour and texture mingling in a sometimes chaotic and sometimes beautiful way. Each thread represents the presence of a life.

In this imagery, each person is both loom and thread. People are woven into the fabric that becomes our own lives and we are woven into theirs.

Jeremiah, often called “the weeping prophet” because of the streams of tears he shed during the tumultuous times in which he delivered messages, also thought of life as a fragile thread. He foresaw impending doom, cautioning the rich and complacent inhabitants of Babylon, saying, you who “dwell by many waters, rich in treasures, your end has come; the thread of your life is cut.”

But even when a thread is cut, it still remains part of the fabric of the lives into which it was woven. You can cut off a life, but the impact it had for good or for ill isn't erased by its ending. The colour and texture of the thread remain part of those into whose lives it was integrated.

Some people weave into our lives like a spring morning, calm and bright. Others hover in us like an overcast steel winter sky heavy with snow clouds. Most people are spun of mottled thread, alternating dark and light shades. Their presence can feel like an unexpected downpour on a summer afternoon, or the rainbow that surprises afterwards. But in the end, the fabric of our lives is enriched by all these shades, the whole range of colours of human experience and relationship. Even difficult experiences and strained relationships lend depth to our identity and character.

Following a brief reflection, we invited everyone present at the service to help to create a weaving that represented our community here at St Ninian's. They were invited to take a selection of fabric strips and talk about what they value about our community. We all come from different places and have had different experiences, but we value our place in this community.

This weaving is a reminder to us that people will continually enter and exit our lives. These encounters shape our perceptions, attitudes, and even our identity. Sometimes, these relationships persist, fostering deep emotional connections that enrich our lives.

Other times, they fade away, leaving us with memories and lessons. In the tapestry of life, relationships are the threads that weave intricate patterns. We forge bonds, experience joy and heartache, and accumulate a treasure trove of experiences. Each connection leaves an indelible mark, contributing to the masterpiece of who we become. As we journey forward, it is essential to embrace the ebb and flow of relationships, cherishing the moments they bring and the wisdom they bestow.

The weaving we created will hang in the church and we invite you to take a closer look at it next time you are in the building. It is a colourful and lively representation of us all.

Hugh & Jane Catto



## **From the Treasurer**

We have finished the year to 30 June in good shape and we want to continue to build on this in what will be a challenging year as our property redevelopment project takes shape. We need to hold this position while costs continue to rise.

Most of our significant cost items will increase by 4 – 6% in the coming year. We have considered our insurance requirements and made some changes in our cover that it is hoped will lessen the effect of what is expected to be a 10% increase in insurance rates.

Our rental income is being maintained with new users but we will lose revenue once the hall is no longer available.

Offerings have declined as we have lost several members. We have decided not to make an appeal for donations this year but appreciate those who choose to do this. It may be necessary to raise additional money to complete the building project but we won't know this until the project is more advanced.

We would encourage all to give through on-line banking. It is much easier for you and for us it helps to keep the records that are necessary to ensure that you get your tax credit. We can help you set this up if you are not sure about this.

We would ask all on the envelope system to consider increasing their giving by 5% for the coming year to keep our parish strong.

Thank you for your support,

Kelvin Chapman,

Treasurer

## The Brick Building – as Remembered



I started going to Sunday School at St Ninian's when I was 6 years and 7 months old. This timing was because my younger brother had turned 4 and was therefore allowed to start. We both started in the Brick Building, which was very new in 1946.

The funding for the building was partly a grant for buildings that accommodated a community group. In this case it was Plunket, which had sole use of what is being transformed from a kitchen into a toilet and storage area. My memory suggests that the rooms were bleak in the early days. I don't remember what the heating was. The Riccarton room was the room for Primer 4 and Std 1 Sunday School, while the 4 and 5 year olds were in the Puriri room. At that time the buildings only just coped with the number of children. Bible Class met before the 11am service, which for me meant 3<sup>rd</sup> form girls in the Riccarton room with Miss (Edna) Westaway as our leader, then 4<sup>th</sup> form girls in the Puriri room with Miss (Mardi) Hunter.

As was common, several of us became Sunday School teachers when we were about 16 or 17. I was again in the Puriri room, with the 4 and 5 year olds, the leader being Peter O'Malley's mother. My corner, with a delightful group of 5yr olds, was the far right corner as you walk in. I moved on to other rooms with older children and junior Girls' Bible Class.

By the time we returned as a family, Plunket had moved out and some improvements had been made to the building. This was still before the days of letting the rooms. The letting gradually became both a financial prop and an important community service.

A major project in the early 1980s was the demolition of the oldest building, the bringing in its place the current office, kitchen and toilet block, and a major renovation of the brick building with new curtains, the current chairs, which have since been recovered, fresh paint, and the little kitchen that has served us and other groups so well over the past 40 or so years. Notable in the kitchen and in the new kitchen serving the hall, were 4 trolleys to hold cups and saucers. The trolleys were designed by Tom Dodd and built by Tom and Kelvin Chapman.

The rooms have been used by many groups, our own and a great range of community groups. One issue has always been the lack of a toilet in the brick building. This lack is being remedied as part of updating and earthquake strengthening the building. I have memories of numerous working bees when we refreshed the rooms with new paint, cleaned windows, scrubbed spots of the carpets, spring cleaned the kitchen etc. We give thanks for those volunteers. As this article is not researched, any reader may have different memories, and that is fine.

Barbara Chapman (Royds)



Strengthening work and improvements have begun.

## **Prayer A Version of the Beatitudes (by a person with disabilities)**

Blessed are you who take the time to listen to difficult speech, for you help us to know if we can persevere we can be understood.

Blessed are you who walk with us in public places and ignore the stares of strangers, for in your companionship we find havens of relaxation.

Blessed are you who never bid us to 'Hurry up' and more blessed you who do not snatch our tasks from our hands to do them for us, for often we need time rather than help.

Blessed are you who stand behind us as we enter new and untried ventures, for our failures will be outweighed by the times when we surprise ourselves and you.

Blessed are you who ask for our help, for our greatest need is to be needed.

Blessed are you who help us with graciousness of Christ, who do not bruise the reed or quench the flax, for often we need the help we cannot ask for.

Blessed are you when by all these things you ensure the thing that makes us individuals is not our particular muscles, nor our wounded nervous system, nor our difficulties in learning, but in the God-given self which no infirmity can confine.

God of mercy and love we **all** have some disability, some are just more obvious than others. We give you our own. We give you those of people we know. We give you those of people **you** know...

**Amine/Amen**

## **St Ninian's Presbyterian Church of Aotearoa New Zealand**

5 Puriri Street, Riccarton, Christchurch 8041

St Ninian's is a Christian community focussed on justice, compassion and inclusiveness, and the exploration of a spirituality relevant to the contemporary world.

[www.stninians.godzone.net.nz](http://www.stninians.godzone.net.nz)

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