

Word and Light

St John's Anglican Parish, Otumoetai



Theme: Friends and Friendship

October 2020

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Themes for Word and Light

The theme for the next edition will be **Christmas** – this could be something about what Christmas means to you or memories of Christmas past.

Photos will be welcome. Please send your contributions to Lynda, the Parish Administrator, or the Vicar, by **7 December**. Remember that, to keep readers' attention, your articles should not be too long.

A theme for our **February** magazine will be **Faith in action**. You can send your contributions any time. We will send another reminder in the New Year.

Vicar's Voice

It is clear from the contributions to this edition of the Magazine that friendship – given and received – is of fundamental importance to us. We probably didn't need a Magazine to tell us that but I have been interested to learn about others' experiences.

The people in our lives are important to us. In so many ways they help to keep us going – in good times and difficult times and all the times in between. I have moved many times in my life, as has John (my husband). We both say that the most difficult aspect of those moves has been leaving people behind. This has been true in our working lives, in the several parishes from which we have moved and in other aspects of our lives, such as volunteering, and also what happens when one moves geographically.

But we make new friends! John and I are grateful for the friendship extended to us by all of you since we have lived here Tauranga. Thank you. We have been blessed too by the opportunities technology gives us to keep up with friends and relatives across the globe.

My longest standing friend is Claire. She and I met as very young children when our fathers were colleagues. After we grew up, and family visits ceased, we lost touch but met at again at her father's retirement party, many years ago now. We were both working in the City of London and so we met for lunch from time to time. After I left London we kept in touch and, although we do not see them often, John and I are still in touch with her and her husband.

My best friend is John. Many years ago, just before one of his birthdays, I saw a cushion in a local shop with the words 'Happiness is being married to your best friend'. I bought it for him. John and I have shared many joys and trials together. He has always been a huge support to me in the ministry I have offered. I know I am blessed to have such a wonderful life-partner.

With every blessing

Sue (Vicar)

Friends

by *Bob Shaw*

The Ethiopian Boeing 767 was diverted from the airport at the capital Addis Ababa to a military airfield fifty kilometres south of the city, where it landed between rows of MIG jet fighters and attack helicopters.

We were bussed to the airport to retrieve our luggage and pass through the formalities. At last, friendless in a mixed crowd, I looked around for someone from the Catholic Secretariat to meet me. Finding no welcoming face, I asked a young woman who had been greeted by an Ethiopian man wearing a shirt embellished with U.S. Catholic Relief Services, if I might have a lift with them into the city. She graciously agreed and after alighting at the CRS compound, her driver delivered me to the steel gate of the Secretariat building, where after banging on the gate I was reluctantly admitted by a sleepy watchman. It was Saturday afternoon and the building was deserted, but the watchman showed me to the visitor accommodation where I found a bed prepared.

Returning to my room from the shower I found an elderly man dressed in clerical attire waiting. He introduced himself as Abba Kidane Mariam, the secretary general of the Ethiopian Catholic Church and bade me welcome to his domain. He was to be my first friend and mentor in this, for me, a strange new land.

The next day was Sunday and I watched the faithful streaming into the adjacent Cathedral with envy, for I had no idea if an uninitiated Church of England professed heretic would be welcome. I wandered out onto the street and managed to purchase a packet of biscuits and a couple of overripe avocados for my Sunday lunch, feeling alone and friendless in an almost deserted city.

On Monday morning the ECS building sprang to life, and I descended to the second floor to meet people who were destined to become close friends and confidants in the years ahead. First, I shook hands with Brother Gregory, who apologized for not meeting me at the airport confessing that he had quite forgotten about my arrival. He in

turn introduced me to Ato Abate Gobachew who was to be my guide and 'minder'.

A 'minder' was an Ethiopian national assigned to prevent foreigners indulging in clandestine activities. Over the following years Ato Abate became a very close friend, helping me in my work and introducing me to his delightful extended family. No longer feeling alone and friendless I accompanied Ato Abate on a tour of the city, meeting Brother Augustine the head of Catholic Relief and Development services and his assistant Ato Werrate, whom I later called 'Ice' because of his addiction to ice-cream. One of the most important introductions that day was to Comrade Sahle the director of the National Seed Distribution Service.

Although he could not be seen to help me directly, he gave much valuable advice. Comrade Sahle and I found that we had much in common concerning our desire to obtain a good education for our children, and we became firm friends. When Sunday came round again, I found my way to St. Matthew's Anglican Church where the resident priests Colin and Charles made me very welcome. Whenever I was in Addis in the future at the weekend, I made my way to St. Matthew's, making friends within the congregation. So within a week I no longer felt alone and friendless.

Together with Ato Abate, and later alone or with other colleagues, I travelled the length and breadth of Ethiopia in my search for seed, tools and oxen to distribute to the peasant farmers made destitute by the drought-induced famine. Wherever I went I made friends, but none were more helpful and supportive than Sister Astrid the controller of finances at ECS. A redoubtable lady from Kanton Appenzella she kept a firm hand on the use of funds provided to ECS for relief and rehabilitation work. Nothing not of direct value got past Sister Astrid, but when the Bishop of Zeway came to me to ask for funds to pay for a church he had built without government approval and no money to pay the workers, she showed compassion and found a French Capuchin fund that saved the unfortunate cleric from incarceration by the communist authorities.

The list of friends I made in the three years I worked in Ethiopia is endless because, everywhere I went, I met people selflessly devoted to humanitarian work, often living under desperately difficult conditions, short of funding and resources. I have managed to keep in contact with many of them over the years, but sadly many like Sister Astrid, who has ended her life in the bosom of her sisters in the convent of Hergiswil in Kanton Luzern are no longer with us. I once asked Father Antonius, who served a church in a remote part of the mountains of Herage, if he felt lonely surrounded only by the indigenous population. He replied certainly not, because he had his friend Jesus ever by his side.

The Gift that keeps on Giving

by Mary Toomer

The older checkout operators get to know you and when I buy for a church function, they always ask what the event is. And so out of that I got to know 'Julie' who one day asked if I knew anyone who could use wool. I replied yes, many, and so 'Julie' came with a rubbish bag of wool and I gave the wool to many who were delighted.

Last week I came home from a Guiding Lights meeting and there were two rubbish bags in the hall. 'Julie' called, Graham told me. We took the bags and emptied the contents on to the lounge floor and wool covered the floor. Then the fun began with bags allocated.



My sister Lesley knits for the neo-natal unit at New Plymouth hospital and she only wants pure wool. So a candle is lit on the kitchen bench and the yarn tested. If it is wool the flame goes out and if it is acrylic it shrivels and burns – I have a burn of honour on my finger to prove it! Into a mail bag goes the wool and posted off to Lesley.

Our daughter, Sandy, has worked at 'Schoolsout' – before and after school care for primary and intermediate children – for a number of years. School holidays are looming and she was looking for suitable activities for the 5 to 14 olds. With wool now available they are having

a 'yarn' day and the children will be able to make things such as wool dolls and octopuses.

Guiding Light friends Jeanette and Margaret knit for the Red Cross – hats, jumpers, socks and blankets so there is a bag for each of them. Dinis, another Guiding Light friend, used to knit 'fish and chip' jumpers. These go to Africa where babies were being sent home from hospital wrapped in newspaper. I will check if she wants wool.

My friend, Valda (I sang in her group Sylvana Singers for 20 years) has knitted over 200 hats for the Seafarers' Mission so Graham and I meet Valda at The Crossing. We hand Valda her share of the wool and she buys us morning tea!!

My friend Alice is not knitting at present but I put some wool aside for her. Nerida knits for Operation Cover Up, blankets and clothes and these go to Eastern Europe so Nerida gets wool too. And there is some put aside for the Op Shop.

I have kitted two hats for Alyssa, one for fun and one to wear to College, a hat for each of my two great-nieces (Alyssa's special cuddie friends) who live in Carterton and I am rewarded with a lovely 'we love you Aunt Mary' phone call and two hats for great niece, Gemma who is in Melbourne at present with acute myeloid leukaemia. Gemma's hats have knitted flowers on instead of pompoms. And I have plenty of wool to keep me going for quite some time!

So 'Julie' came in for afternoon tea and I gave her a card with a list of where the wool has gone or will go and a pot plant on behalf of all the grateful recipients of her great gift of wool.

And one day soon we will have delivered all the wool and the bath which has been used for storage will be empty again and I will soak in a bubble-bath and give thanks for the wonderful gift that keeps on giving.

What is a 'friend'?

by Helen DÁth

Such a simple word, yet it has a complex degree of interpretation. Isn't that so typical of the English language!

Here's a short list for starters: acquaintance, crony, roomy, mate, pal, chum, classmate, family, buddy, soulmate, ally, lover...

Webster's dictionary has it precisely – 'The opposite of an enemy'!

Well, that's easy isn't it!

Seriously, what makes a **friend**? When you are young, it all seems so easy, so natural. Generally young children are more relaxed, enjoy having fun, and are far more acceptable of each other. I mean – who cares if he or she has dirty clothes? Or dirty fingernails for that matter! Children are far less judgemental than adults. If a child is so lucky to go through pre-school and Primary with the same ones, the chances are they may become 'Lifelong friends' – or even 'besties'! However, that's another chapter!

As one ages, one becomes more choosy – to put it bluntly! Why? I believe it's because you have been through the whirlwind of Life, becoming sadly mistrustful, often lacking confidence, with some negative influences from associates and family, your mental and physical health and many other things....

Now – as many of us who are reading this are 'newbies' in Tauranga, you will identify with this. Moving to a new town/area is a challenge in itself isn't it! How on earth do you meet people and 'make friends'?

You need to concentrate on the things in Life that most inspire you, the things you love to be involved with. Then – join a church, a club or meeting. In a city this size, we are lucky to have an abundance of choice! Be involved in some voluntary work – it is so rewarding and can be lots of fun too.

Not many people these days entertain at home – totally different to thirty years ago! But you will still find the majority are outgoing and friendly!

Go out the door feeling positive, sing to yourself and SMILE!

These are MY definitions of a **friend**:

- An acquaintance = someone you've met once or twice ('Do you know Mary Smith?' 'Oh, only vaguely')

- A **classmate** or **workmate** = a friend from the past ('Do you remember Anna Jones?' 'Oh YES, we were great mates at school. We had so much fun together. What happy memories!')
- **Family** = whether it be a parent, a sibling, a grandchild – probably the closest you'll get to a 'real' friend!
- A **soulmate** = the equivalent of a 'bestie'? One of those rare breeds!

I so envy those who can lovingly nominate their spouse as their soulmate! A soulmate is someone on the same wavelength as you – someone you can love and share Life with. It's called 'Togetherness'.

Regarding Lifelong friends and Besties (ie Best Friends!) – you'll be lucky even if you can count them on one hand. Lifelong friends probably come under the same category as a classmate or workmate. A Bestie doesn't always last a lifetime, and from my experience, as we change with age, so do the Besties!!

Still confused!

If you have researched 'a friend' online, there are literally thousands of quotes – I would like to share this outstanding one with you....

**'Friendship means understanding, not agreement.
It means forgiveness, not forgetting.
It means the memories last, even if contact is lost'**

A story of friendship in the Hebrew Bible

by the Vicar

Jesus said to his disciples: 'I have not called you servants, but friends'. Friendship, he says, is at the heart of what it is to be the church of God.

The Book of Ruth in the Hebrew Bible (our Old Testament) is one of the most charming of all the books of the Bible. It tells how Naomi, a Hebrew woman, is bereaved both of her husband and her two sons in the land of Moab where they had gone to live. Naomi decides to return to her homeland in Judah and expects that her daughters in law

will stay behind and remarry in their native Moab. This Orpah does. But Ruth refuses to abandon Naomi.

In one of the most moving speeches of all literature, she 'clings' to Naomi: 'do not press me to leave you, or to turn back from following you! Where you go, I will go; where you lodge, I will lodge; your people shall be my people, and your God my



God. Where you die, I will die: there will I be buried. May the Lord do so to me and more if even death parts me from you!'

While Ruth is gleaning in the field at harvest-time, she meets a member of her husband's extended family, Boaz, who takes her into his home and cares for her. He marries her, not simply doing duty of a kinsman, but out of love. They have a child, Obed. At the end of the book we learn why this is so significant for the history of Israel, for Obed turns out to be the father of Jesse and grandfather of none other than King David himself. So, the story of Ruth, the non-Israelite who found a home among the Hebrews, shows how the great king's roots lie in a friendship between two women and a chance encounter in a Bethlehem barley field.

Consider what this story says about the nature of friendship itself. Naomi is consumed with bitterness at the loss of all the key males in her life. In these circumstances, she has no right to expect anything of a daughter in law. But Ruth is blessed with a generosity, a capacity to love, that triumphs over Naomi's inconsolable pain and grief. Ruth pledges to stay with Naomi for the rest of her life. That is a profoundly moving story of human intimacy, for it entails a lifelong commitment to an older woman of her father's generation, not her own. It also breaks through the constraints of roles within the family into something that is marked not so much by duty as by a truly humane joy. What drives Ruth is not that she owes anything to her mother-in-law: Naomi has already released her from that debt. It is purely her love for her as a fellow woman and as a human being.

The second theme is how friendship rises above the differences between the women. It's not only their ages. What makes the story so remarkable is that while Naomi is a Hebrew of the chosen race, Ruth is a foreigner, a detested Moabite whose long history of antagonism towards the Hebrews was sharply etched on the memory of every Israelite. This friendship crosses the forbidden boundaries of both race and religion.

How friendship transcends difference is a key issue in our modern world. In many cultures, people pay a high price for befriending those of another race or faith tradition, so entrenched is our world in ever more dangerous tribalism. It's a wonderful thing when people recognise that they love each other despite, or even because of, their differences. Embracing difference is necessary if we are going to live together, but it is always enriching too, because it is how we build wholesome communities.



Friends and Friendship

by Jenepher Hensman

I arrived in New Zealand in September 2002 from Zimbabwe to live near to my daughter, her husband and two little granddaughters. I was very excited but at the same time rather apprehensive at leaving my lifelong friends and coming to Tauranga only knowing my family. After I had settled in, my daughter took me to the 8am communion service at St John's Church Otumoetai and I would attend whenever suitable for the family.

The late Lois Foster from the St John's caring group kindly came to visit me one morning and to see whether I was settling in well and when she heard that I was attending the 8 am service she offered to introduce me to the 10am service where I could meet members of the congregation in the lounge for a cup of tea after the service. Well, this was the beginning of a wonderful time in my life when I was welcomed and introduced to the most amazing, interesting, kind and clever people and who became such wonderful friends of mine. Quite a number of parishioners had visited (Rhodesia) Zimbabwe with the All

Blacks and one or two said that their visit to the Victoria Falls on the Zambezi River and to wild Games Parks nearby, were very special and so exciting for them.

I joined the AAW which was so interesting with strong devotions and incredible speakers and there is such wonderful comradeship between all members of the group.

Lois Foster introduced me to the Op Shop which was operating in the building now used by the Toy Library. I met such lovely ladies and there were some very amusing times when I was introduced to the lovely fun-loving and caring ways of the people of New Zealand.

At about the same time as I was settling in to my new way of life, Mary Toomer and Chris Park started a new group called Friends and Fellowship and which would meet in the afternoon once a month in the lounge for a time of fun, games and friendship. This group attracted 30 to 40 members every month and quite a few ladies brought their husbands to join in with the happiness and comradeship. Jams, baking, vegetables, fruit, books and magazines were brought to the meeting for sharing and a good time was had by all!

My life at St John's was very full and satisfying and I became involved in taking communion to many parishioners in the Otumoetai area who were unable to attend church and once again I met and was privileged to talk with some amazing people. When the procedure of taking communion to homes was changed, I concentrated on helping with the Wednesday and Sunday services.

I have attended St John's Church regularly since I arrived in New Zealand and have always found it a happy and encouraging place to worship with such lovely friends.

Then COVID 19 struck and we were in Lockdown 4 which was a bit frightening and worrying at how I would cope on my own? I didn't need to worry because my darling daughter was wonderful and she did my grocery shopping for me and every Monday evening she would bring me a plateful of their weekly roast for my dinner. She also would come some afternoons and take me for a walk in our bush area. I got myself organised and started sorting out 18 years of bank statements,

invoices and letters etc. I managed to shred all these on my small shredder and filled my rubbish bin to the top with all the shredded paper. I cleared out cupboards and drawers and managed to collect up quite a bit of “Stuff” for the Op Shop.

But with all this business there was a huge gap in my life and that was the lack of Church and any contact with my lovely friends at St John’s Church. Then my loneliness was answered when the Rev’d Sue introduced me to Church through Zoom every Sunday. What a blessing this was and I was so excited when I successfully switched on to Zoom on the first Sunday and there they were – the two Sues on my computer screen – and slowly other parishioners were appearing and we could wave at each other. The church service was wonderful and it included gorgeous music and singing. Then we were switched back together again and were able to chat with each other for a few minutes. On one day I counted 42 people on the Zoom Church service and we were all back in touch with each other again – praise the Lord. Amen.



New Friends made at Oasis

by Brenda Harrison

Our Oasis Op Shop has always been about more than just selling and receiving items and I was delighted to witness this in action recently. I was serving on the till when a regular customer approached me with a number of items she wanted to buy, one of which was a plant that she didn’t know the name of. As I didn’t know what it was either another customer approached and told her what it was. However, it didn’t end there as they discovered that they had lots of things in common including baking bread regularly etc. They were talking so animatedly that I left them to it and served other customers while they chatted alongside. It ended with them exchanging phone numbers and arranging a date to visit each other’s homes. The whole episode left me with a good feeling that not only were we selling and receiving goods we were a place where people could catch up with each other and meet new people too.

Anam Cara

by the Vicar

In the Celtic tradition there is a beautiful understanding of love and friendship. One of the ideas here is the idea of soul love; the old Gaelic term for this is *anam cara*. *Anam* is the Gaelic word for soul and *cara* is the word for friend. So *anam cara* in the Celtic world was the soul friend.



In the early Celtic Church, a person who acted as a teacher, companion or spiritual guide was called an *anam cara* and was originally someone to whom you confessed, revealing the hidden intimacies of your life. With the *anam cara*, you could share your innermost self, your mind and your heart. This friendship was an act of recognition and belonging. You were joined in an ancient and eternal way with the 'friend of your soul'.

The Celtic understanding did not set limitations of space or time on the soul. The soul is a divine light that flows into you and into your Other. This art of belonging awakened and fostered a deep and special companionship.

In everyone's life, there is great need for an *anam cara*, a soul friend. In this love, you are understood as you are without mask or pretension. The superficial and functional lies and half-truths of acquaintance fall away. You can be as you really are. Love allows understanding to dawn, and understanding is precious. Where you are understood, you are at home. Understanding nourishes belonging. When you really feel understood, you feel free to release yourself into the trust and shelter of the other person's soul.

This recognition is described in the beautiful line from Pablo Neruda, the Chilean poet-diplomat and politician: 'You are like nobody since I love you.' This art of love discloses the special and sacred identity of the other person. Love is the only light that can truly read the secret signature of the other person's individuality and soul. Love alone is literate in the world of origin; it can decipher identity and destiny.

The *anam cara* is God's gift. Friendship is the nature of God. The Christian concept of God as Trinity is the most sublime articulation of Otherness and intimacy, an eternal interflow of friendship. This perspective discloses the beautiful fulfilment of our immortal longings in the words of Jesus who said: 'I call you friends.'

Jesus as the Son of God is the secret *anam cara* of every individual. In friendship with him we enter the tender beauty and affection of the Trinity. In the embrace of this eternal friendship, we dare to be free. There is a beautiful Trinitarian motif running through Celtic spirituality. Love is the threshold where divine and human presence ebb and flow into each other.

Reference: *Anam Cara: Spiritual Wisdom from the Celtic World* by John O'Donohue

Friendship and Music

by Rev'd Sue Genner

Growing up in the 60s and 70s in rural New Zealand we couldn't just 'pop down the shops' to buy something. Going to town was an occasional all day event. In my early teens we joined the NZ World Record Club and it was through this I bought my first record. We trawled through the catalogue and on the advice of my older sister I bought Carole King's album 'Tapestry'. I tended to follow Ann's advice somewhat unquestioningly in those days – her 5 years of seniority on me surely meant she was right. It could have been distasteful (I had never heard Carole King) but as I look back over the decades I have a great fondness for that first record and her tunes still ring in my ears. A favourite song was 'You've got a friend'. The chorus runs like this:

'You just call out my name
And you know wherever I am
I'll come running, to see you again
Winter, spring, summer or fall
All you have to do is call
And I'll be there
You've got a friend.

In the 80s Dionne Warwick released 'That's what friends are for' and in the 90s the theme song of the TV programme 'Friends' was 'I'll be there for you'. In 2005 the song 'How to save a life' speaks to our need for connection and the life-affirming, life-saving effect of friendship.

We use the jargon term fellowship in Christian circles but it really refers to friendship and the friendship we find in our Christian community fills some of our needs for connection and enriches our lives.

There is an extraordinary statement in John 15:15 where Jesus states to his disciples that they are not servants but friends. The idea that we are offered friendship with the creator of the universe is marvelous indeed, a gift and a treasure. This has inspired the writing of hymns such as 'What a friend we have in Jesus'; 'O worship the King all-glorious above' (continuing in verse 4 with 'Your mercies, how tender, how firm to the end, our Maker, Defender, Redeemer, and Friend!').

What songs and/or hymns valuing friendship with each other or with God are your favourites?



Friendship through Parish & Community Activities

by the Vicar

One of the aspects of the life of our parish which attracted me when I was considering the post was the commitment to provide activities for the community (notably the Playgroup and Golden Age) together with those parish groups which offer the opportunity to gather for friendship and food (such as the AAW and Men's Fellowship).

St John's Playgroup and Golden Age have been running for more than 20 years. Both have a significant presence in the community and are highly valued by those who attend. The Playgroup currently operates three times a week during school term-time and is well attended at every session. Golden Age is a monthly afternoon tea for residents of retirement villages which includes singing and entertainment. Both activities enjoy the support of committed volunteers, some of whom

are volunteering in multiple contexts. Volunteers are essential but they cannot be expected to take leadership roles.

Both groups require leadership. Currently the parish employs a Playgroup Coordinator. Golden Age was most recently led by the Rev'd Isabel Mordecai who has now moved to Auckland. For the moment, Sue Genner and I will keep it going with the help of our fantastic volunteers. We need to find a person who can dedicate more time to the leadership role than either Sue or I have available. It is also clear, from discussions I have had with a number of people, that there is scope to offer other activities for older adults (particularly those who live independently), both those within the church community and those who live nearby.

Over the past few months, I have had very fruitful discussions with the Parish Projects Facilitator of Anglican Care Waiapu (the social services arm of the Anglican Diocese of Waiapu). The outcome of these discussions (which Vestry has agreed) is that ACW has agreed to fund the parish so that we can employ a Community Activities Coordinator (part-time). The prospective job holder will be responsible for leading the running of the Parish's current Golden Age provision for residents of retirement villages and researching, developing and implementing the possibilities for the provision of activities for independent older people, both those who are church members and for those who have no immediate connection with the church. This person will also provide some support to the Playgroup.

This is a very exciting development which, if successful, will help us as a parish maintain and grow our community activities. Without funding for a staff role, these community activities would struggle to operate. It is worth noting that this project is being seen as a significant pilot within the Diocese (we are breaking new ground) – funding a community activities role will provide a much-needed template to help other parishes be outward-facing amid ageing and declining membership and diminished financial and human resource capacity.

If you know anyone who may be interested in applying for the role, a job description is available from the Parish Office.

And, in any case, do chat with me if you'd like to know more!

Celebrating 50 Years of the Association of Anglican Women

The Association of Anglican Women was formed in 1969 to encompass Mother's Union, Young Wives and Ladies Guild and welcomed all women of the Anglican Church, whatever their situation, single, married (with or without children) or divorced. We congratulate five members of St John's, Otumoetai who have been involved with AAW for 50 years and were recently presented with badges to acknowledge this.

Journeys of Faith and Friendships

Anne Rosoman

We were farming in Morrinsville at the time and I was a member of Young Wives and welcomed the aims and inclusiveness of AAW totally. I also was pleased that AAW had a close association with the National Council of Women.

When I moved to Tauranga in 1989, I became a member of St John's Church and joined the AAW. In time I became the Overseas and Outreach representative on the AAW Diocesan committee with Maureen Taylor doing the typing for me. I was also on St John's committee for many years serving as president for two years and O&O rep for a number of years. I enjoyed being president of the Bay of Plenty Regional AAW committee for four years. During that time, we used to have three committee meetings in Rotorua and a Regional Day at different parishes in the Bay of Plenty every year. This was made easier with a good secretary. A large number of us also used to attend the annual Diocesan weekend held at various parishes throughout the Diocese and it was a great time of friendship and fun. I feel that the peak of AAW was in the 1990's and early 2000's.

AAW has been a great group to belong to – making many great friends by working together for the Church. Through AAW I have learnt how the Church functions, the structure of the Church and of the church commitment to the wider world.

Cherie Crawshaw

When Cherie and Geoff intended to wed in 1967 Cherie was interviewed by Bishop John Holland as to her suitability as a vicar's wife. Cherie proved over the years that she was indeed a most suitable vicar's wife. Cherie and Geoff started married life at St Arden's, Claudelands where Geoff was curate and Cherie joined Young Wives and became a member of their committee. In the many parishes following, where Geoff was vicar, Cherie was always involved with AAW being president and always on the committee.

Since joining St John's, Cherie has been a very active member of our AAW and has been a valued leader and on the committee and involved in all AAW and parish activities. Cherie very much embraced the aims of AAW and said that AAW was the sparkle in every parish where Geoff was vicar. Cherie knew Thora Holland (the Bishop's wife) very well, who along with Jennie Parr lead the contingent to England to discuss the inclusion of all women into Mothers' Union. As we know they were unsuccessful.

The things Cherie enjoys most in AAW is the fellowship and friendships made and having a night out with the ladies. Also, the Diocesan AGM weekends in the various parishes. To Cherie the AAW is the beating heart of every parish.

Beryl Dent

I joined Young Wives at St Stephen's in Tahunanui, Nelson in January 1962 a few weeks into married life. We moved around a lot and it was in 1969 when in Young Wives at St Hilda's, Upper Hutt that AAW was formed. More changes of residence took me to St James, Lower Hutt where I was treasurer and I also became treasurer of Belmont Archdeaconry. At St Paul's, Paraparamu I was vice president but we moved before I became president! In Martinborough I became secretary of AAW and became the Mothers' Union representative at Archdeaconry level and then Diocese. In 1992 I was inducted as the Mothers' Union representative of AAW a position I held for three years. Since coming to St John's, Otumoetai I have enjoyed helping with the services at the end of our AAW meetings.

Anne Harray

Anne joined Young Wives in Katikati following her marriage to Tom in 1969 but had not been in Young Wives very long before it became part of AAW. Anne totally agreed with the reason for change to make membership more inclusive. She was leader of Katikati AAW for a good many years. Since coming to Tauranga Anne has been leader of St John's group and was the AAW representative on the National Council of Women for many years. In the last few years Anne has been charged with finding speakers for our monthly meetings. Thanks to Anne we have been informed and educated on a wide range of subjects which adds great interest to our meetings. The thing Anne enjoys about AAW is the fellowship and being together with like-minded women.

Beth Wills

I joined the Mothers' Union when I was 23 and became leader of the 'Young Wives' – this I accepted with pleasure. I represented Auckland at the 1st YW conference in Wellington – at which Dame Miriam Dell became the first NZ president. From Auckland we moved to Gisborne – I was leader there of the Mothers Union group. On to Wellington – attending St. Barnabas parish for many years and represented Mothers' Union on the National Council of Women. I attended the meeting held to form the AAW at St Mark's church, Wellington – an occasion that was momentous in its creation. Bishops' wives of the Diocese of NZ instigating Mothers' Union, Young Wives, Women Fellowship in a new format – from that came the AAW embracing each group into one strong Anglican organisation – the Association of Anglican Women. My membership from Mothers' Union to the present day AAW would be 70 years – and ever hopeful have more to achieve. In friendship, Beth Wills



Time to Remember

On Monday 2nd November 2020 at 7.00pm there will be an *All Souls' Service for the Commemoration of the Departed*. This is an opportunity to give thanks for the lives of those dear to us who have died. It is appropriate for people who have lost a loved one recently or many years ago. The names of those to be remembered will be read out during the service and those who attend may light a candle in memory of loved ones. Please feel free to tell other members of your family, your friends and neighbours about the service and invite them to come too.



Advent Conversations: Living in Hope

Our Advent Conversations will offer the opportunity to think about what it means to live well and to die well. We are people of history and people of hope. We look back to see where we have come from and we look forward in hope to what lies ahead. But there are times when looking ahead is frightening. Even looking around can be a source of anxiety. The current times are unsettling. COVID-19 has caused untold suffering in many people's lives and is negatively impacting the global economy. There are areas of social and political concern and instability across the world. The challenge of climate change looms larger each decade. What hope do we have? How can we live well in the face of current events?

More details will be available nearer the time – for the moment please mark these dates in your diaries.

Wednesdays: 25th November and 2nd, 9th, 16th December

11.00 am or 7.00 pm *

* *the material will be the same at each session so you don't need to come at the same time each week.*

Planning ahead for Advent and Christmas

Advent and Christmas may seem some time away yet but it is always good to plan ahead. Here are some dates for your diaries:

November

- Wednesday 25th Advent Conversations Session 1
(11.00am or 7.00pm)
- Saturday 28th Ordination as priest of the Revd Sue Genner
1.00pm Napier Cathedral
- Sunday 29th Advent Sunday (combined Eucharist)
10.00am (*no 8.30 as it is Advent Sunday & a 5th Sunday*)

December

- Wednesday 2nd Advent Conversations Session 2
11.00am or 7.00pm
- Sunday 6th Service of Advent Carols & Readings
5.00pm
- Wednesday 9th Advent Conversations Session 3
11.00am or 7.00pm
- Sunday 13th Messy Church
- Wednesday 16th Advent Conversations Session 4
11.00am or 7.00pm
- Wednesday 23rd Last Wednesday service before Christmas
- Thursday 24th *Christmas Eve*
4.00pm Instant Nativity
8.00pm Christmas Eucharist
(*not-the-Midnight-Mass*)
- Friday 25th *Christmas Day*
9.00am Christmas Eucharist
- Sunday 27th 9.00am Sunday Eucharist
(*one service only until 7 February inclusive*)

About this Magazine

This Magazine is called *Word and Light* because our parish church is dedicated to St John the Evangelist. At the beginning of the Gospel of John there are many powerful images. Two of these are *Word* and *Light* and they are woven together. Jesus as the *Word* of God echoes the story of creation. Jesus, the *Light* of the World, is the one who shines in the darkness. We hope that the words and images in this magazine will bring some light to your life.



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