

Word and Light

St John's Anglican Parish, Ōtūmoetai

We can't help
everyone, but
everyone can help
someone.

- Ronald Reagan



Helping Hands
July 2023

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Theme for Word and Light

The theme for the next edition will be **The Colours of Spring (greening and blooms)**. Articles on other topics you think may be of interest are also welcome. As ever, please use your imagination – there are many possibilities. We look forward to your contributions. Photos will be very welcome!

Please send your contributions to Lynda, the Parish Administrator, by **10 September**. Remember that, to keep readers' attention, your articles should not be too long (*up to 700 words*). If you have ideas for future themes, please let us know. *The Editor has the final say as to the suitability of articles for inclusion.*

Priest's Ponderings

"I see Jesus in every human being. I say to myself, this is hungry Jesus, I must feed him. This is sick Jesus. This one has leprosy or gangrene; I



must wash him and tend to him. I serve because I love Jesus." So said Mother Teresa. In Matthew 10, Jesus speaks of how acts of welcome and even something as small as offering a cup of cold water can be an act offered to Jesus.

Similar sentiments are found in the parable of the sheep and the goats in Matthew 25, all acts of charity and kindness here on earth are also received by God as being an offering to God.

St Teresa of Ávila in the sixteenth century expressed it this way, "Christ has no body now but yours.

No hands, no feet on earth but yours.

Yours are the eyes through which he looks compassion on this world.

Yours are the feet with which he walks to do good.

Yours are the hands through which he blesses all the world.

Yours are the hands, yours are the feet, yours are the eyes, you are his body.

Christ has no body now on earth but yours."



Caring for others and helping the poor are recurring themes in the Old Testament and Israel was castigated when she failed to do this. Jesus' ministry is full of acts of kindness as he spent time with those society rejected and healed the sick. This was continued in the early church; we find one of the major events Paul referred to in his epistles was the collection for the poor in Jerusalem and it was also mentioned in the book of Acts. The early church fathers continued to encourage it. "Do not go past the poor man with his hand stretched out, for it is the Lord Himself who stretches out this hand," writes St John Chrysostom in the fifth century.

Being “helping hands” is part of our Christian identity, it’s in our DNA. It has characterised the life, worship, and mission of the church through the ages. The third of the five marks of mission adopted by the Anglican communion is “To respond to human need by loving service.”

We find this in prayer and in song. In the 404 service in our NZ prayerbook we find the following intercession:

“Make us willing agents of your compassion.
Strengthen us as we share in making people whole.”

Bill Bennett from our own diocese wrote a hymn for each church in Waiapu. This is the first verse in the hymn Bill wrote for us in St Johns.

“Here in our streets where Christ walks each day,
bringing compassion and care;
we are his hands, his voices of love,
love that's sustained by our prayer.”

Sue (Priest-in-Charge)

Introducing our new Vicar

Greetings, Christine and I will arrive from Feilding where I have been working as a part-time Assistant (in the absence of a Vicar), while helping settle my father in a rest home with all of the issues that entails. Prior to this I served as Vicar in Geraldine for four and a half years and completed a Curacy in Halswell-Prebbleton. My wife Christine and I have been married for nearly thirty-seven years. We have three adult daughters, five grandchildren, and a Whippet called ‘Brin.’ Christine is a Nurse Practitioner and is currently working as a locum in General Practice.

I came to ordained ministry later in life, having served in the New Zealand Army for nearly twenty-seven years. As an Infantry officer I completed two years in Singapore, and three operational tours with the United Nations in Angola, East Timor and the Solomon Islands, but that was balanced with a variety of training roles and, towards the end of my service, appointments in logistics staff. I left the Army in 2004 to

work in contract and project management, but also drove heavy trucks and cranes for a short time.

I am what I call a 'progressive inclusive' rather than a 'liberal.' I am inspired by the Word of God and believe that we are responsible to read and interpret what He says for our place and time. Be in no doubt however, our calling makes us servants of the living God. We are called to love God's people, especially those who do not love themselves, and we are to proclaim the good news of the kingdom of God, especially to those who cannot discern it for themselves. We are all wonderfully made in God's image and are a priesthood of believers ... in other words there is plenty for us all to be getting on with ... and the best way of achieving that is together. I am happy to help find ways for anybody who feels called to help us out; there is always more work to do than people to do it.

I like meeting new people and intend to meet everyone within the first few months we are in place, whether at church or in your homes. My approach is to (as far as possible) leave alone things that are working well. I like to discover what the Holy Spirit is up to by seeing and doing, and to work with others by prayer and consultation. I look forward to discovering what has worked well here in the past, as well as what has not and why. If you have something to offer, please don't hesitate to come and see me at an appropriate time.

We look forward to being with you very soon. We are planning to move into the Vicarage in the first couple of weeks in August. With every blessing,

Tony and Christine



The Mission to Seafarers

by Angela McFetridge, Welfare Officers Coordinator, Port of Tauranga

The Mission to Seafarers was founded in 1835 by the Anglican priest, John Ashley, in response to Reverend Ashley's discovery that the many ships anchored off the coast of England were never visited by anyone, nor did the crew have a way of getting to church. Additionally, there was no one caring for the welfare of the seafarers. Today The Mission to Seafarers has a presence in more than 200 ports in 50 different countries worldwide. This makes The Mission the largest port-based welfare organisation in the world. Through a global network of Chaplains, Honorary Chaplains, ship visitors and Centres, The Mission provides advocacy and welfare support to seafarers 365 days per year, regardless of their rank, nationality, gender or religion.

Seafarers play a vital role in the global economy by transporting goods and passengers across the world's oceans. However, their work is demanding, physically, socially and psychologically. It also requires them to be away from family for months, even years at a time. These factors, along with spiritual and personal issues mean port-based welfare support is a necessity.

In Tauranga we have three dedicated Mission to Seafarers Ship Welfare Officers who endeavour to visit every foreign ship that berths in the Port of Tauranga. The role of a Ship Welfare Officer is essentially to provide seafarers with support, advocacy and serve them however we can while in port, especially when crews are ship-bound. Visiting seafarers often have limited access to shore leave and land-based activities. We board the vessel, taking a welcome bag full of treats, fruit, reading material, a bible and useful information about the port and what welfare services we have available.

Welfare Officers are a welcome visitor to the vessel, where crew have sailed for many weeks to get to New Zealand and often just enjoy having a fresh face to talk to. We encounter seafarers of various nationalities *and some* experiencing difficulties onboard that breach the international Maritime Labour Convention 2006. Seafarers can experience restricted access to shore leave & internet, late payment of

wages, challenging work conditions, poor food and in some cases bullying & harassment. In such cases we work with local authorities and advocate for their workplace rights. We enjoy spending as much time with the crew as we can and support them in many ways depending on their needs.

Mt 25:40: “I tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me”.



A crew were in port for a few days with no access to WIFI or shore leave. As you can imagine their morale was low. We went and got some pizzas and our guitar. The whole crew joined in singing and we had a bible study.

The Helping Hands of Sister Astrid

by Bob Shaw

The many orders of Nuns form a vast supporting force to the Church and those within its reach. The hands of those nuns I knew and admired in Africa never faltered and never tired in their work as daughters of Christ. There was Sister Celestine building and supporting schools for girls, in the face of opposition within a male orientated society. There was Sister Alicia, facing death as she succoured the wounded in civil war torn Tigray Province, driving out to the battlefield holding a white bed sheet tied to a bamboo cane out of the window of her truck. There was Sister Sympatica, far from her home in Nigeria, washing children in Zahia Lake in the Rift Valley of Ethiopia, with bars of home-made soap I brought her, while their mothers looked on in amazement.

More than helping hands were needed sometimes. An active brain guided by firm resolution of spirit was required to guide those in possession of authority in this money-orientated world. Sister Astrid sat all day and often in the night hours, guiding the flow of financial help that came through her office in the Ethiopian Catholic Secretariat. With great difficulty she kept funds out of the grasp of the Cardinal of the Ethiopian Catholic Church, that he wanted to use to support the Tigreian Peoples Liberation Army. She kept funds away from the RRC and other government organisations. She fought the influence of Ato Tekle Rosario, the controller of the dispensary, who allowed medication to fall beyond its 'used by' date, so that he could sell it on the black market and pocket the proceeds. She fought against his plans to ship luxury goods to Eritrea, in transport aircraft chartered to airlift food and seeds across the war-torn battlefields of the central region.

Her own mild gifts of charity, gave her some relief from her battles with diverse authorities. She was sent small sums in \$US raised by her sisters in the cloister of Hergiswil, Luzern. She dispensed this as she saw fit to those who came to the Secretariat in time of need, widows with children, men wounded in the civil wars, orphans, and elderly destitute people. She had family at home in Kanton Appenzel, and a blood sister doing similar work in Chad, but the people who lived and worked beside her in Addis Abba became her surrogate family. I relied upon her advice and looked to her as to a mother, brought her presents from her home cloister and the chocolate she adored. I brought her loaves of bread from the European bakery and took her to concerts in the Italian Embassy. To her I confessed my problems with government officials, and with personnel in the employ of the Secretariat such as Ato Teckle. She was for ever wise and supportive, and I feared her criticism or rebuke.

Good Neighbour

by Lynda Wallace

In early 2014, having left BoPDHB after 22 years, I was taking a break from work. I saw a small article in the free paper about a group of people who were setting up a food rescue operation and were looking

for volunteer helpers. That sounded like something I would like to get involved with so I gave them a call and the next week began as a volunteer for Good Neighbour.

Good Neighbour was the brainchild of Jackie and John Payne and Cam Hill. They partnered with Lavina Good (co-owner of Brookfield New World) to re-use food that New World would otherwise have dumped – bakery items > 1 day old, canned food where the can was dented or label torn, food with damaged packaging, vegetables etc. The food was sorted and distributed to charities. For the first few weeks the sorting was done in the back of cars at New World but then St Peter's Church kindly offered the use of the old garage behind the church.

In those early days food had to be collected from New World using volunteers' cars – often turning up at the garage loaded to the roof with boxes of tins and packaged food and black rubbish bags full of bakery bread and other items. We would weigh in the food then go about sorting it, repairing torn packaging and re-bagging as necessary. It was always exciting to see how much we got each day. Between 2pm and 3pm the charities we were supplying would turn up to collect their boxes of food. The pleasure on their faces when they saw what we had for them was heart-warming.

Initially Good Neighbour was only able to supply 4 or 5 charities (eg Women's Refuge, Merivale Community Centre, Shakti) but as we got more supermarkets involved the number of charities increased. The addition of more supermarkets was only made possible with generous sponsorship from the likes of the Ministry for the Environment, Farmer Auto Village, Acorn Foundation – enabling Good Neighbour to buy a refrigerated truck, fridges and a freezer. You wouldn't believe how excited we all were to have these new tools to enable the operation to expand.

The expansion of Good Neighbour meant that the garage at St Peter's was no longer viable – through generous sponsorship and support from several government departments new premises were built in Burrough's Street – although for a while we had to operate out of what used to be the Sunny's shop on Willow Street.

Good Neighbour branched out with new ventures – Café Run, Projects (garden tidy-ups, house moves), Firewood, Kitchen, and Community Gardens. In 2017 I was no longer able to be involved with food sorting due to the hours of my work at St John’s but I was still able to help with Café Run and occasionally Projects. Café Run involved going to 7 or 8 cafes at the end of the day to collect the food they had not been able to sell that day. The food was taken back to the depot, weighed and sorted – muffins and scones were bagged and frozen to be distributed to charities the next day whilst salads, sandwiches, filled rolls etc were bagged and then taken to the overnight shelter.

Good Neighbour has been a real success story and has become an important part of the Tauranga community. In 2022 Good Neighbour distributed 610,298 kg of food from supermarkets, 25,600 kg of produce picked by the fruit-picking team, cut and delivered 500 cubic metres of firewood to 121 families, provided 3,682 kg of community meals and 24,699 kg of Covid-response meals, and completed 169 community projects.



Helping 101

by Merina Foster

The Oxford dictionary definition of the word ‘help’ is ‘to make it easier or possible for somebody to do something by doing something for them or by giving them something that they need’.

John 15:12 (NIV) says “My command is this – Love each other as I have loved you”.

In a perfect world all humans would get along, help each other, encourage one another, and share what we own to assist others. But sadly, this is not the case. We live amongst greed, violence, corruption, racial injustice, and the list goes on. These days it is getting increasingly difficult to even help another person. It is often looked at as we want something in return, or there is an ulterior motive at play. Or sometimes the



attitude of 'it's not my problem, someone else will sort it out', stops people from helping.

As Christians with Jesus' spirit that dwells inside us, surely we can show Christ's love and care through us on a daily basis.

There are so many agencies available in New Zealand alone that provide the much-needed help to those in need. But we don't need to feel like we must belong or work for those agencies to provide help and care.

Look around you, even in our St John's community, we have a huge number of helpers right here amongst us.

Sue, our Priest-in-charge leads us with grace and humility. She is there for her church family, cares for her family at home and for all those whom she serves in the community.



Lynda, our most treasured Parish Administrator – with her knowledge, skill and amazing organisation runs our parish like a well-oiled machine. She always drops whatever she is doing to help those around her.

Our Op Shop manager, Maree, with all her skilled and giving volunteers offer help to our entire community and beyond.

Our Play Group and Toy Library managed by Stephanie and Elena offer their time and relationship skills to families in our community. They lead a skilled team of volunteers that serve from giving hearts.

All the wonderful groups I organise wouldn't go ahead without my team of volunteers that are so generous with their time. They create a warm and welcoming atmosphere to all those who attend our community activities.

I must mention all our parishioners that help behind the scenes. We have so many that if I start listing you all I'm afraid I will miss someone out. We have an enormous amount of people that give of their time to serve our parish and beyond. Your care and dedication don't go

unnoticed. But why do we all do this you may wonder? Because we care with helpful hearts.

But caring and helping others does come with its own challenges. We can often feel drained and even taken for granted. To learn how to help successfully, we must firstly learn how to keep oneself safe. Well-placed boundaries must be set. I personally think every person that is in a helping role should be educated in boundary placing and selfcare. We are better equipped to helping and serving others if we grasp how to care and love ourselves first. Boundaries allow us to take better care of ourselves emotionally, mentally, physically, and spiritually. Therefore, we can then pass on our care for ourselves to others.

This now leads me to the most ultimate helper of all: The Holy Spirit. The role of the Holy Spirit is all-encompassing. He is our comforter, counsellor, helper, advocate, intercessor, strength and standby. I feel a great sense of relief knowing that I do not need to labour through life because God is always with me, and he has my back!



The role of the Holy Spirit is to lead us into a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. Once we then commit our lives to following him, his spirit can dwell in us enabling us to experience a full life and live it in abundance. We then can reach out to others with God's strength and show his love and care to everyone that crosses our path.

Wouldn't this world be a different place if we all could grasp that concept? Wishful thinking on my part! I know I can't change the world, but with just a little bit help, care, and time to one person we could make a world of difference for them. And who knows, your help and care, could then be passed on to another person, then another, then another. Thus, creating a flow of change to a family unit, a community, a town, a country, a nation, and even the entire world.

A Psalm for Stewardship

by Chris Robertson-Parkes

Generous God

I've learned a new word for Stewardship -

A new way of looking at it.

You never quite explained

When I made the choice for You,

How much of myself

You'd want me to give.

But now I understand.

Stewardship is all about

Giving more of myself.

Self-giving.

The essence that speaks of

Who I am.

Self-giving means

Commitment

An openness of mind.

A freedom to empower others.

And an eagerness to serve.

It means being more

Hospitable and generous –

Sharing all I have.

Loving others as I do myself.

Isn't that what Jesus said?

And what's that special word –

That word for Christian love?

AGAPE.

That's what Stewardship is about.

AGAPE!

Thank you Lord.

Now I understand.

Hands that Helped Travellers

by Sue Genner

Back in 2009, my eldest sister and I went on a trip to Europe together. Our sister who lived in England picked us up from the airport and our first stop was with her and her family in Derbyshire. They took us by car to stay with our cousin near Ludlow, a delightfully picturesque market town in Shropshire. Following some wonderful times meeting cousins for the first time and exploring the place where our Dad had grown up, we were off to London. Cousin Carol took us as far as Slough, on the outskirts of London, and we needed to make our way into the centre where we were staying. We were on our own. We each had our 20kg suitcases as well as hand luggage (and 20 kg gets heavier the longer you drag/carry it!!!).

Ann had been injured in an accident a year or two prior and her collarbone fracture had never healed. This added to the woes. Now, in the London railway and underground systems, there are multiple levels and between the levels there were sometimes escalators and at other times one had to carry one's luggage up or down the stairs. As we progressed through, we came to yet another staircase with **no escalator**. Ann looked at it absolutely crestfallen and said aloud just what she was thinking "Oh No!!!" with a huge sigh. Just then 2 wonderful burly young men came alongside us picked up our suitcases and carried them to the top of the stairs. It was wonderful! We were two immensely grateful kiwis. We did thank them but never got their names. Those two young men were angels in disguise and will never know just how much that small act of kindness meant to two very weary kiwi travellers.



Some years ago, I lead a Lenten study called "The power of small choices". Together we watched "The Shawshank Redemption" and "Babette's Feast" and those two films along with scripture and an excellent study book had us pondering the impact of the various small choices we make in our daily lives. The other day at Hodgson House, I stopped to chat with a woman who was not a member of our little congregation there. It could have been just a brief 'passing-the-time-of-

day' with her, but we had quite a talk and she was so appreciative that I had stopped and made time to talk. We never know the impact of a small act of kindness, whether it be helping to carry a heavy load or simply giving a listening ear. "Jesus has no hands but ours" ... helping hands.



Showing The Good News in Doing Good

by Graeme Brock (Parish Projects Manager, ACW)

From its very beginning, the church has followed in Jesus's footsteps in loving the poor, the forgotten, and the forsaken. The early Christians gained a reputation for rescuing abandoned children, caring for widows, and visiting prisoners in the mines.

Since the gospel's first arrival in NZ, the Anglican church has proclaimed the good news and shown the good news through practical help.

The Anglican church within this Diocese has a long history of doing good in the community; from its start, it focused on education, literacy, and vocational training.

Anglican Care Waiapu grew out of the community's growing needs and became our church's social services arm, adopting and developing the work begun by local parishes.

ACW services involve early childhood centres, older people's day programmes, family services, and growing through grief programmes. Hundreds of people are helped daily through our Anglican services.

In 2019 ACW created a new role, Parish Projects Manager, the purpose of this role is to help parishes do good in their local neighbourhoods. Projects have emerged from local parishes, including community meals, lockers for the homeless, Senior Chef, literacy help and books for schools, Covid packs, community gardens, community events, and more.

The Parish of Otūmoetai is a parish that provides a powerful example of what a practical difference a parish can make in its local community. Senior Chef, Toy Library, Book Club, Playgroup, Golden Age, Crafts

Group and your partnership with the Mission to Seafarers all provide loving service to Otūmoetai and beyond.

We should never underestimate the quiet presence of the Kingdom, outworked in these loving acts of service. Nor should we underestimate our ability to outwork this kingdom through our peaceful and gentle actions. A kind word, comfort to those who grieve, hospitality offered in the name of Christ, the ministry of a cup of tea and a listening ear.

Charity: water



121,314

Water projects funded

16,993,794

People will be served

29 Countries

Why Water?

For people in developing countries, clean water can change everything. 771 million people in the world live without clean water. That's nearly 1 in 10 people worldwide. Or, twice the population of the United States. The majority live in isolated rural areas and spend hours every day walking to collect water for their family. Not only does walking for water keep children out of school or take up time that parents could be using to earn money, but the water often carries diseases that can make everyone sick. But access to clean water means education, income and health - especially for women and kids.

Clean water changes everything.

Health: Diseases from dirty water kill more people every year than all forms of violence, including war. *Children under-five are on average more than 20 times more likely to die from illnesses linked to unsafe water and bad sanitation than from conflict.*

Time: Every day, women and girls around the world spend an estimated 200 million hours collecting water. *Access to clean water gives communities more time to grow food, earn an income, and go to school – all of which fight poverty.*

Education: Clean water helps keep kids in school, especially girls. *Less time collecting water means more time in class. Clean water and proper toilets at school means teenage girls don't have to stay home for a week out of every month.*

Women Empowerment: Women and girls are responsible for water collection in 8 out of 10 households with water off premises. *When a community gets water, women and girls get their lives back. They start businesses, improve their homes, and take charge of their own futures.*

Charity: water is a non-profit organisation bringing clean and safe water to people around the world. **Together, we can end the water crisis.** Since charity: water was founded in 2006, we've been chasing one ambitious goal: ending the global water crisis. And while the water crisis is huge, we're optimistic. We know how to solve the problem, and we make progress every day thanks to the help of local partners and generous supporters. If we work together, we believe everyone will have access to life's most basic need within our lifetime.



There are so many ways we can be helping hands. The Charity:water website contains stories of people of all ages who were helping hands by raising funds. From Harry (pictured here) who asked family and friends to donate \$78 for his 78th birthday and raised US\$3,785.00 to young London who asked for donations instead of dolls for her 5th birthday and raised US\$2,143.00.

This article used information from <https://www.charitywater.org>

The Helping Hands of Charlotte and Alfred Brown

Helping hands have always been part of mission and they were part of the mission which helped establish the Anglican Church here in Tauranga. Here is a little of our local history:

Alfred Nesbit Brown served as a Church Missionary Society missionary in New Zealand from 1829 to 1884.

He was born on 23 October 1803 in Colchester, Essex, England. Alfred attended school in Colchester, and became articled to a local attorney. He applied to the CMS in 1824, encouraged to do so by Dr William Marsh, vicar



of St Peter's, Colchester, his friend and mentor, who taught him the evangelical principles to which he adhered all his life. After training at the CMS school in Islington, London, Alfred Brown was ordained deacon on 10 June 1827 and priest on 1 June 1828.

Alfred married Charlotte Arnett at Islington, Middlesex, on 20 March



1829, shortly before leaving England for New Zealand. Charlotte was born probably in 1795 or 1796. Little is known of her early life except that she was well educated, and kept a girls' school before her marriage.

Alfred and Charlotte Brown sailed first for Australia on the *Elizabeth*. They arrived in the Bay of Islands on the *City of Edinburgh* on 29 November 1829. Although Alfred was only the third ordained missionary to arrive in the country, the couple at first took charge of the missionaries' children. Three children were born to them in the next eight years – a stillborn child, a son and a daughter.

On 9 April 1835 Alfred Brown opened a CMS station at Matamata in the Waikato, near Te Waharoa's pā. This mission lasted little more than a year: intertribal warfare forced the closure of the station in October 1836. One of his notable converts from the area was Te Waharoa's son, Wiremu Tāmihana Tarapipipi, who was baptised in 1839.

Wiremu Tāmihana's original name was Tarapīpi Te Waharoa. He was the second son of the Ngāti_Haua chief, Te Waharoa. He was deeply influenced by missionary teaching. He created a marae near Matamata which became known for its peaceful Christian witness.

The Brown family took up residence at Te Papa (Tauranga) in January 1838. The Elms) can be visited today and is a rich source of this history. Bishop G. A. Selwyn granted Alfred his licence as minister of the Tauranga district on 19

December 1842 and appointed him the first archdeacon of Tauranga on 31 December 1843. He was installed in September 1844. He was a keen and successful gardener, and it seems that he and Charlotte loved music, for they brought with them the first piano to come to New Zealand.



In all areas of his work Alfred was supported by Charlotte Brown, who was described as pious and 'superior in education to most Female Missionaries'. Her teaching experience proved invaluable to her, as she had charge of the infants' and girls' schools. She supervised the work of the station in the absence of her husband on his frequent pastoral visits around the Bay of Plenty, ran her own household, travelled miles over rough country to care for the wives of the other missionaries when they needed her in illness or in childbirth, took the children of other missionary families into her own, and received graciously many important visitors.

Tarore of Waharoa was one of Charlotte's students and following her tragic death, her gospel of Luke travelled around the country and resulted in many coming to Christ and some wonderful stories of reconciliation. We never know the potential results of helping someone else.

Much of this article was from the online biography found at <https://teara.govt.nz/en/biographies/11335/brown-alfred-nesbit>

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.

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