

Welcome! Haere mai!

St John's Anglican Church, Ōtūmoetai



Sunday 24th July 2022
17th Sunday in Ordinary Time

Dear Friends

In Sunday's Gospel from Luke, Jesus has withdrawn from the disciples to be alone in prayer. Jesus' prayers are never careless or rushed; rather, precious times of being with God and listening. Jesus' example must have impressed his disciples because one of them said something many of us would echo: 'Lord, teach us to pray'. As practising Jews, they already prayed but there was something about Jesus' prayer life that spoke of a deeper experience than they knew.

The model prayer Jesus provides for his disciples illustrates great intimacy with God. So far no one had ever presumed to call God by the familiar form of 'Father' which is what 'Abba' means. The relationship is that close. The prayer continues in the way familiar to us. The disciples are to pray that God's name be kept holy and honoured and that his kingdom will be established on earth. They are to ask him to provide for their needs day by day; that God will forgive their sins and not put them to hard testing. It is short and simple.

After Jesus has responded to the request, he tells the story of a neighbour who bangs on his friend's door at midnight to ask to borrow some bread to feed a surprise visitor. 'Go away!' comes the reply. 'I've locked up and the kids are tucked up in bed with me.' But in the end the continuous knocking forces the friend to get up and give the neighbour what he wants. God is better than that friend, says Jesus. God is not a sleepy householder who does not hear our prayers until we wear God out with our constant asking.

God hears *all* prayer that is sincerely made. If there is no immediate answer to prayer – or we don't get the answer we expected – there will be a reason. It is to be God's will not ours.

What we read in Luke is the only *verbal* prayer Jesus ever taught. But his teachings also seem to say that we need 'unsaying prayer', the prayer of quiet contemplation, to ground all 'saying prayer'. Without an inner life, our outer prayer may become superficial. Prayer can too easily become an attempt to try to change God instead of what it was meant to be – an interior practice *to change the one who is praying*.

This change will gradually happen if we place ourselves in God's utterly safe presence and allow the divine gaze to permeate and heal our unconscious, the place where most of our motivations and reactions come from. All we can really do is return the gaze. Then, as the medieval mystic Meister Eckhart so perfectly said, 'the eye with which we look back at God will be the same eye that first looked at us'. We just complete the circuit – face to face, friend with friend.

Arohanui,

Sue (Vicar)

WORSHIP THIS SUNDAY: 24th July 2022

Sentence

Ask, and it will be given you; seek, and you will find; knock, and the door will be opened for you.

Luke 1.9

Collect

**Provident God,
you grant the Holy Spirit to all who call upon you;
may we so ask that we joyfully receive,
search that we may fully find,
and knock that the door of compassion is opened;
through Christ our Mediator,
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever. Amen**

1st Reading *Genesis 18.20-32*

2nd Reading *Colossians 2.6-15*

Gospel *Luke 11.1-13*

Prayers of the People

Today we pray for the Diocese of Singapore, West Malaysia, Sabah and Kuching and for the people of the Taupō parish and their clergy.

We pray for those in need, especially those who have asked for our prayers: Janice H, Colin, Shirley.

We pray for the recently departed: Mike Tipler, and we pray for Maureen and all who mourn his loss.

William Wilberforce and all social reformers

On July 29 every year the church remembers William Wilberforce and all social reformers. William Wilberforce was born into a Yorkshire merchant's family in 1759 in Hull. After studies at Cambridge, he entered Parliament in 1780. He was converted to evangelical Christianity in 1784 and became an important spokesman for evangelical ideas. Wilberforce used his considerable influence to organise and legislate for his perception of a Christian society. He helped found the Church Missionary Society and the Bible Society. He promoted education, missions and moral reform. The trade in slaves drew his attention: he attacked slavery and the slave trade vigorously. The Emancipation Bill putting an end to slavery in the British dominions was not passed until August 1833, a month after his death on 29 July. Wilberforce was recognised as a strong influence for good and was buried in Westminster Abbey, London.

This Week Beginning: 25th July

Monday	10.30 am	Funeral for Mike Tipler
Tuesday	7.00 pm	Vestry meeting via Zoom
Wednesday	10.00 am	Mid-week Eucharist
	2.00 pm	SAYGo in the hall
Op Shop	10.00 am - 4.00 pm	Monday to Friday (ph. 576 2422)
Playgroup	9.30 - 11.30 am	Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday
Toy Library	9.30 - 11.30 am	Tuesday, Thursday, Saturday

Services for Sunday 31st July –

OT 18

8.30 am	Holy Eucharist
10.00 am	Holy Eucharist

Contact Us

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