

Welcome! Haere mai!

St John's Anglican Church, Ōtūmoetai



Sunday 13th September 2026

Liturgy: p456

OT 24

Psalm 114

Greetings all:

Over the last few weeks, we have heard Jesus teach his disciples, Matthew's community, and us, how to hold good community together. When asked by his disciples "who the greatest in the Kingdom of Heaven" Jesus responds by placing a child in their midst. It was not about their status. Instead, Jesus reminded them that good community places the most vulnerable—like children, the marginalized, and those named in the Beatitudes—at its very centre. Good community has a common story that holds it together and gives it purpose. It is built on God's deep love seen in the Exodus story and lived out in Jesus. Good community is not about our needs, and is about us living God's deep love for creation and all who share this home with us.

Last week in the gospel reading Jesus taught that true community is about mirroring heaven on earth through common purpose, deep commitment to each other, as Paul's letter to the Romans details, and the honesty needed to face conflict. Matthew 18:18 is often read to mean that what we do here on earth holds true for heaven too. But maybe it is better understood using the Lord's Prayer, "your will be done on earth as in heaven". What we do here on earth is to mirror heaven. When we truly live out community we become signs of the reign of God here on earth.

This week, Peter's question pushes us into the hard work of forgiveness. Like the first slave in Jesus' story, we are all recipients of God's immense grace. Too often this teaching has been weaponized to keep people in abusive relationships or to excuse the ongoing harms of colonization.

Forgiveness demands genuine repentance and systemic reform. It does not erase consequences, nor does it automatically restore broken relationships. Sometimes it is letting go and walking away.

In this Season of Creation, we are invited to consider how we sin against God's creation and those who bare the greatest cost of that sin.

Pollution, bio-diversity loss, and climate change are having devastating consequences on those who have contributed the least to these sins, including our Pacific neighbours. We routinely prioritize our own short-term economic costs over their survival, begging the question: have we even begun to ask for forgiveness for our action and inaction?

The Exodus reading is one of the foundational stories that sits at the heart of Islam, Christianly and Judaism. This is a story that shows the superiority of God over the would-be-gods of Egypt, including Pharoah, and our would-be-gods of endless growth and progress. We are reminded that God's love is universal, but never neutral. God stands with the oppressed Hebrew slaves, as God continues to stand with the poor and oppressed, including creation. As we reflect on our place in this story, an old rabbinic tradition reminds us of God's universal grief, showing God silencing the angels who celebrated as the Egyptians drowned because they, too, were God's children.

What do we need forgiveness for in this Season of Creation, and from whom must we seek it?

John Hebert PSSF.



Living Water
Season of Creation 2026

IMMERSION IN LIVING WATER

Ezekiel 47:9, 12

WORSHIP THIS SUNDAY: 13th September 2026

Sentence:

If you, O Lord, should note what we do wrong, Lord, who could stand?
But there is forgiveness with you, so that you may be revered.

Psalm 130:3–4

Collect:

God of infinite mercy
in our ignorance and selfishness
we so often fail to care for your Creation,
may your Holy Spirit soften and unite our hearts
with all living beings who suffer;
through Jesus Christ the Wisdom of Creation, who lives and reigns
with you and the Holy Spirit, now and for ever
Amen.

OT Reading *Exodus 14:19-31*

NT Reading *Romans 14:1-12*

Gospel *Matthew 18:21-25*

Prayers of the People

Today we pray for the H&W Williams Memorial Trust who continues to honour the legacy and vision of Henry and William Williams, who came to Aotearoa New Zealand as missionaries among Maori from 1823-1876, and we pray for the Hato Hone/St John Chaplains in our Diocese.

We pray also for those in need, especially those who have asked for our prayers: Craig, Viv, Lynda, Lawrence, Reg, Jon, Angela R and Robyn.

St George's Parish Spring Festival

Support the parish and community by going to St George's Op Shop car park for Raffles, Bake and Plant sales, Crafts etc - Saturday 19th September.

This Week Beginning: 14th September 2026

Wednesday 10:00 am Mid-week Communion
2:00 pm SAYGo in the hall

Friday 9:30 am Senior Chef

Sunday 9:30 am Holy Communion

Op Shop 10:00 am – 4:00 pm Monday to Friday
10:00 am – 1:00 pm Saturday

Playgroup 9:30am – 11:30 am Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday

Toy Library 9:30am – 11:30 am Tuesday, Thursday, Saturday

Contact Us

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