



KNOX CHURCH

love faith outreach community justice

Pastoral Newsletter

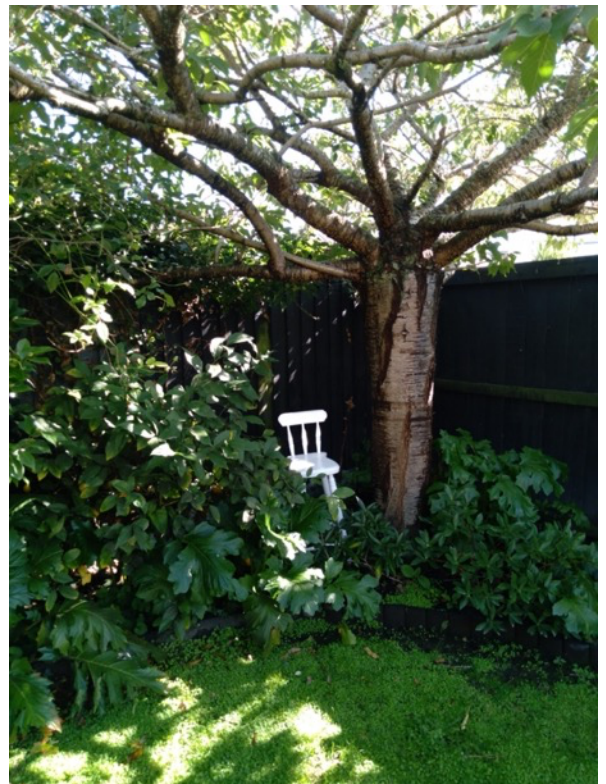
3 July, 2023

Kia Ora Knox Community,

As is the Knox custom now, in some of the months when we don't have a "Knox Life", I send out a pastoral email newsletter.

185 Chairs

A while back, artist Pete Majendie invited people to mark a transition for the "185 chairs", the installation artwork in honour of the 185 people who died in the quake of 2011. Pete noted that installation artworks evolve, and that the people engaging with them become part of the works themselves. He invited us to eat scones, drink tea, chat, then claim a chair and take it home. As the chairs find new homes around the city, the work changes, rather than concludes - hence "transition", rather than "end". Part of the work, then, now stands under the cherry tree in my garden in Papanui. Given the plants in that part of the garden, the chair will be more visible in the winter, less so during the summer. When the chair decays and breaks down, that will be OK - slow dissolution being part of the work too. It's a special object.



Regrets to be avoided

For Stuff, Karen Nimmo wrote an article about the regrets of the middle-aged:
<https://www.stuff.co.nz/life-style/wellbeing/300831755/the-top-seven-regrets-of-middle-age>

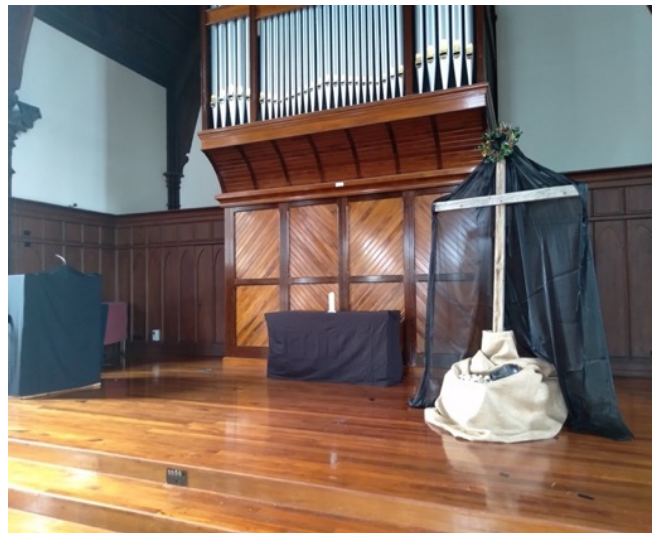
Remember not all of your decisions have to be smart. They can also be purely for cinematic value.

Decorating the sanctuary

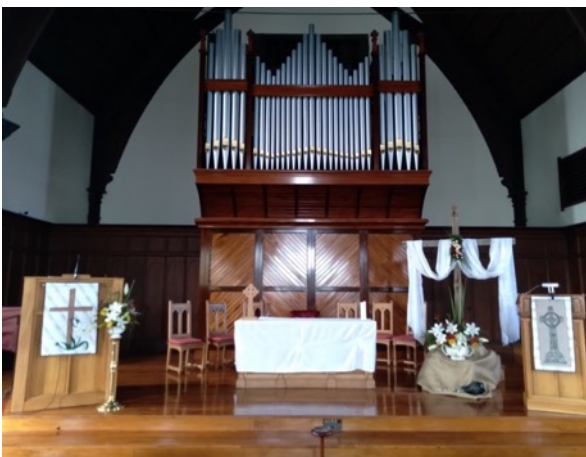
We're very grateful to Rochelle Howley, whose installations enhance our sanctuary on special Sundays. Rochelle gets organised to ask me, well ahead of time, about service themes for Palm Sunday, Tenebrae, Good Friday, Easter Sunday, Ascension, Pentecost and Trinity Sunday. Armed only with my vague thoughts, she creates some wonderful sanctuary installations. Thank you, Rochelle!



Palm Sunday



Good Friday



Easter



Pentecost

On the Day of Pentecost

we invited people to wear red. Here's a photo taken of Matthew greeting a welcome visitor (one-time long-time member of Knox) after the service. Some red clothing features.



Boys help elderly man across the street

On Sunday 18 June, I preached a sermon which included reference to two thirteen year olds from New Lynn whose good deed was noticed, got posted on facebook, and ended up on the news. Here's the link to Michael Holland's interview with the boys.



<https://www.1news.co.nz/2019/05/20/its-amazing-woman-inspired-after-taking-viral-photo-of-boys-helping-elderly-man-across-auckland-road/>

Free te reo classes

Knox is happy to announce a series of five free classes in te reo Māori for fifteen people from early October, followed by a visit to Te Kōhao-tū o Mahaanui Marae in mid November (for a full day "getting to know us" workshop).

Tuesdays nights - 6 pm for two hours (break for kai and kōrero at 7:00pm)

- Tuesday 10 October - Lesson One
- Tuesday 17 October - Lesson Two
- Tuesday 24 October - Lesson Three
- Tuesday 31 October - Lesson Four
- Tuesday 7 November - Lesson Five

- Marae visit - 16 November - "Getting to know us" workshop - 9:00am - 3:00pm.

We're looking to

- getting ourselves ready to do our pepeha
- learning some basic grammar and vocab,
- having regular practice of the Lord's Prayer,
- having regular practice of the Grace,
- reviewing the congregational responses regularly used at Knox,
- learning some prayers before food,
- learning a couple of hymns,
- looking at how some famous Bible passages go in te reo Māori (and how the two languages spin the meaning of those passages)
- exploring some creation stories,
- exploring the difference between karakia and innoi

The classes (and marae visit) are free, solely because the Justice Compassion Trust, established by Rev. James Symonds, a minister of the Presbyterian Church USA, has provided funding (the Justice Compassion Trust). Should you wish to attend the classes (and the marae visit), please be aware that presently there are only fifteen places available. First to come, will be first served.

If you're available for the classes, but not for the marae visit, let us know. We can offer places for the marae visit to others who haven't been to the classes.

To register for the classes and / or the visit to the marae, please contact the office: office@knoxchurch.co.nz



A word from Kylie, our teacher for the te reo classes:

Ko Tākitimu te pae mauka
Ko Ōreti te awa
Ko Te Ara a Kiwa te moana
Ko Tākitimu, ko Uruaokapuaraki kā
waka
Ko Kāi Tahu, ko Kāti Māmoe, ko
Waitaha kā iwi Māori
Ko Murihiku te marae
Ko Kylie Clark tōhoku ikoa

Tākitimu is the mountain range
Ōreti is the river
Foveaux Strait is the body of water
Tākitimu and Uruaokapuaraki are the
canoes
Kāi Tahu, Kāti Māmoe and Waitaha
are the tribes
Murihiku is the marae
Kylie Clark is my name.

Kia ora! My name is Kylie and I am a nurse who during the day, works for Te Whatu Ora Waitaha. Here, my role focusses on developing the Māori nursing workforce and strengthening equity for Māori and the application of Te Tiriti o Waitangi in nursing practice. I am also particularly passionate about te reo Māori. I love learning about it as well as contributing to the revitalization and normalization of the indigenous language of this country. As such, I enjoy sharing my knowledge with others in a variety of ways, both through my work at Te Whatu Ora Waitaha, as well as in Adult Continuing Education programmes and other community groups. I look forward to the opportunity to meet you all and help support you in your journey towards learning a little more about our beautiful language in a relaxed and safe space.

This year's Matariki service

Knox will be observing Matariki on Sunday 16 July this year. One of the conventions at Matariki in te Ao Maori is to speak out, in community, the names of those who have died in the last year. We did this for the first time last year, and a number of people who spoke out (or in our large building "shouted out") said it was a good thing to do.

You don't need to let Matthew know whose name you plan to shout out, but please spend the next while thinking about whether you have a name that comes to mind.



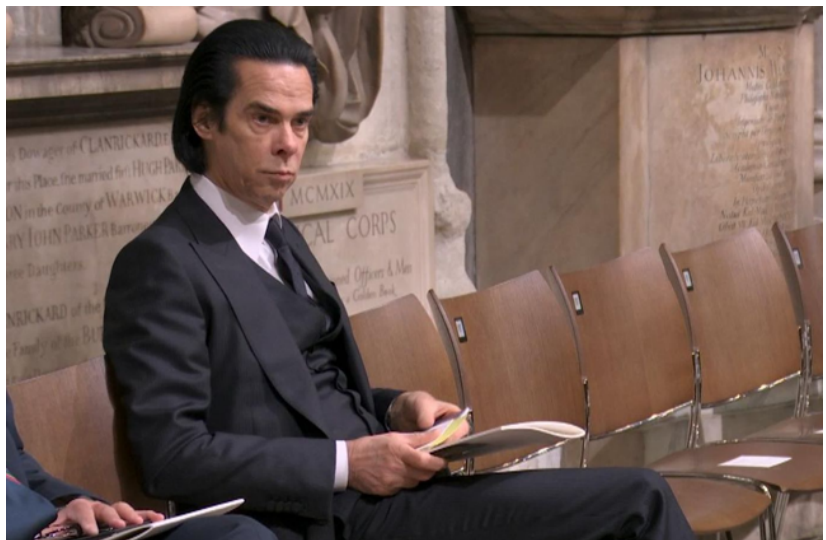
The Lord's Prayer in te reo Māori

With the considered reflection and whole-hearted support of the Knox Council, we've started saying the Lord's Prayer in te reo Māori once a month for the next wee while. We plan to say the Lord's Prayer in te reo on the second Sunday of each month.

An article explaining the rationale for this ("Language in Church") was published in the last edition of Knox Life, which you can find here:

[http://www.knoxchurch.co.nz/data/knoxlife/202305240000_KNOX_LIFE - June 2023.pdf](http://www.knoxchurch.co.nz/data/knoxlife/202305240000_KNOX_LIFE_-_June_2023.pdf)

Nick Cave speaks about faith, grief and music



When Charles III was being crowned, questions were raised about why Nick Cave (an Australian Gothic singer) was in the congregation. Familiar with Nick's work for many years now, I yet to have been instructed on how or why Nick was invited. But there he is! Here's a link to an interview with the BBC. Background to the interview ought to include that Nick's son, fifteen year old Arthur, fell from a cliff and died. Nick speaks about this, his early life in the Christian faith, his attempts to broaden his faith to cope with his loss as a parent.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=04VEORM4_YY



Genocide is biblical.

Loving your enemy is biblical.

But only one is Christlike.

Slavery is biblical.

Chainbreaking is biblical.

But only one is Christlike.

Patriarchy is biblical.

Counter-cultural elevation of women is biblical.

But only one is Christlike.

Retributive violence is biblical.

Grace-filled restoration is biblical.

But only one is Christlike.

Segregation is biblical.

Unity is biblical.

But only one is Christlike.

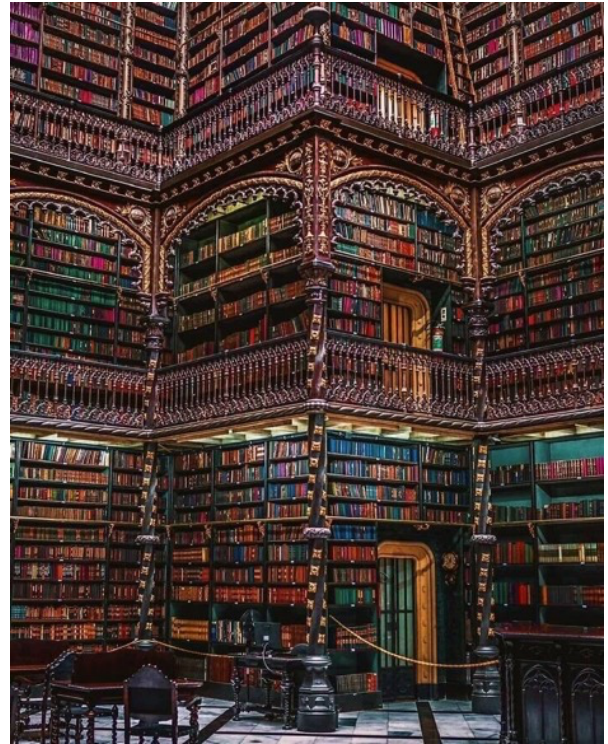
Christ transforms, not the Bible. Be wary of those who know one but not the other.

Jordan Harrell

Where to find books



*Spellbinding bookstore
in Chengdu, Sichuan, China*



*The Reading Room – Royal Portuguese
Cabinet Of Reading – Rio De Janeiro, Brazil*

BUT - don't forget that we have a really good library at Knox, located in the hall of the Knox Centre. Either take a seat and enjoy reading in the hall, or fill out a borrowing card and take a book home.

Environmental matters

While his work engagements took him around the country, whenever he was in Ōtautahi Christchurch, Wolfgang Rhexus worshipped at Knox. Located in Golden Bay, Wolfgang is concerned to advance, as he can, awareness around environmental responsibility. Recently he sent me an email:

Hi Matthew

*How are you? Time is running quick, years had passed by and I am still in Golden Bay. Recently, I've updated and expanded the "**Reflections on Corona and Easter**" with the short summarising chapter "**You are Guardians...**" to include some inspiring photos from Golden Bay High School, some quotes and links to the recently held and very thoughtful World Day of Prayer 2023 service, and to **Eco Church New Zealand**. Perhaps this year's Easter would be a good time to reflect again.*

For details, please see https://SolarPeace.org/e/20200412_CoronaEaster.htm.



RULES FOR DOING THEOLOGY



1. First, lay your weapons down. Bow your head in prayer, and come in all unguarded.
2. Allow yourself to be served. Turn and serve your neighbor.
3. Your work space is a practice field, a place for exercise. Polished perfection is not required.
4. Read. Seek intimacy with the scriptures. Read things more than once. Read across time, space, culture, ethnicity, experience. Read things that are too hard. Read things that are too easy.
5. Theology is personal work. Theology is interpersonal work. Don't believe claims that any theology is objective; it's all personal and interpersonal and contextual.
6. Open yourself to learning from others. Trust that what you're learning matters for your life, body, church, vocation. Be lavish with your attention. Pay attention to others, to texts, to God, to your own body and soul.
7. Reading isn't the only practice that matters. Commune. Worship. Pray. Wonder. Adore. Love the LORD your God with your heart, mind, and strength. Learn with philosophers and poets and scientists. Pay attention to your gut. Use your imagination. Do not quench the Spirit.
8. Knowing that God is God, relax into the fact that you will not master this subject. Let the subject master you. Embrace mystery over mastery. God is the point of the enterprise.
9. Make a mess. Fail. Try again. Grow in grace. Repent and forgive.

TO FILL TWO PRECIOUS HOURS

This reflection was written by Matthew in May 2000, as an editorial for the newsletter of St George's, Takapuna. He was 36 years old then. Used as a Church Council devotion in May 2023, a request was made that it be included in the next pastoral newsletter.

“If I had two hours given to me,
with no limitations, I would . . .”



I'd begin in New York by spending fifteen minutes listening to Tony Bennett sing slow songs in Central Park. Since I like the way he responds to audiences, I'd make it a public performance rather than a private audience. I'd spend another fifteen minutes catching a couple of anthems at King's College in Cambridge. I'd take half an hour to eat

something nice at the little side walk restaurant I visited by a broad Venice canal in 1990, and I'd have a rerun of the sunset that turned the whole waterscape orange. I'd have a bottle of Te Mata's Coleraine Cabernet Sauvignon on the table. I'd spend twenty minutes coaxing third formers off the top of an abseiling wall, and watching the exhilaration on their faces as, with their fears conquered in the first descent, they rushed up the steps to take the plunge again. I'd go for a ten minute motorcycle ride on a cold, clear South Island night. I'd spend five minutes singing Byrd's "Justorum Animae" with friends in the atrium of the War Memorial Museum. I'd spend five minutes falling asleep, and five minutes soaking my feet in a hot pool on a cold, still morning in Rotorua. For five minutes I'd lose myself in a novel where I really like the characters. I'd make sure the five minutes didn't include the final chapter, so that I didn't experience that sense of loss I sometimes get when my characters reach the end of their interaction with me. For the remaining ten minutes I'd attend a party (without noise) where all my distance- or time-separated friends were present. In the closing minute of the party, I'd invite my friends to join me in thanking whoever it was who gave me the two hour gift.

Then, I guess I'd have to go back to my normal pace and place, among all the ordinary limitations that constitute a real experience of life. That wouldn't be so bad! I'm typing this article on an ancient computer on my desk at the manse. The window is open and some plant in the garden is releasing its wonderful night time fragrance which I can smell from here. I'm listening to Tony Bennett on the gramophone, and this silly exercise of filling up an

imaginary two hour block seems to have awoken in me an appreciation of the quality of this present moment.

Jesus once pointed to some sparrows and said their living within the moment was something we could learn from. Isaiah coined the well loved phrase: “this is the day that the Lord has made - let us rejoice and be glad in it.” What can you do today, to treat yourself into receiving this day as a gift from God? Perhaps you could start by finishing the sentence: “If I had two hours given to me, with no limitations, I would . . .”

Sermon Practice



Sermon Practice videos continue being posted on Youtube each week. Not many people watch them, but it's a good offering for those who, for some reason or another, can't attend worship physically but want to participate in worship. If you would like to go on the email list, so that you can receive a link for each Sunday's sermon, just contact the office.

Sunday 25 June, Jesus encourages us to think more carefully about the people and things to whom and which we are willing to surrender our anxiety. In a speech about being brave and defiant about important things, he calls us not to worry about matters that are irrelevant. Do we have a good handle on what to fear and not to fear? <https://youtu.be/9Gdr53teSls>

Sunday 18 June, a collage of pastoral interactions, interspersed with scenes from the ministry of Jesus, as he has compassion for the people he sees as harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. He calls people of faith to join in the work of blessing, since the harvest is huge and the labourers are few. <https://youtu.be/wEM3-3FM1Ls>

Sunday 11 June, set around a Frank Sargeson short story, Cowpats, we explore Jesus' descent into engagement with people who've been declared "religiously unclean". Consorting with tax collectors, menstruating women and dead children, Jesus pushes the boundaries of what his society can cope with. In doing so, he expresses the determined inclusive love of God. <https://youtu.be/HYs0mMOL-BE>

Sunday 4 June, on Trinity Sunday, we look at the great commission Jesus gave to the disciples to go out into God's world, baptising people in the name of the "Father, Son and Holy Spirit". We look at how this injunction may have sat within the capacities of a broken worshipping stretched between faith and doubt, formed by the One whose authority was an "easy yoke". The sermon ends with the reading of a Trinitarian affirmation written by John Bell of the Iona Community. <https://youtu.be/h3IYBgY92AM>

Material for Knox Life

I will probably produce another newsletter in August. If you have any material you think might go well into the next edition of Knox Life (September), just send it to the office. The deadline for contributions will be advertised through the Sunday notices for a few weeks before the deadline.

Arohanui, Matthew.

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