



KNOX CHURCH

love faith outreach community justice

Pastoral Newsletter

1 August, 2024

Kia ora Knox Community,

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

Civilization

Posted on facebook by Kelly Hudson, 28 April, 2024

Years ago, anthropologist Margaret Mead was asked by a student what she considered to be the first sign of civilization in a culture. The student expected Mead to talk about fishhooks or clay pots or grinding stones.

But no. Mead said that the first sign of civilization in an ancient culture was a femur (thighbone) that had been broken and then healed. Mead explained that in the animal kingdom, if you break your leg, you die. You cannot run from danger, get to the river for a drink or hunt for food. You are meat for prowling beasts. No animal survives a broken leg long enough for the bone to heal.

A broken femur that has healed is evidence that someone has taken time to stay with the one who fell, has bound up the wound, has carried the person to safety and has tended the person through recovery. Helping someone else through difficulty is where civilization starts, Mead said."

We are at our best when we serve others. Be civilized!



Flourish - a life well lived (Saturday 17 August, 10:00am - 2:30pm)

A seminar on human flourishing, exploring what a life well lived looks like. Four different perspectives and the opportunity for questions and discussion. Antony Nihoniho: How tāngata relationships spiritually & physically with whenua engage with collective wellbeing. Maja Whitaker: How Christian communities can embody and offer a holistic form of human flourishing. Jolyon White: Pathways for pursuing biblical justice without burnout, disillusionment, or motivation by guilt. Gareth Bezett: Living well by doing right; virtue and Christian ethics. Morning tea will be provided but bring your own lunch, or Riverside market is just a short walk away.

95 Tuam Street. Register here:

https://events.humanitix.com/human-flourishing-seminar/tickets?fbclid=IwZXh0bgNhZW0BMAABHTFmYcDHFJq8xMkaE1Iz97uvHuXUE1FHctMrAXxUAIG8hxUCBc0rZ_A3UQ_aem_3_Net5pBQsBhO2RipMfDaA

In my kitchen

While recently I've enjoyed cooking some lovely new dishes from exotic places (Pork Ginataang with Pumpkin and Beans - Philippines; prawn, scallop and corn dumplings - Malaysia; chili orange beef - China), today I made a very old-fashioned brussels sprout tray bake. It was hot, honest, cheesy and nourishing. Who could hate a brussels sprout? By the way, thank you for continuing to supply Te Whare Roimata with food for their foodbank. Food at the supermarket continues to cost more than some (now more than some?) can afford.



An address at the Royal School of Church Music's AGM

Invited to deliver a talk at the Annual General Meeting of the Christchurch branch of the Royal School of Church Music, and reflecting on how I had been educated in music, I found myself reflecting on the work of Neil Gyan, who ran the music department at Pakuranga College when I was there, and who recently had died. Speaking of Neil's work, somewhat to my surprise I became a wee bit teary. Good teachers are such a blessing, often not suitably acknowledged. After my talk, I was thanked for my having become teary by someone called Denis Gyan, organist at St Barnabas, Fendalton. Denis just happens to be Neil's brother. What a small world it is! *(In the photo, Neil is on the bike - steering - and Denis is on the left.).* I wonder if there are any teachers for whose work you are grateful.



The Season of Creation

The Revised Common Lectionary (see the article on page 7 for its origins) allows for September to be observed as the "Season of Creation". This year, I'll be using the month to explore the senses through which we engage with the created order.

1 Sept	The senses of touch and taste 	<p>As we celebrate COMMUNION (bread of the earth taken in human hands, then eaten), we explore the gifts of touch and taste.</p> <p>I plan to bring some of my famous Afghan biscuits to morning tea. Maybe you might bring something also.</p>
8 Sept	The sense of smell 	<p>OUR ANNUAL SPRING FLOWER SERVICE</p> <p>Having meditated on "fragrant offerings", we will distribute posies of flowers to home-cast Knox people.</p> <p>Maybe you would like to wear perfume, cologne or floral patterns to church</p>
15 Sept	The sense of hearing 	<p>THE EAR - AND THE VOICE</p> <p>The blessing of lovely sounds. We hear, but do we listen? What do we hear? Truth, love, amens, alleluias sung by other members of God's creation? Sometimes, do we hear things we pretend we haven't heard? What's that about?</p>
22 Sept	The sense of vision 	<p>THE EYE</p> <p>Looking for form and colour, for beauty, for signs of love, for what needs to be seen, for what needs to be done.</p> <p>The role of the children of God in seeing Christ where others don't. Seeing and "seeing".</p>
29 Sept	The theorized extra sense - place within space 	<p>THE THEORISED EXTRA SENSE</p> <p>While, in the olden days, it was taught that there were only five senses, now an extra vestibular sense is recognised: it is the sense of where our body is in space.</p> <p>We'll use this sense to reflect on our place within our part of the world, and also our time within the times - "the signs of the times". Who are we as people of time and space?</p>

A free Steinway Piano

Some time ago, someone called "Amanda Harvey" offered Knox a Steinway grand piano owned by her recently deceased husband. I wrote her a nice email, comiserating her on the death of her husband, asking her about his taste of music, and how we might use his piano in a way that would honour what he valued. I offered to visit her to talk about all of this. A return email discouraged me from visiting, and



made no reference to her late husband's musical values. She told me instead (in now broken language) that she just wanted rid of the piano, because it was in storage and costing her money every month. It then transpired that the piano's storage location was Florida, USA (photo attached). The next email would have instructed me, I'm sure, to send money to release the non-existent piano from storage - and then to pay for its transport to Aotearoa New Zealand. I reported the SCAM to Netsafe (Aotearoa New Zealand's organisation for online safety).

I, myself, had to cancel my credit card recently, because its details fell into the hands of other online fraudsters. There are plenty of increasingly crafty people out there who are getting very good at stealing your money or personal details. PLEASE BE CAREFUL ONLINE! Also be careful about people who "cold call" you on the phone. And indeed, I'm told that fraudulent people are going door to door in Ōtautahi just now, pretending to be collecting for Hato Hone, St John.

Reporting an incident

You can report online issues including fraud, privacy breaches, online trading complaints, or online harassment, bullying and abuse to us. Our team will review your report and give you advice and information, and let you know the options available to you. If you are in danger or a crime is being committed, call 111 or visit your nearest Police Station immediately.

[Report to Netsafe](#)

THE PUBLIC QUESTIONS GROUP

The Knox Church Public Questions Group is compiling material it can use when the public is invited to respond to the Treaty Principles Bill through the select committee process. We don't yet know the schedule for public submissions to the bill, but we are "getting ourselves ready".

Lovely flowers in the garden

This is a photo of the house I lived in while being the Dean / Deputy Master of Knox College, Ōtepoti Dunedin, from 2011 to 2013. At one point during a cost-saving "shake up of staff and resources", it was decided that payments to florists could be reduced if the College grew its own flowers. So it was that a part of the lawn outside my house was turned into a flower bed. Eventually, it was decided that the harvesting of the flowers and the extra care required from the gardeners who now had to mow around a flower bed made home-grown flowers uneconomic.



When it became clear that the flower bed was to be pulled up and mowed over, I rescued a few dahlia bulbs, which (having been planted in Avonhead, then in Papanui, and then lifted for the most recent frosty Ōtautahi winter) now are in a box in my garage (wrapped in straw and newspaper). The next time they enjoy being in the ground, and make lovely blooms, I'll take and publish a photo. I might call the photo "uneconomic blooms".

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BTW, this wee house (85 square metres) was carefully restructured and refurbished for me before I moved in. It was a comfortable house with tree views from the living room and sun that shone into parts of the house in the afternoons. The second bedroom (which I used for guests) had space only for a standard double bed, but not a wardrobe. For the hanging of clothes, we put hooks on the bedroom door. Everything was pretty "tight". Meanwhile, to meet significant housing needs (especially in Tāmaki Makaurau), the government is working on legislating for the building of apartments of 25 square metres. I need to look at plans of what can be squeezed into 25m². I can't imagine that a 25m² apartment could be workable for a full, hospitable life. I currently have 136m².



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be squeezed into 25m². I can't imagine that a 25m² apartment could be workable for a full, hospitable life. I currently have 136m².

How much living space do you have? How much does anyone need?

Sanctuary Installations

Rochelle and Barbara Howley continue to decorate the sanctuary for our special services, and provide us (as part of that) with pulpit and lectern falls (the decorated fabrics that hang from our reading desk and preaching place). The latest were installed for our Matariki service. My trawling of cyber-space (in all my usual places), looking for how other churches had observed Matariki, revealed no such care taken to represent the stars and Māori motifs in sanctuary spaces. So thank you, Rochelle and Barbara.



What is the meaning of life? That was all – a simple question; one that tended to close in on one with years, the great revelation had never come. The great revelation perhaps never did come. Instead, there were little daily miracles, illuminations, matches struck unexpectedly in the dark...

Virginia Woolf, "To the Lighthouse"



I'm so grateful to Pete Majendie for loaning us some of his artworks, so that we could "theme" two of our June services around them. During the second service, called "Ephemerality", Pete created a coffee-grounds work giving notice that it would be destroyed during morning tea - ephemeral! Our reaction to its destruction gave us much to ponder concerning how we struggle with ephemerality. Thanks so much, Pete. Until next time!

Bible Readings

At Knox, while sometimes we choose Bible readings independently (to follow local events like Matariki, Waitangi Day, ANZAC Day, Pete Majendie artworks, other special services), generally our services follow themes based on readings prescribed by the "revised common lectionary". Following the lectionary means that Knox coordinates with many other churches around the world in its devotions, explorations of faith-themes, and intercessory prayer life.

The revised common lectionary posts four readings for each Sunday:

- a First Testament reading
- a Psalm
- an Epistle
- a Gospel reading

My process (as preacher), most weeks, is to look at the readings, and choose one or two that are "speaking to me". I turn those chosen readings into a sermon, then a service. Generally, I try not to include in worship readings to which I'm not going to refer in the preaching.

People sometimes ask me who decides the revised common lectionary. The Revised Common Lectionary, first published in 1992, derives from The Common Lectionary of 1983, both based on the Ordo Lectionem Missae of 1969, a post-Vatican II ground-breaking revision of the Roman Lectionary. The churches involved in producing the revised common lectionary are:

- The Anglican Church of Canada
- Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)
- Christian Reformed Church in North America
- The Episcopal Church
- Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
- Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada
- Free Methodist Church in Canada
- International Commission on English in the Liturgy
- The Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod
- Polish National Catholic Church
- Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)
- The Presbyterian Church in Canada
- Reformed Church in America
- Roman Catholic Church in the United States
- Roman Catholic Church in Canada
- Unitarian Universalist Christian Fellowship
- The United Church of Canada
- United Church of Christ
- The United Methodist Church

Te Tiriti matters



On two Tuesday evenings, 16 and 23 July, a small group of Knox people met in the chapel to watch two videos, "Belonging in this land", produced by Common Grace Aotearoa New Zealand.

The first video looked at:

1. the historical context within which the Treaty of Waitangi (Te Tiriti) came into being,
2. the motivation of the emancipation movement connected missionaries who supported it,
3. the social and economic situations that made it relevant,
4. the two different versions in which it was circulated - some of the key disparities between the English and te reo Māori versions,
5. how it was preceded by He Whakaputanga, the Māori Declaration of Independence.

The second video looked at:

1. how Treaty commitments were broken by the Crown,
2. how Māori responded to the broken commitments - Māori religious resistance movements, social withdrawal, war, parliamentary representation, land marches, the resurgence in the speaking of te reo Māori.

The group found the videos stimulating, full of useful historical detail and welcome invitations to discuss the church's part in the on-going evolution of our nation. You can watch the videos at home. Here are the links:

Session One: <https://vimeo.com/942865102/25e1aa2dd3>

Session Two: <https://vimeo.com/953800093/e8ca68e801?share=copy>

A Knox Response

Occasionally, the General Assembly sends documents to parishes for reflection and comment. The most recent was a paper on the theology of ordination. The Assembly had called for the document to be written to guide its pending deliberations on a proposed "new order of ministry" floated in a paper suggesting reform to the way that people are trained for ministry. Knox Council considered the paper, and came up with this response:

Theology of Ordination

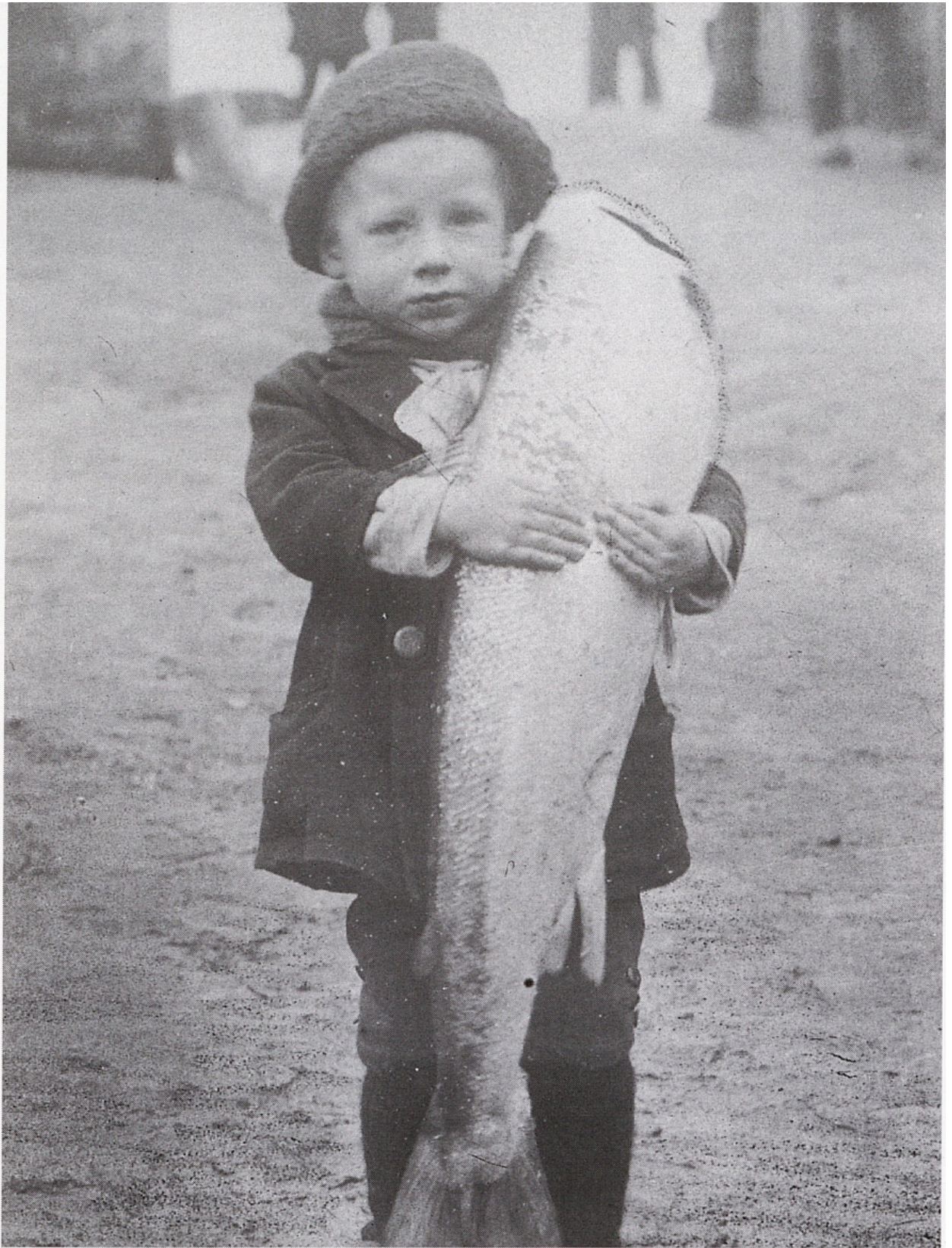
The Council of Knox Church, Ōtautahi Christchurch, considered the paper: The Theology of Ordination, and is pleased to be invited to respond.

We understand that the paper was produced to give theological context to PCANZ's deliberations about establishing a "new order of ministry" in light of the TELT report. Being generally positive about the Church's having called for the writing of the document, we have four comments to make:

1. We have heard that some parishes are being served by people who are not as well prepared for spiritual, liturgical or pastoral leadership as perhaps the needs of the church might require. Knox affirms entirely the principle of people being well trained and supported for responsible tasks within the Church.
2. We can't see how the document informs the PCANZ, with respect to key skills or foci for formation, as it explores the "new order of ministry". We imagine that the new order will be fashioned to address highly contextual situations - as was the LOM proposal some years ago. We wonder, in fact, what the difference might be between the LOM model and the "new order" ministry model.
3. We found the language of the document old fashioned.
4. We note that while sexual practice is the single issue over which the PCANZ recently has legislated an ordination prohibition, no mention is made of this in the document.

[The document states that "whatever may be learned from other human communities about the principles of good governance, the Church is to be ordered, above all, by the truth of the gospel".]

Given that the welcoming of diversity is a widely embraced principle of good governance, and given that the PCANZ has elected to set itself apart from that wide practice in the interests of the gospel, we encourage the PCANZ to consider how the exclusion of rainbow people from ordained service might actually be a failure of the "truth of the gospel". The Council of Knox Ōtautahi Christchurch does indeed consider the exclusion to be such a failure.



Henry's family were too poor to get him a puppy.

When two or three are gathered . . .

For a long time now, I have been video recording my sermons and posting them online on the Youtube website, so that people who can't attend worship (because of sickness, isolation requirements, or the pure fact that they identify with Knox but don't live in Ōtautahi Christchurch). I call the videos "Sermon Practice", because

literally I am practising the sermons. Calling them "Practice" is a way of keeping the audience expectations realistic. They are not high production "bells and whistles". I do sometimes do a "second take" of various sections that I have mangled in the practice - so



there *is* some quality control exercised. I don't want anything completely ham-fisted going out with Knox's name on it.

After church on Sunday 21 July, having delivered a sermon that became quite intense (as it engaged with the chanting of "fight, fight, fight" by Republican's in the United States), I watched the video version. While the live, in-church version was quite powerful (I think), the recorded version seemed fairly flat. Same words; quite different effect.

I wondered why this was so. Was it that the second version had benefitted from having been practised?

Or is there something about surrounding a sermon with other things (prayers, hymns, anthems) that gives it a different spirit or life? Or is there something about the presence of **people on site** who are following the story as it's told? Jesus once said that when two or three are gathered, he is there [Matthew 18:20]. Could the live version be different because "he" is present in it? I wonder what he meant when he said that he would be present when two or three are gathered - and whether we are sensing something of it as live versions become quite different from solos recorded in private.

The sermon in question is still available (for another couple of weeks) at:

<https://youtu.be/C6ZPFEH3KSg>

It was a disappointing cruise, rained a lot. But they had a great buffet; I had two of everything.



Material for Knox Life

If you have any material you think might go well into the next edition of Knox Life, 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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