

# St Matthew's Anglican Church, Morrinsville

April 14<sup>th</sup>, 2024

## We Are Witnesses

**Website: [stmatthewsmorrinsville.org.nz](http://stmatthewsmorrinsville.org.nz)**

Readings: Acts 3:12–19

Psalm 4

Luke 24:36b–48

**Sentence:** Then he said to them, 'These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you—that everything written about me in the law of Moses, the prophets, and the psalms must be fulfilled.' *Luke 24:44*

**Collect:** Ever-present God, we desire your transformative spirit among us. Yet, we confess that many times we only stare, mouths gaping and knees trembling, at the sight of your miraculous presence. Forgive us for when we stand in disbelief. Fill us with Christ's peace, Peter's conviction, and the healed one's joy so we may be your witnesses. Amen.

### PREPARATION FOR SUNDAY.

**Acts 3:12–19**

**Question:** Story telling can be a very good therapy to help us better know our purpose for existence as Christians. What do you think?

**Prayer:** O God, may the good news of Jesus continue to make a difference today.

**Psalm 4**

**Question:** Is there a right time to give praise to God? Why do we give praise?

**Prayer:** May your Spirit live with us and bear much fruit to your glory, God of Love.

**Luke 24:36b–48**

**Question:** Do you feel the presence of the Crucified and Risen Christ in your worship gatherings? In what way?

**Prayer:** Risen Lord Jesus, breathe on us so that we can witness clearly and truly.

### SPECIFIC PRAYERS FOR THIS WEEK

- We pray for North and Central Africa countries facing drought and tribal uprisings that cause people to flee from their homes, and we pray for the relief agencies trying to help.
- We pray for those who are sick, especially Colin (and Sandy), Sarah-Anne (Val and Lance's daughter), Pen (Mary's sister-in-law), Lynda (Janice's daughter), Jim (Elizabeth's brother).
- Pray for all families mourning the death of a loved ones.

### GIVE THANKS

- For the many young people applying for Diocesan School for Girls and that the people making these decisions have Godly wisdom.
- For the school holidays fast approaching and the related plans.
- For the City Missions and our own Foodbank in Morrinsville who are continually living on the edge of faith and constantly needing help with providing food for people in need.

## FOCUS

A thread running through this week's texts is that of being a witness – of what has been, of what is unfolding, of something to be revealed. To be a witness, as these texts understand it, is to exist in complex tensions of doubt and evidence, astonishment and faith, terror and peace, disbelief and joy, of distress and hope, of who we are and who we could be. To be a witness is to have an encounter with God that transforms us and compels us to act. Peter speaks of the people in condemning terms, depicting them as having rejected Jesus, painting a stark contrast to those whose lives are marked by the power of faith in the resurrected Christ, evidenced in the wholly transformed life of the formerly lame man. The good news of Peter's sermon is that, through repentance, all those present may be forgiven and restored to wholeness. Cleopas and his companion encounter Jesus on the Emmaus road. The eleven disciples plus their companions, gathered and listening to the Emmaus pair tell of meeting and sharing a meal with Jesus. These events mirror the events of last week's text from John 20. This time, however, the disciples are in the position of Thomas. They are hearing another's account of meeting the risen Jesus and are not able to overcome their doubt without the evidence of sight and touch. This text presents two significant and interlocking themes. First, as also happens in Acts 3, a miraculous event occurs, and, as a response, those who are witnesses to the event are called to repent. To be a witness is not a passive event. It is a call to action. The gathered followers are not only observers of an amazing story; they are to be participants in that amazing story. Second, repentance is an act of devotion to God, an act of worship, as is sacrifice (Psalm 4:5) and purification (1 John 3:3). In Luke, Jesus shares food (v. 41) and word (v. 44) with his followers. These are sacred acts. Luke 24, along with this week's other texts, makes a deep connection between being witnesses to the love of God and participating in the worship of God. To be a witness is to respond to the call of God. Each of this week's texts asserts that we all bear the burden of the sins we have perpetrated and are called to repentance. Each text is equally clear that God's complete forgiveness is perpetually offered to all.

**How might we express repentance as part of our response to God's call to be witnesses?**

**How might our worship reflect our understanding of and our commitment to being witnesses?**

**Prayer: Lord, teach us to love and pray and to enjoy telling others of what you have done in our own lives.**

**Next Sunday: 21<sup>st</sup> April 2024. 8.30am and 10am  
Wednesday 10am**

**Readings – Acts 4:5–12; Psalm 23; 1 John 3:16–24; John 10:11–18**

<b>21<sup>st</sup> Apr</b>	<b>Sidesperson</b> Meg, Macy & Greer	<b>Welcomer</b> Jacky	<b>Data</b> Barbara	<b>MOW</b> Margie	<b>Bible Reader</b> Lyn R & Vince	<b>Prayers</b> Margie	<b>Chalice</b> Vince	<b>Morning Tea</b> Joy & Peter
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**Our AGM will be on April 28<sup>th</sup> after the 10am service. Please consider carefully whom you would like to elect to these leadership roles. Nomination forms will be available at the back of the Church.**

**The recorder is in the process of completing the receipts for people and will be available early next week.**

**A big thank you to all who have given over the year – whether by cash, direct debits or calf rearing. THANK YOU - WE CAN NOT SURVIVE WITHOUT YOU.**

**If you would like to begin a financial contribution please let Diane know or simply go in line and set up a direct debit with your name as reference. Bank account is St Matthews Church 02 0368 0027228 00.**

**Vicar: Val Riches 078880878 or 0274448286, Lance 0275553286 Email [val@wtanglican.nz](mailto:val@wtanglican.nz)**