

St Matthew's Anglican Church, Morrinsville

April 7th, 2024

Seen, Heard, and Known

Website: stmatthewsmorrinsville.org.nz

Readings: Acts 4 :32-35

Psalm 133

John 20:19-31

Sentence: Jesus said to them again, 'Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you.' *John 19:21*

Collect: Christ, who bears the marks of love, grant us peace and open our eyes to see you among us. Blessed One, whether we see or don't see, may we believe, and through that belief grant us life in your holy and mighty name. Amen.

PREPARATION FOR SUNDAY.

Acts 4 :32-35

Question: What is your heart like towards other believers in your local church?

Prayer: Almighty God, help us to experience your great grace and love today.

Psalm 133

Question: How are you able to help the church to be the diverse community in unity that our heavenly Father longs for his family to be?

Prayer: Gracious God, help us to glorify you by living in your unity today.

John 20:19-31

Question: Thank God for his peace, and think about how you can "step out" for him in the world today.

Prayer: Thank you Lord Jesus for pleading our cause to the Father and being the sacrifice that atones for our sins. Please help us to walk as children of the light, connecting in loving fellowship and experiencing your forgiveness.

SPECIFIC PRAYERS FOR THIS WEEK

- We pray for the families for whom the Easter weekend was marred by tragedy and loss of life.
- We pray for aid workers risking their lives getting help to people in Gaza and for the families who have lost a loved one in this war.
- We pray for the people personally affected by the ongoing destruction in Ukraine
- 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), Mary Allen our SC coordinator and others we may know.
- Pray for all families mourning the death of a loved ones, especially for Garth Smith family (Gayle Lamason's brother)

GIVE THANKS

- For family and friends who help us enjoy an Easter break; and the joy of answered prayer
- For the First responders risking themselves, in search of people in the rumble in Taiwan
- For the many people who took part in the various services over Easter and the fellowship enjoyed – especially during the walk of witness

FOCUS

The Season of Easter is one of new life and new birth. Filled with the excitement of what God has done and is doing, we do not stay quiet. Instead, we are sent to proclaim and to continue the physical acts of Christ on earth.

Human activity and all creation reveal God's way. Acts 4:32–35 provides a glimpse of a community that faithfully responds to what God is doing among them. The presence of the Holy Spirit, which drives us to act in response to gospel news, fosters the community's selfless giving. Psalm 133 is a song of ascent sung by pilgrims arriving in Zion. The reference to kindred is not one of bloodline but to their common faith and practice. Their coming together from all over to one common place is an act of devotion. The message of the song rings through the context of the church, too; God blesses unity. The disciples are gathered behind locked doors. Likely, the glow of lanterns was kept low. Mary Magdalene had told the disciples of what she had seen in the garden that morning, and they are fearful of how the Jewish authorities might respond to Jesus' missing body. Appearing to them, the Light of the World must make his presence known. Jesus came with a message, "As the Father has sent me, so I send you." Sent, not only to proclaim the gospel and the message of forgiveness but to grant forgiveness themselves, and possessing the power of the Holy Spirit, they begin to do the work of Christ.

Thomas was not present for this closed-door meeting. The other disciples share the news that they have seen the risen Christ. Thomas rejects their accounts; instead declares that he will not believe until he sees it for himself. In their very first opportunity to do what Jesus sent them to do, the disciples encounter disbelief from one of their own. A week later, Jesus appears to them behind closed doors again. Thomas receives what he asked, yet Christ and the author of John in v. 29 and then in v. 31 declare that new life is not in seeing but in belief.

Jesus sends and forgives. From the garden, the risen Christ sent Mary to the disciples, and then sent the disciples to share forgiveness in the world. When obstacles arose, Christ continued to show up and provide for the disciples' work of sharing the gospel. The disciples still go out, as we see in Acts, to share the message of Jesus Christ with the world while depending on the Spirit to keep them unified. Christ is the unifying factor of the church, and Christ's work still needs to be carried out in the world.

Will you go where Jesus sends?

What is needed for the breath of Christ to touch your life, as individuals and as the church?

Prayer: Dear Lord, thank you for all you do in our lives. Help us when we are weak and help us to be built up in unity.

Next Sunday: 14th April, 2024. 8.30am and 10am

Wednesday 10am

We Are Witnesses

Readings – Acts 3:12–19; Psalm 4; 1 John 3:1–7; Luke 24:36b–48

14th Apr	Sidesperson Anne M	Welcomer Trish & Rosemary	Data Shantal	MOW Jacky	Bible Reader Barbara & Diane	Prayers Lance	Chalice Lyn R	Morning Tea Margie & Sue H
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**With the installation of a larger kitchenette in the church the choir robes wardrobe has been reduced and the robes stored – if anyone would like one of them you are welcome to them
Our AGM will be on April 28th after the 10am service. Please consider carefully whom you would like to elect to these leadership roles.**

DEVONSHIRE TEAS this Saturday morning 9.30 am Come and enjoy

Choir Robes - Choir robes from previous times have been retrieved while renovations have taken place. These are now longer required for services. If you would like have one contact Chris at the Office. - or 021 894811

Vicar: Val Riches 078880878 or 0274448286, Lance 0275553286 Email val@wtanglican.nz