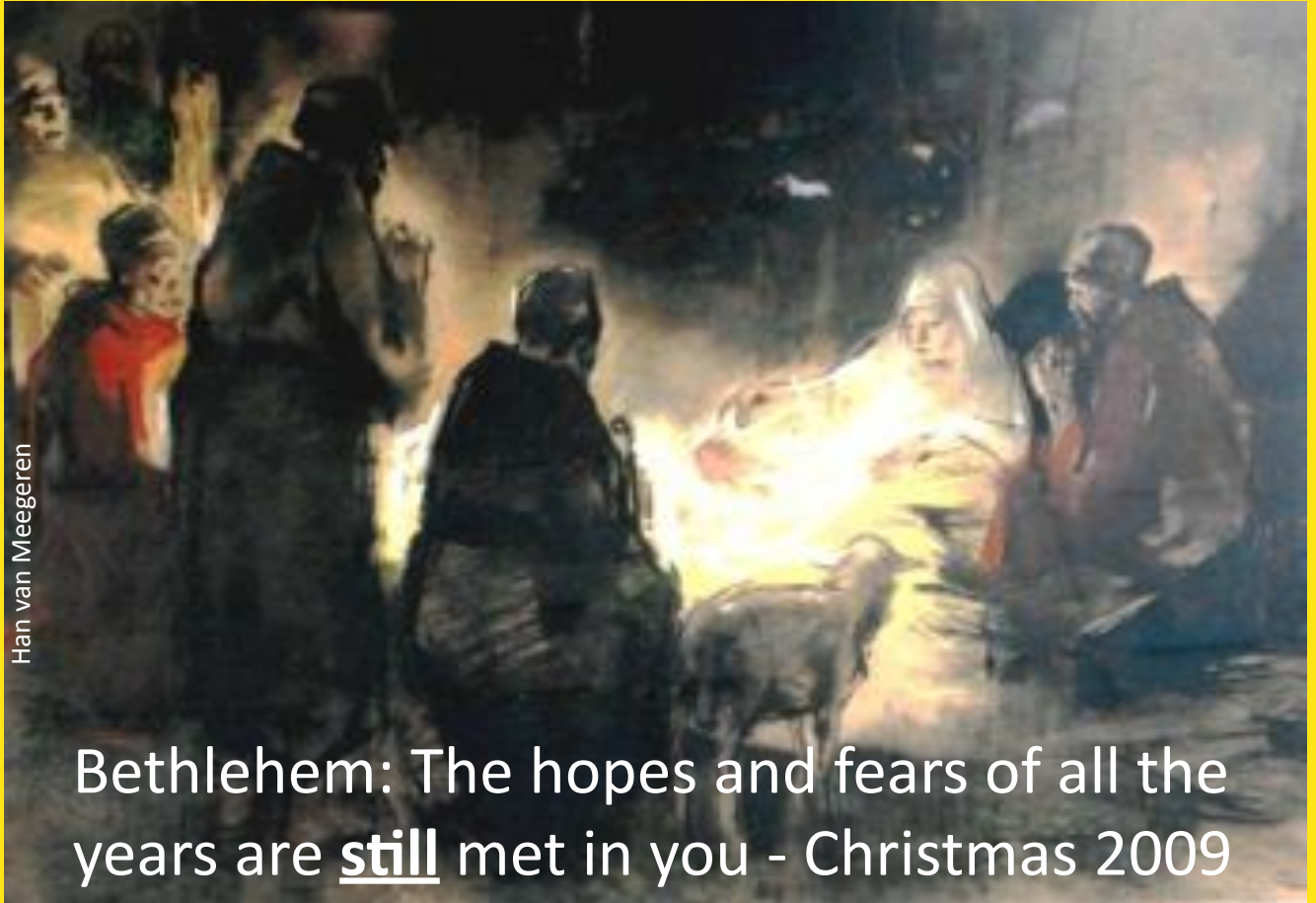




Summer 2009

Welcome



Han van Meegeren

Bethlehem: The hopes and fears of all the years are still met in you - Christmas 2009



An Israeli observation post near Bethlehem



The security corridor between Israel and Bethlehem. Bethlehem is controlled by the Palestinians



Some Bethlehem children



Peter McClure

The importance of early intervention

I have the privilege of Chairing the Board of World Vision in New Zealand. World Vision NZ is part of the world wide World Vision partnership which focuses its work on children in the 'poorest of the poor' countries.

Many people are surprised to find that World Vision is New Zealand's largest charitable organisation. Our annual income is in excess of \$60m – mostly from every day New Zealanders. The major sources of this income are through child sponsorships and through the 40 Hour Famine which I'm sure most of you will be familiar with.

Recently I was also voted onto the International Board of World Vision. That is a role I won't take up formally until August next year, however I do attend the international board meetings already due to some sub committee involvement I have. At a recent board meeting in Los Angeles I was particularly taken by the presentation made by one of our board members from Ecuador. He was stressing the importance of our 'child focused' work and how critical early intervention is in transforming the communities where we work.

This early intervention applies in not just child security but also in areas like nutrition, and disease prevention.

The key issue is that unless we intervene early then sadly, its often too late and permanent damage occurs. His presentation showed computer images of a cross section of the brains of healthy adults. Coloured areas highlighted the healthy brain activity. He then showed similar scans of adults who, when they were children, suffered sexual abuse. Their brain scans were significantly different. Where in the scans of the healthy adults there were colours showing activity throughout the brain, in the scans of those who had suffered childhood abuse, large sections of the brain had simply shut down. His point was that all the subsequent counseling and support in the world, could not reverse the damage done and that only by providing early intervention, can damage of this nature be averted.

The same issue of early intervention can be seen in many of the countries where World Vision NZ operates. One of our new series of television commercials highlights the issue of what the locals call 'stunted brain'. The film crew travelled with Petra Bagust to Cambodia where we have a number of projects. The film director took his 9 year old daughter, Isabella with him. They shot one commercial showing Isabella along side a 9 year old Cambodian girl. The difference is stark. And sadly the little Cambodian girl has suffered, growing up with malnutrition, and dirty water. This results in a cycle of typhoid, dysentery, and diarrhea and stunted brain. The children never grow to their potential – physically or mentally. This is where early intervention is critical. It's so simple to break the cycle with water filters, proper sanitation and appropriate development that teach the communities where we work, the skills to improve their nutrition.

As "global citizens" we have an obligation to act. And as Christians we are called to act – just read Matthew 25! I encourage you to look at the World Vision website at worldvision.org.nz and to look at Petra's Diary. Look at the television commercial titled 'Stunted Brain' and read more about what we are doing to intervene and to make a difference to these children's lives.

And I ask you to consider what you may do to help make a difference. To 'lend a hand'.

"Our vision for every child, life in all its fullness
Our prayer for every heart, the will to make it so"

Peter is an Elder of our Church





Hospitality - Love in all Languages

The pictures: **Top:** Our son, Walker, his wife, Effina, and our grandson Logan, in Bali. **Middle:** Serina Lee and her parents in Incheon, South Korea. Serina spent one year with us and regularly used her talent as a pianist in worship. **Bottom left:** A traditional Korean meal. Helen Han and Terry Han’s sister in Jeong Ju. Helen and Terry have been members of our church for several years, and our own Hee Kyung our guide and driver. **Bottom right:** Jeff Shin in the De-militarised Zone (DMZ) between North and South Korea. Jeff and Min Shin are members of our church and live in New Zealand. They were on a business visit to South Korea and hosted us in the first days of our visit.

There were two languages that made our journey in Bali, Korea and China inspiring; the language of hospitality and the language of music.

Hospitality - We experienced it in homes, in car parks, in restaurants, in churches. It was offered with bountiful food or sometimes with just a small rice cake. It was offered with big smiles but sometimes tears. It was offered in English, Javanese, Korean, Mandarin and Cantonese and at times in silence or with simple hand gestures. It was sometimes planned and other times it was a, by the way, spontaneous interchange.

The hospitality was marked by a generosity of spirit. I kept thinking of the promise of Jesus. “ For where two or three come together in my name, there am I with them.” Matthew 18: 20. You don’t need to know each other’s language. Love communicates. *Pauline Stewart*



A Baptism

Ethan Matthew Wright was baptised on Sept 20th and he is the son of Tony and Shanlee Wright.



Funerals

George Gilbert - stepfather of GERALYNNE Entwistle. Funeral was held on 23rd October, conducted by Bill Duncan. GERALYNNE is now living at St Andrew’s Village.
Maryrose McKenzie – Funeral on Oct 24th conducted by the Rev David Clark.
Kathleen Paterson – Barbara Fowler’s mother. Funeral on November 20 conducted by the Rev Ron Mills.

Our sincere sympathy is extended to all the families of the bereaved.

Stan Stewart writes:

Pauline's Study Leave Travels 2

Mad dogs and Englishmen and thinking about life



Pauline in a
Bali Street



Stan sits in a Bali
beach shade house

Wondering where are all the people? After all, this is bustling Bali. Well it's midday and in the words of Noel Coward's song, only "Mad dogs and Englishmen go out in the noon-day sun". Everyone but us is snoozing in the shade. On Pauline's study leave tour we boiled in Bali and froze in Beijing - 6 below. Perhaps because of this I developed a noisy cough. But the weather did not keep us from our main task, which was meeting people and finding churches and community centres.

On every little beach headland the Balinese build structures like the one I am sitting in. They are occupied most of the day with people sitting or lying and generally catching the breeze. I found it a good place for thinking. I fell to wondering, "Am I really a religious person?"

Superstition is a major factor in the thinking of Asian life. People look for spirits everywhere. I have heard Muslims, Hindus, Buddhists and Christians talk of surviving in this spirit-filled world in surprisingly similar ways. The basic premise is that God has to be pleased and if you do this he will protect you. People of all these faiths go to extra-ordinary lengths to pray, work and give money to please their God. It's a payback concept. Please and flatter God and he will protect and bless you.

I don't believe that concept at all. I think the favour of God is his free gift in Jesus. We can't earn his approval. He simply wants us to say "Thank you" and share our gratitude with all people. Being religious seems to mean toiling in many different ways to earn God's protection. I am now thinking I must not be a religious person. A rather surprising discovery on my spiritual journey!



St Heliers

Jon Won makes sushi in the Bay Sushi shop. Our church has helped his family for years. We visited his family. What a wonderful welcome! Overwhelming!



Korea



Once again the baton of Session Clerk is being handed over, this time from Betty Bullock to myself. Betty has been acting as Interim Session Clerk since early in the year and has been providing marvelous support to our ministers while keeping the activities of Session and Managers ticking along. I am also very grateful that she is continuing to assist me as I take up the role.

As Erin and I are relatively new to St Heliers Church, perhaps I should provide you with some background as to who we are and where we have come from. Both Erin and I originally were mainlanders who have had the good sense to migrate northwards. We met at Bible Class in Christchurch and after university days moved to the Wellington region and we lived there for about 17 years including a period away in the United States. We attended St Stephens Presbyterian Church in Lower Hutt where I became an elder in 1978. Our next migration step was to Mt Eden in late 1988. With a family of three sons, moving into the Grammar zone had some attraction. Church life for us in Mt Eden focused on

Greyfriars and although we first moved across to St Heliers in 2002, we continued to worship at Greyfriars until the end of 2007 before joining St Heliers Church in 2008. Our time at Greyfriars was an important period for our family as we grew as Christians and gained a fresh understanding of the importance of God's word in an ever increasingly secular world.

Our sons are married; one family lives in Los Angeles, one in Hastings and one in Auckland. We currently have four grandchildren so like the theme for this magazine we are now an inter-generational family. Erin teaches Bible-in-Schools and assists with a Reading Recovery programme while I work from home as a consultant in radiocommunications.

Well that's enough about us for now but please do not hesitate to introduce yourselves to us if you have not already met Erin or myself.

Other changes to Session over recent months have included the recent ordination of two new elders, Vivian Wu and Chris Eady. Session and Managers welcomed them both in October and I'm confident both Vivian and Chris will continue to make excellent contributions to the life of the Church in their new roles.

Finally, on behalf of you all, I would like to express appreciation to all those members who have helped with extra duties and tasks during the time Pauline and Stan have been on leave. It has been great to see the efforts of so many in helping to ensure that our services and other activities are maintained to a high standard. *Alan*

Church Financial Report

As at 30 September, 2009 the Church has an operating cash shortfall of \$11,797. We budgeted for a shortfall of \$11,676.

Offerings and Donations July to September (\$50,631 this year, \$47,503 last year) are up on last year but are 3.2% below budget of \$52,326. We are extremely grateful to members for their continuing support; particularly in these hard times. Should our Offerings and Donations continue to fall short of Budget, it may be necessary for us to undertake a special appeal in order to balance budget.

As at 30 September the church had \$21,919 of uncommitted funds that were available for Parish use.

I would like to thank Andy Picot; your retiring Treasurer, and all the Church staff for the welcome and help they have given me.

Best wishes to you all,

Geoffrey Ehrlich



BAY WALKERS – ALL WELCOME – Fast and Slow –find your match! Every Saturday morning 8.30am sharp – 1 hour walk. Meet above the beach opposite the Moreton Bay Fig Trees on Vellenoweth Green, St Heliers. Final walk for the year will be Saturday 19 Dec. Bay Walkers resume in 2010 on Saturday 6th February.

St Heliers Church and Community Centre

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email: paulinepac@xtra.co.nz

Assistant Minister Rev Stan Stewart:

email: stan.stewart@xtra.co.nz

Operations Manager: Gillian Blower

Community Centre Manager: Leeann Hindman

575 6098 email: centre@sthelierschurch.org.nz

The Church and Community Centre Office is open weekdays 9am to 5pm.

Our web site: www.sthelierschurch.org.nz

A number of publications about our Church and Community Centre are available in the foyer

[Worship - Barbara Spiers]

INTERGENERATIONAL WORSHIP

Thinking about the intergenerational church – from the worship aspect, a number of things come to mind, some obvious, some maybe less so. All our services afford opportunities for families or people of different ages/generations to participate – from door welcoming, powerpoint presentation, music, candle lighting, reading prayers, thoughts for the day, Scripture, the offering, dance and drama, and other activities associated with special Sundays and Seasons.

- ☼ How do we compare with other churches or denominations? Does it matter? More important is how genuinely and enthusiastically we accept and involve people of all ages in worship, and its preparation.
- ☼ Look at the photos often projected or used in our publications – the pride and joy and sense of belonging and accomplishment on the faces in the photos
- ☼ Think about baptisms – there are always children involved
- ☼ Recall Simon and Ella Casey's wedding and the awe on the faces of the two dozen or so children sitting on the floor in the aisle of the church, as members – some Simon's and Ella's generation, some older – participated in the service and at the meal afterwards.
- ☼ Recall, also, the ordination of Vivian Wu and Chris Eady when Pauline included their families – both natural and adoptive – in an act of blessing .



- ☼ Outdoor Waitangi Day service – young and old in the singing group; families of two, three maybe even four generations picnicking in the Dell after the service.
- ☼ Could we do more? A question often in the minds of the Worship Focus Group – and of others.
- ☼ Are there opportunities between or after the services for serving each other and mingling?



- ☼ What is the role of grandparents? Or older 'grandparent-ly' adults who have opportunities and stories to share with children?
- ☼ Are we talking about Sundays only, or is 'church' something much greater than the Sunday hour?
- ☼ Advent and Christmas are family times and our family is wider than those with whom we live, worship, work. What about inviting neighbours to share in our special services; help with the Food Bank project (and what a great way to exercise as a family).

If you have suggestions do talk with Pauline and Stan or a member of the Worship Focus Group.

WORSHIP DURING OUR MINISTERS' LEAVE

The worship Focus Group thank all who so willingly and competently led our worship through October and November while Pauline and Stan were on leave. Prior to their going a few voices were heard to wonder how we would manage – those of us who have 'been there, done that' knew that all would be well – and it has been – very well. Bruce Anderson, Colin Pidgeon and Bill Duncan in their preaching issued challenges and offered new insights, musicians and worship assistants have involved themselves in service preparation, communions have been meaningful, visiting preachers have each worked within our custom yet brought something fresh. Bill Duncan, the Pastoral Care team and Christel have all contributed to the smooth and sympathetic running of three funerals. In all it has been a significant opportunity for growth in worship experience.

Sincere thanks,

Barbara Spiers. Convenor

To think about:

Advent is more than a nice Tale about a baby being born in difficult circumstances. It is the strategy of God and the tactics of the Son. It is about life, death, blood, confrontation, darkness, light and warm. It's the clash of two kingdoms. (Christian Bible Studies 12/11/09)

[The Community Centre]

Tena Koutou

Where has the year gone? It goes so fast, but sometimes we can sit back and feel proud of all that's been achieved.

Happy customers come and go, not so happy customers too. But you soon learn not to take things personally. If somebody's not happy and you know you have done your best, even as far to say better than your best, then what more can you do but smile.

Sadly the Adult Community Education that has been running for many years will close its doors. For many adults, this was their first step back into the workforce, providing affordable and more importantly welcoming courses that were non threatening and a step in the right direction. At a recent protest meeting, many students campaigned for funding not to be cut as they shared their personal journeys. Some spoke about leaving school with no qualifications and missing out on the importance of an education, seeing community education as a second chance. The confidence gained through the community education encouraged them to further their qualifications, with some even becoming tutors and teaching.

A snippet of one of our regular rentals Painting & Drawing class featured in the local courier at the end of November - a fine example of how a community programme has benefited one person.

Margaret Stewart, Director of Selwyn Community Education said recently at our last network meeting for 2009 that it was business as usual and she would soon have their programme out for the first six months of 2010. She is doing her best to keep as much as possible on offer and at the cheapest rate possible without the assistance of funding. I am pleased to say that two groups that still benefit from the funding are literacy and numeracy classes.

Hee-Kyung successfully ran the immigrant friendship and support group offering a range of programmes exposing the students to the New Zealand way of life. Three New Zealand Christmas theme classes are set for December with the help of church members.

Hee-Kyung recently took five weeks off work to return to her home country Korea. Part of her return trip home was also to see what's happening in their churches and community centres and see if we can implement it here in Aotearoa.

St Heliers Church & Community Centre programme is still current for another six months. We will need support to distribute the programme in late January.

Thank you all for your love and support over the year.

May you all have a Safe & Happy Christmas and a fantastic 2010. *Meri Kirihimete Leeann Hindman*

Jump In for Summer Fun - Gillian Blower



Term 4 is always a busy for the Centre; we are just getting over the October holiday programme and straight into the preparation of the four weeks of holiday activities for January. Combined with this the addition of Christmas and its all fun and games.

January holidays in 2010 will see four full weeks of activities for two age groups 5-7yrs and 8+ years. Many of the children attending these programmes already attend our after school programmes and the emphasis is on a fun orientated day that includes everyone in the day's events.

January 2010 will see the group visiting Glen Innes Pool, Auckland Zoo, and the movies. Our centre based days provide a relaxed atmosphere where children can try out crafts, sports and games.

The Centres holiday programmes cater for 60 children a day and is regularly over subscribed. Our team include the regular Oscar staff plus students and volunteers who join us for the four weeks. It's fun filled and tiring for everyone. Personally, I'm hoping for a few sunny weeks.

More Movie Making - by Robin Child

Interested in being part of our video adventures? 575 6098 Following the completion of the Video Production Cadetship, I wanted to continue learning the mysteries of movie making and the complexities of the Apple computer and its iMovie programme. The best way of doing this, I thought, was to get another five week course under way as soon as possible. In October, three participants met with me in the editing suite. After a promising start problems arose due to our lack of knowledge - oops!

On the second week, the team and myself spent the first half hour learning more about editing clips and adding sound to the movie. Then we moved on to story boarding and filming a TV reality type show, 'How to Make a Good Cup of Tea'. Sounds easy, but it turned out to be a hilarious farce.



Youth activities - dance, drama, outings and learning

The fourth term is always the busiest for the young people of our church. This is the time of year when knuckling down to study for exams is the norm. Add to this, preparation and practice for end of year performances of various genre, the anticipation of summer holidays, Christmas and, for the older youth, decisions to be made about how they will start their career paths, and you have a cohort of God's children needing as much support as they can get from the older and wiser members of our community. Parents and grandparents are wonderful at this – it's their job. Sometimes, however, it doesn't come easy for other, more distant adults, to actively engage with the younger generation.

I believe our St Heliers church family is working hard but not perfectly, towards breaking down these barriers.

Take Day Camp – what a great experience for young and old alike. From 6 years old to 96 years young, everyone could be seen having fun participating in the diverse activities on offer. I didn't see any 96 year olds on the mud slide, but watching our older members showing how and helping our youngsters to make miniature tables, photo frames, and name blocks, was heartwarming. It's not only the act of making something tangible, but making



It was suggested at the AGM this year that we have regular intergenerational church services. Well, I suggest we make this happen before the 'oldies' disappear, and the youngsters miss out on an opportunity to really understand what being older means. All generations have so much to learn from each other – let's teach each other that no opinion is wrong – just maybe different from our own. Intergenerational tolerance – can we at least try to achieve this? We are not called to serve according to age, but according to our ability to do the job.

We have many programmes and activities running from our church and community centre which are designed for our young people from age 10. There's a criss-cross involvement, with some young people coming first to church and then discovering the more social activities such as Friday Night Friendly and Friday Night Late, as well as the formal teaching programmes like musical instruments, languages and drama. Conversely, we have

those coming to these programmes and discovering that church is really quite a cool place to be. They may join Teen Team on Sunday mornings – this is the place for the older 'Godzone Kids' (years 6-9). Currently having an average attendance of 15, we have 30 minutes each week talking, laughing, learning and doing fun things with music and drama, while learning about God, Jesus, and His place in our lives. Sunday evening is the domain of the older youth – college age up. This is a distinctly small group with the potential to grow. Informal worship and discussion is the formula. I look forward to growing this group next year, but we do need the help and enthusiasm lying dormant somewhere in our church family! There is work to do, and I know that God will give us the tools to use as long as we keep focused on a vibrant, active youth movement in our church.

For others it will be the beginning of a new era in their lives as they leave college. Some will move on to tertiary education, others will be taking a gap year, working in America and UK. We look forward to hearing of their experiences as they journey into their future. With Skype, email, texting, MSN, Facebook, Bebo – no excuses now!

As the older young people move on, the younger ones move up – these will be our new leaders at Bush Camp, Ideas Explosion and Day Camp 2010.

We have a great young people's music ministry, with Cathy and Alistair Louis and James Merrell leading two youth bands.

There are many opportunities for adults in the church to be more involved with our young people. You may learn something! After all as one parent said "It's time for our son to leave home while he still knows everything!"

For more youth news see the notice boards, the Orders of Service and the church office 5756098. Or you can contact Frann Sawtell, Youth Co-ordinator, by phone on 0272796041 or email fran_sawtell@ihug.co.nz



Day Camp leaders who slept over, unwind around a camp fire.

[Small Miracles - art and artists]

Last term some of our children participated in the St Heliers library 'Celebration of Art' display. We were very excited that our budding young artists got judged first in the individual section and second overall in the children's section. This prompted us to then look at ways we could celebrate our Pre-School Art and share this with the Small Miracles Community.

The inaugural Small Miracles Art Exhibition was held on 22nd Sept from 5.30 -7.00pm and not only saw lots of families attend, but by purchasing the children's artwork helped raise funds for the Samoan Tsunami appeal.

The artwork on display demonstrated what capable, creative and competent artists our 2-5 year olds are! I think we all agree this will be an annual event.

Our end of year regular events have started with our ever popular Fathers Fish and Chip night and our 'Christmas Singing' for the Community groups. We are well into practising our Christmas songs with the children and are looking forward to all the Christmas crafts and activities that happen at this time of the year.

The four year old group has had several walks and visits to places in our local Community including the art framers, library, beach and playground (where we enjoyed an afternoon tea of hot chips!!).

Another inaugural event will be a 'Christmas market morning' at the Pre School ,with some of our mothers bringing their wares to sell, including jewellery, clothing, baking, bags and hats. For those interested, this will take place on Dec 11th between 9.00am -12.00noon.

We are taking our Christmas service outdoors - a picnic is to be held at 2.00pm Sunday 13th Dec at Dingle Dell.

This family service is always a lovely end to our year, a time to celebrate Christmas and farewell those families who are moving on to school.

Last day is Wed 16th Dec - 2010 Re-open on 3rd Feb



Pakpingjai – A Place to Rest the Heart - supported by St Heliers Church and Community Centre and other sponsors.

There is a place in Northern Thailand where children with uncertain futures are cared for and given a good education. Here, 60 boys and 17 girls, aged 6 to 16, have a safe haven, away from the despair that afflicts their families, where as part of a Christian family they receive good nutrition, and a thorough education.

In January 2010, a group of 22 people, ages ranging 10 to 72, most of them from our church, will be travelling to Pakpingjai, where they will spend two weeks helping in many ways. They will also learn about other cultures and religions. Some will help with music, others, led by John Hallett, an engineer, will be engaged in upgrading the water supply. Pray for us - *Stan Stewart*



[Building Re-development]

A Personal Note from Stan Stewart - Convenor

I write this just one day after our return from Pauline's study leave. The Redevelopment Committee has not yet discussed the news I share here. When the Committee meets next week, there may be further developments.

The Best News

Our application for funding with Auckland City Council has been successful. Under the Community Facility Partnership Scheme we have been granted \$1,250,000 over two years, commencing in 2011. This is most significant in relation to our total funding plan. The Auckland City funding is a cornerstone on which other funding will build. Under the Council's careful scrutiny, we have established the need for our project and the credibility of our approach. All other funders we approach will note this.

The Difficult News

Before anything can commence in earnest – planning, fund raising, scheduling, we must be certain the project can legally go ahead. This means we must obtain

the necessary consents. After taking advice, we feel we could need up to \$90,000 to complete this process. We had hoped to obtain this amount from a major new fund in the national Presbyterian Church, 'Press Go'. Unfortunately our application was declined.

The Press Go Committee had applications from other parishes. Some of these were extremely poor and others were in desperate circumstances. One talked of a mission initiatives which would shortly double their congregation. Beside such earnest and urgent pleas I suspect that St Heliers case, while undoubtedly interesting, must have seemed less critical.

Where to From Here?

Here is where I think we are - *Looking for Plan B!* Not another building plan but a plan which could enable us to obtain the \$90,000 we need to commit to pursuing the consents necessary for us to proceed. There is at least one fund which we know we could approach but this will involve a great deal of further work and will not be available until late 2010.

Just a reminder

Why Must we Redevelop - A few lines from the cases we have been developing over recent months.

Remember the sixties when all our Sunday Schools were bursting and we had to have classes in sheds. Since then most of these churches have added facilities to their buildings but the numbers of people using them have declined. They have lived in the hope that the boom times were going to return. Today many of these churches are almost empty. Their buildings look tired and sad; their people are even sadder.

By the grace of God and the vision of those who have gone before us, St Heliers Church and Community Centre is not one of those sad churches. Our worship services are attended by all ages from many different countries and our community centre thrives with a multiplicity of programmes every day of the week. Nor are we a "land-lord" church, renting facilities to organisations who do not connect to the goals of our Church. In most respects our church and community centre is an integrated whole committed to reaching out and welcoming in.

As an indication of size of our community centre operation, we attract over 75,000 users each year with

a staff of 20 full time equivalents and a Community Centre budget of about \$700,000 (excluding all church attendance numbers and expenses). We cater for all age and ethnic groups. We run over 50 in-house programmes and have 37 regular community group users (examples include Toy Library, Yoga, Probus, U3A, Senior Net.) People attending these activities come from far beyond St Heliers. We have numerous children's programmes including a pre-school, OSCAR and many holiday programmes. In most of our children's programmes we offer low-cost or no-cost places to disadvantaged families. We assist other groups such as Eastern Suburbs Budgeting Service, Glen Innes Foodbank, Reading Programmes and help new immigrants from Europe, Asia and Africa.

In the year of our Lord, 2009, we are not pining for the past. We are very excited about what is happening and we are impatient to see the new possibilities before our international family becomes a reality.

In many areas we are bursting at the seams. Our building complex is no longer able to serve the present needs, let alone the future needs. In fact, we have reached a situation where our buildings fight against our mission to 'reach out and welcome in'.

A very special service Mon 21 Dec - "Hard to be Merry"

Many of us will be facing a problem or loss of some sort – a financial struggle, job loss, death of a loved one, divorce, maybe just frustration at the seemingly unending pain and poverty in the world.

Our Hard to be Merry service is a quiet, reflective time

with soft lights, music and prayers, a time for candle-lighting and quiet personal reflection. If you are wondering how you will face Christmas Day come and join us at **7.30pm on Monday 21 December**. Bring a friend or invite someone you know who is sad. You may not "go out with joy" but you will find some hope and peace.

At the end of each year we farewell our young people leaving school at a graduation service. They are sent off with our blessings and prayers to a range of destinations and experiences. It is always a thrill to see them back worshipping with us during their uni break or after an overseas experience looking that much more mature and worldly. While their attendance at our church is often sporadic during these years their heart is still very much at St Heliers Presbyterian. We caught up with some of our '20-somethings' recently:



Pip Kayser and Ashley Williams

Pip Kayser:

"I'm studying theatre and religion at Victoria University graduating next year. My interest in Christianity and my Presbyterian roots led me to St John's in the City where I have been instrumental in developing and singing in the worship band at the young adults service on Sunday evenings. I also nanny in Wellington.

These holidays, **Ashley Williams** and I are running a holiday programme we developed a couple of years ago called 'Let it Shine' that aims to empower and equip young girls by teaching them communication and presentation skills, assertiveness, healthy living and lots more."

Ashley Williams:

"I spent my first year out of school (2008) on a gap year working in an English School. I also got to see lots of the UK and Europe and made heaps of cool friends. Recently, I have finished my first year in my Design Degree at Massey University in Wellington. It has been so inspiring, and challenging. I am loving my course. I have recently started attending St John's in the City adults service in Wellington with friends from St Heliers, but still think of St Heliers as my church and love to visit when I am home."

Ryan Williams:

"I'm just on the verge of leaving school, and very excited about going on a Gap year next year to England. I'm going to a small town called Brakley to work at a school, helping the kids there, and travelling during their holidays. It will be so hard to leave the friendships I have forged through the St Heliers Presbyterian community, as this place has been such a huge part of me. I'm hugely thankful for all the guidance and the lifelong bonds that I have found in this community."

Ashley Stinson:

"I have just completed a Bachelor of Applied Science in Food Innovation at Otago. I am in complete disbelief that the four years are now over, and am looking forward to my OE in Europe in June. Even though I have been away for four years I will always think of St Heliers Presbyterian as my home church where my spirituality was nurtured and I look forward to the opportunity to return while home."

Amy Gulvin

I'm currently in Tianjin, a northern Chinese city of 13 million, studying Mandarin as the final part of my BA at Auckland University. Having been here now for three months, I can easily say that it has been the most mind-expanding experience of my life. The Chinese culture and lifestyle couldn't be further from that of NZ, and getting used to it has been both exciting and challenging. I have been attending the city's international church (foreign passport holders only). It has members from more countries than I can name, and seeing all the different faces, the feeling that We Are All One really hits home. But it is a strange feeling when you remember that the Chinese, who we interact with every day, are not allowed to attend.

I am excited about coming back to St Heliers in February. "Yes", I am thinking about a new show. There are a lot of songs in my mind. "No", despite what Stan says, it won't be called "We are all One - Two".

Love - Amy.





COMING EVENTS – CHRISTMAS & NEW YEAR

St Heliers Presbyterian Church and Community Centre

CAROLS BY CANDLELIGHT

Organised locally by Don Linden with support from Auckland City Council
Sunday 13th December, at 6.30pm St Heliers Primary School Field

TWO CHRISTMAS PAGEANTS

1) SMALL MIRACLES CHRISTMAS PAGEANT

Involves all our Small Miracles in telling the Christmas story.
Picnic in Dingle Dell Reserve
Sunday 13 December at 2.00pm



2) CHURCH CHRISTMAS PAGEANT

Lots of children and music all based around the Nativity.
A very beautiful experience for all ages.
Strawberries and ice cream for morning tea.
Sunday 20 December at 9.00am



COMMUNITY CHRISTMAS SERVICE of CAROLS AND READINGS

Specially assembled combined choir, children singing and brass.
Members of the community invited to be in the choir. ph: 575 6098
(Morning Tea prior at 10.00am)
Sunday 13 December at 10.30am -11.45am



YOUTH NIGHT - CHRISTMAS ROCKS!!!

Youth night with a Christmas flavour- café style!
Sunday 20 December at 7.00pm - 9.00pm (stay later and yak!)
Cost \$5 Includes coffee and nibbles.



“HARD TO BE MERRY” CHRISTMAS SERVICE

Christmas is not always a merry time. Lots of hard things to face, hard times, loved ones gone, family far away, divorce in the family; loneliness.
This special service will help you feel stronger and find some joy.
Supper to follow. No cost.
Monday 21 December at 7.30pm – 8.30pm



CHRISTMAS EVE: (a Thursday!)

Little people's Christmas Service at 5.30pm - 6.30pm

A simple informal worship for all small children and their families.
Carols, story with all involved, a photo memory, and decorate a ginger bread man.

Family Christmas Eve Service at 7.30pm - 8.30pm

Involving all ages

Candlelight Service at 11.30pm

Come at 11.00pm for carol singing;
Cake, coffee and wine follows the service.



CHRISTMAS DAY (a Friday!)

Family Services (45 min) 9.00am AND 10.30am

Every child to bring a toy or gift to show and tell.
(We don't keep it!
You get to take it home again)

NEW YEAR'S DAY

Outdoor Early Morning Communion

Under the Moreton Bay Fig at Vellenoweth Green
Informal – for the community
A great way to start the new year of 2010
Coffee to follow
Friday 1 January at 8.00am



Everyone always welcome
All enquiries:
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