

Parish and Community Information

Please make contact with organisers to confirm details

- Monday **Upright & Active** 9am weekly exercise for active seniors
Contact Carol 867 1097
Community meals takeaway only, every Monday 3:30-5pm
Contact Maureen 027 246 6164
- Tuesday **Sit and be Fit** 10am weekly for the less active
Contact Viv 869 5295
Stitch n' Chat fortnightly 1:30-4pm in the Hamilton Room
Contact Julie 021 169 1637
Enliven (Presbyterian Support for the Elderly) weekly
Contact Jenny 021 071 9539
- Wednesday **Ladies' Bible Study** 10am weekly
Contact Julie 021 169 1637
Inter-Church Women's Fellowship Monthly.
Contact Annie 866 3711
Scrapbags quilting group 10am weekly.
Contact Robin 866 5029
Parkinsons Support 6-weekly.
For dates and times contact Keith 027 459 8683
- Thursday **Enliven** (Presbyterian Support for the Elderly) weekly
Contact Jenny 021 071 9539
- Friday **Cancer Support Coffee Morning** First Friday of each month.
Contact Ruth 021 363 840
AA Driver Licensing Second Friday of each month.
(12 August, 9 September) No bookings allowed.

MERCURY BAY CO-OPERATING PARISH

St Andrew's By the Sea Community Church

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MERCURY BAY CO-OPERATING PARISH

St Andrew's Community Church Newsletter

August—September 2022

Our Mission in this Parish is to bring the saving love of Christ to all whom we meet, and lovingly encourage them to follow Him.

Our people and their stories: Janet & Ian Brown



Ian and Janet joined St Andrew's Fellowship a couple of years ago, and they are seldom absent on Sunday mornings. It's good to get to know them through their combined stories.

Ian's Story:

Ian started life in Glasgow, and he has a lovely soft brogue to prove it. His family were regular members of the Church of Scotland. On a nearby hill in Glasgow there was a monument to a battle fought on behalf of Mary, Queen of Scots in 1568. Ian recalls standing there as a child, looking over a wide view and a big sky, thinking of war and death, and asking life's big questions about eternity. Early in life Ian's family moved to England, "a foreign country where the Scots were the baddies. In Glasgow it had been the other way round!" He started work in a bank and took his first overseas holiday in Spain – and sunshine. A taste for travel eventually led Ian to seek a new life in New Zealand (more sunshine than England). Working in Government service in Wellington, Ian attended St John's Presbyterian Church.

"God was moving in NZ in the 1960's. I read *'The Cross and the Switchblade'* about how God was moving amongst gangs in New York. In Wellington I saw a café called 'Teen Challenge' and that resonated with me. It was an outreach to the youth of the city, and I wanted to get involved. They welcomed me, but they posed the question, 'Are you a Christian?' I gave the answer that is often given: 'I try to be.' The team explained to me, about confessing my sins and being born again. It took a bit of understanding, but I took those steps, and I saw changes in my life. The familiar words of the hymns and psalms that I loved, took on a much deeper meaning. I

understood what we were singing about! After that I got involved in a number of Christian outreaches, including YWAM (Youth With A Mission) and a mission to Fiji. It was about then that I got to know Janet.”

Janet's story:

“I was born in Lower Hutt and am a fifth generation New Zealander. Some of my forebears arrived in Petone in 1840. They helped to start and to lead the first Methodist Mission in Lower Hutt. As a child I attended the Anglican Church and Sunday School with my brother and sister. My father was an engineer with NZ Railways and when we were growing up his work took us all around NZ. He was one of the first to be called out to the Tangiwai rail disaster.

At 17-and-a-half I applied to go nursing, which I has always wanted to do. A preliminary medical x-ray showed a shadow on the lung, which turned out to be cancer of the bone (sarcoma). So at 18-and-a-half I had an operation to remove one and a half ribs. This was followed by deep x-ray treatments. After some months I returned to nursing, but found I could not cope with the heavy lifting that job entailed. It was a terrible disappointment for me. From childhood I always wanted to be a nurse.

“I had been a church-goer and although I tried, I knew I was not ‘right with God’. I was afraid of dying. Then I started getting pain in my left side, so I went on a raw vegan diet for two years, with my family supporting me. As Ian said, God was moving in NZ in the 1960's with the charismatic movement. My sister and I attended a weekend retreat in Palmerston North and it was there that we both asked Jesus into our lives. Before that, no-one had explained to me that you have to ask! Joy and Peace flooded my soul, and I was no longer anxious about dying. A few weeks later, at another retreat, I was baptised in the Holy Spirit again. I knelt down and felt God fill me completely with Himself. I was ‘slain in the Spirit’ and I didn't come to until hours later. Over a period of time, God healed me through the laying-on of hands. At one meeting where God was moving, I felt the hand of Jesus on my side, and I knew I was completely healed.

“A few months later, in May 1966 I went to UK where my Mother and Grandmother were from. We arrived shortly before a Billy Graham Crusade, and I had a wonderful time attending the meetings in London. I had never seen so many Christians together! I also went to John Stott's church, All Souls, where there was an international fellowship of 1,000 people.

St Andrew's Worship Schedule

We are still wearing masks in our services, as is recommended for singing. However, we are now able to gather for morning tea.

As always, we are grateful to the visiting preachers who bring us such a diversity of worship styles and inspiring messages. If you have friends or relatives who could take a service, **please let us know.**

In September we welcome **Rev Mary Petersen** back to our pulpit. Since Ministering in this Parish, Mary has worked in Gisborne, Christchurch and Te Aroha. Currently she is employed for 10 hours a week with the Te Aroha Parish, which means she now spends more time at home in Tairua. Mary has been unwell and we are delighted she has accepted our invitation to preach.

Aug 7th Rev Shirley Barker Kirby (**Communion**)

14th Dorothy Preece

21st Rev Mary Petersen

28th Dorothy Preece

July 4th Rev Shirley Barker Kirby (**Communion**)

11th Rev Shirley Barker Kirby

18th Ross Millar

25th Julie St George & Bible group

Sunday duty rosters

Door Welcoming:

1st Sunday – Martin Wigmore, Ian Brown

2nd Sunday - Barbara Blake, Janet Brown

3rd Sunday - Dorothy Preece, Madeleine Saunders

4th Sunday - Annie Lynch, Madeleine Saunders

5th Sunday - Elizabeth Nicholls, Ian & Janet Brown

Morning Tea:

1st Sunday - Barbara Blake, Annie Lynch, Madeleine Saunders

2nd Sunday - Gina Mahmud, Christine Christie

3rd Sunday - Linda Stephenson, Heather Anderson

4th Sunday - Martin Wigmore, Enid Hogg

5th Sunday - Dorothy Preece, Gina Mahmud

Please Note: If you cannot attend on the appointed day, please arrange for someone else to take your duty – thank you all!

Parish Council News

Important Diary Dates

This year our AGM has been brought forward to September 18th
to fit in with Presbytery reporting dates. As usual, the meeting will be held after the Sunday service. Group leaders, please start thinking about your Annual Reports.

We are coming up 125 years old!

In February next year 'Whitianga Undenominational Church' will celebrate 125 years of worship and community service in Mercury Bay.

It's time to start planning for this important community event. We need photos and stories from all of those years –we need to contact old friends – and we need your ideas.

If you have any contacts with people who might/ should be included in this milestone, please let Dorothy know. We will also need some enthusiastic organisers.

Church Garden Update

Yes, we must confess – we did chop down the cherry tree! Some of the wood has gone to wood turners and other usable pieces are in storage at Bill Lee's farm. The rest has gone as free firewood. Kevin Pringle and John Pedersen will be in charge of the garden construction, and the aim is to get a group of men together to manage it. It is our hope that this will form a basis for a strong men's fellowship attached to St Andrew's.

At last Sunday's service, John announced that work on the construction is about to start. The plan is to build two raised gardens initially, and a third one later this year. A fourth garden might be added in a year or two.

The timber to form the raised gardens has been generously donated by **Placemakers Whitianga**. We are very grateful to them for their support.



After two years I returned to NZ and became involved in Team Challenge and YWAM. The Lord brought Ian and I together through working with outreaches in Lower Hutt and Fiji. Ian's brother was the NZ Director for YWAM. 50 young NZers went with the Fiji Mission. God threw us together on many Christian projects. I chose to be baptised and gave my testimony at a retreat, and God spoke to me that I was to marry Ian! He had been in NZ for nearly two years, and wasn't sure what he should do. I advised him to pray about it, and the Lord showed him that he was to marry me. We got engaged a month later, were married six months after that. I knew God was in our marriage from the start! In the Bible, Jacob waited 7 years to marry Rachel. We shortened it to 7 months.

"We spent 18 months in Britain where we spent time with Ian's family, and where our oldest son was born. Our second and third sons were born in Wellington. In 1980 we moved to Tauranga for Ian's work. Determined to stay in one place for the boys' schooling, we stayed in Tauranga until 2003. During that time I had 13 years working in the Salvation Army Rest Home, and also doing homecare in Tauranga and later in Athenree/Waihi Beach after we moved there. 32 years in a caring capacity. God knew my heart! We worshipped mainly at Otumoetai Baptist, and then Waihi Beach United Church.

In 2016 we moved to Whitianga to help support our second son and two granddaughters, who live locally. We have seven grandchildren, some of whom are in Brisbane. I was singing at the rest homes with a group from Waihi Beach church and I found a similar group here. I joined Golden Girls and I'm on the Church Op-shop team. We have become part of the Whitianga community. We do a lot of walking for health and pleasure. We are out on foot around town most days.

Throughout our nearly 53 years of marriage we have attended church wherever we found ourselves, and we have known the Lord's leading and guidance. A favourite verse of mine is Proverbs 3, verses 5 and 6: *'Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your paths'*.

Thank you, Ian and Janet, for sharing this great faith story.

Church and Parish Donations: Mercury Bay Co-operating Parish
BNZ Whitianga: **02 0496 0062562 00**

Monday Meals Donations: Mercury Bay Community Support Trust
Westpac Whitianga: **03 1578 0108901 00**

'Something beautiful for others...'

Our friends Linda and Helen Stephenson have both inherited skills from their late mother, Heather. Linda has her mother's sweet singing voice, and frequently blesses our worship with solos. Her sister Helen has Heather's textile skills. Helen (on the right of the photo) knits blankets for *Operation Coverup* (a branch of the Christian charity *Mission Without Borders*.) Every blanket that Helen knits is a unique work of art. She doesn't use a knitting pattern – she makes them up! She browses through her mother's patchwork books to find design ideas, and then she devises the knitting pattern by drafting it out on graph paper. On July 3rd Helen brought in the latest blanket and we were able to display it during the service, to the delight and admiration of all.



Linda and Helen, we love you both, and we thank you for all that you do!

Operation Coverup – Knitters for Ukraine encouraged!

Our knitters meet on the last Wednesday of every month at the Social Services rooms on Cook Drive, 1:00 – 3:00 pm, or you can knit at home. We knit blankets, beanies, socks, jumpers etc. to support *Mission Without Borders*, working with dispossessed and homeless people in the cold climates of eastern Europe. Currently 150,000 Ukrainian refugees are crossing into Poland every day.

Every year we send container-loads of knitted goods from New Zealand. We hold raffles to help pay for the enormous container costs, and all donations to this cause are very welcome. If you enjoy knitting, come along and find out more. We're a friendly bunch.

Team Leader is Brenda Duncan 07 866 5814.

www.mwb.org.nz/get-involved/operation-coverup

Judge not

On July 10th Rev David Rolinson led us in thinking about the well-known story that Jesus told, of the Good Samaritan. How easily we fall into the trap of judging people before we even try to follow His command to love them. This was, of course, the point that Jesus was making, using the example of the long-held enmity between Jews and



Samaritans, who distrusted each other as a matter of course.

Jesus does not tell us whether the unfortunate traveller was a Jew or a Samaritan. Jesus left his hearers to understand that two highly respected churchmen *should* have been the ones who showed compassion to the injured man. They were his 'neighbours'. Did they pass by because touching the victim would make them ritually unclean, or did they both consider the man too far below them in social status to care what happened to him? It occurred to me that maybe those two religious leaders were afraid to stop on that dangerous road. There was plenty of evidence there were robbers nearby! I can relate to that, so I think I can now find sympathy for them. That also leads me to the courage of the Samaritan who is the hero in the story. He too, would have been very aware of the danger. Had the thugs left the scene, or were they lying in wait? But he put his own concerns away, while he ministered to the victim. It is only a story – a parable – but perhaps we should think about our own courage, or lack of it, when we are faced with people in need of friends. They might appear 'dangerous' to us, because getting involved often takes us into unknown territory – and it demands our time and effort.

Friendship and coffee

Madeleine and friends have started a coffee group, meeting at **Espy Café at 10:00** on the first Thursday of each month. **September 1st** is the next one. If you can come along, we'll see you there! No commitment involved, just come when you can, and bring a friend if you can...



Thank you for this initiative Madeleine!