



Nativity News

August 2019

Nativity
ANGELICAN FAMILY
A place in the son!



Koru are young shoots of the New Zealand fern frond unfurling.

They symbolize new life and growth.

Our babies, children and youth at Nativity are our Koru,
our young shoots to be nurtured in the faith of Christ.

As you will see in this edition of Nativity News, there are many involved in this important ministry at Nativity. Pictured here is Rose Newton, Nativity's Youth Worker, with The Gallery Girls Group. Rose is about to reveal to them whether the baby she is expecting is a boy or a girl. Can you guess by looking at the picture?

ISSUE 12 / AUG 2019

Editorial by Rosemary Francis



Like the koru fern unfurling, our Nativity family is stretching out, seeking the Light of God, and growing. From birth, each bundle of potentiality is celebrated, and nurtured in the faith of their parents. We have ministries which guide and teach our children and youth; some of which are featured in this issue. Family services and Kids' Church have delighted our 10AM congregation, (even the elderly have been waving their flags with enthusiasm, and, ignoring their creaking joints, joining in action songs with delight!) 'Canvas' evening services continue to be a popular place for our teens to interact in a positive environment as they sing praises and learn about their place in God. 'Misfits' boys' group and 'The Gallery' girls group also bless our youth.

The more mature Nativity family members are not forgotten either, as we begin a series of introducing the twenty or so Care Cells operating within our church. We begin with Kathy Hammond's group of grandmothers, of which I am a member. For those who feel lost in a big congregation, the intimacy of learning about God's Word with a like-minded small group is so encouraging. We need each other if we are to grow in grace and compassion, each sharing our God-given gifts with others.

We also bring you news from our Seddon and Spring Creek Churches where Miriam Taylor and John Neal conduct services each month. Nativity is at the hub of a group of smaller rural churches, which we intend featuring in future editions.

As the nights shorten and our days lengthen, we look forward to Spring. Beneath slowly warming ground, bulbs are bursting into life. As the seasons change we anticipate warmer weather, delight in seeing fresh foliage on wintry trees, and rejoice at the ducklings, lambs and newly hatched chicks as Creation displays renewed vigor for life.

Christians Awake! Changes are happening all around us, and we can be part of this renewal. Let's 'plug in' to our Creator God, to recharge our flagging energy; and, in faith, stretch and grow up towards heaven, and outward to our community. We are His hands and feet to bring hope and comfort and words of life to those around us. If the fern did not unwind its tightly curled leaves, it would remain stunted and useless. When it opens to expose itself to the light, it enables the plant to thrive. Let us also be open and willing to change so we can be productive parts of a thriving church here at Nativity.



Editorial Team: Rosemary Francis, Miriam Taylor and Heather Murchison

CELEBRATING!

ARCHDEACON KEVIN THOMPSON AND REVERENDS PUTIPUTI AND HEENI THOMPSON



On the 17 March 2019 at Pare Rarua, Wairau Pa, Rev. Kevin Thompson was commissioned as Archdeacon of te Arapai by Bishop Richard Wallace.

On the same day Rev. Putiputi Thompson and Rev. Heeni te Rongopai Thompson were ordained as priests by Bishop Wallace.

Kevin celebrated fifty years as a priest in 2016. His involvement with Maori Ministry began on the Otago Peninsular and at Matura.

We give thanks to God for their faithfulness in ministry and mission.



GETTING TO KNOW OUR CHURCH FAMILY - SERVICE WITH A SMILE

KATHY TAYLOR OUR PARISH ADMINSTRATOR AND CHILDREN'S MINISTRY TEAM LEADER



A SNAPSHOT

I moved from my home in Sydney, Australia to New Zealand in January 2007 in order to be closer to Conway, my (now) husband. Not long afterwards I joined Nativity, as this was the place that Conway worshipped, and took a job with NMIT School of Aviation where I looked after administration and developed online learning courses. Since then we have had three lovely children: Jack, Max and Lucy; we have adopted a range of farm animals along the way, and I now find myself in the very blessed position of working at Nativity both as the Parish Administrator and volunteering as Children's Ministry Team Leader. Life is busy, but oh – so good!

FAITH

I come from a very long heritage of Christians, many of whom were either ministers or missionaries and so I consider myself to be extremely fortunate. Having eagerly adopted the faith myself at a young age, it was during my late teens and early twenties when I wandered from the faith that God became truly real to me. It may seem strange that it happened in that order, but I've discovered that the light shines much brighter in the darkness. That low point helped me to begin to understand what I was saved from. Since then, God has been teaching me more and more about what I was saved FOR.

OPPORTUNITIES

My working background is extremely eclectic and includes secondary school teaching, tertiary education, administration, retail customer service, hospitality, website design and many voluntary roles. I had often looked back at it all and thought there was no real rhyme or reason to what I did, but I now know that God was preparing me for HIS jobs, right here in Blenheim New Zealand. I've been able to help Richmond View School in applying for and transitioning into Marlborough's only Christian secondary school, and now am finding all the skills and experience invaluable as I help Nativity Church redesign and improve its administrative functions. It's a wonderful thing is knowing that you are doing a job that God has prepared in advance for you!

MY HEART

My greatest desire is to see my children adopt a personal faith in Jesus Christ. There can be no greater gift for a parent than to know their children are walking with the Lord. Conway and I so strongly believe this that we committed to lead our marvellous Children's Ministry team to help train up our young people and invite them into a living relationship with Christ.

I also have a desire to see all of us, adults and children alike, walking that narrow path – that as many as possible reach the end of the journey to hear "Well done, good and faithful servant". The burden of our personal responsibility to respond to Jesus' call, to become as Paul suggested a 'slave for Christ', has weighed heavily on me recently, for I fear too many of us (myself included) have become too 'comfortable' in our faith. But what an encouragement it has been in my new role at Nativity to meet so many who demonstrate the servant heart that I long to have! God is certainly at work in many of our people here and my prayer echoes Paul when writing to Timothy: *This is the only race worth running. I've run hard right to the finish, believed all the way. All that's left now is the shouting—God's applause! Depend on it, he's an honest judge. He'll do right not only by me, but by everyone eager for his coming. (1 Timothy 6:12)*

May we all run hard right to the finish and believe all the way!





FAMILY SERVICE WITH KATIE AND SAM, PESKY AND TOBIAS



Family koru



COMBINED YOUTH BAKEOFF



Misfits and Gallery had a combined youth Bakeoff in term 2. The goal was to facilitate an event where both Misfits and Gallery could engage with each other with a bit of healthy competition. The afternoon started with each team coming up with a name and designing a poster for themselves. Following that, the teams were both given clues for a scavenger hunt of all the baking ingredients. The bakeoff was a great chance for team building and connecting with new faces!

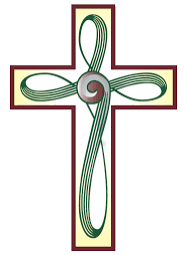
While both teams produced very successful batches of brownies, it was evident that the Gallery team flourished in the Combined Youth Bakeoff! It was a very successful day of relaxing, laughing and hanging out.



Misfits Boys Group seen here with Youth Intern - Jody Jansen van Vuuren



Koru Cross



Following Easter Camp these two young women embarked on a term of meeting together for afternoon tea and lessons in the fundamentals of the Christian faith! It's been a successful term. One has now connected with The Gallery and the other has left for a season in Italy! We look forward to her return. RN



In the nature of the Early church in Acts, Canvas (the 5.30pm service in the hall on Sundays) held 'all-day Church' in the home of one of our families. We ate together, had Bible Study together, played together and worshipped together. I bet you have never heard a band containing a flute, a cello, guitars, bass and French horn make such a joyful noise! RN



Musical koru

Make a joyful noise unto God, all ye lands"
Psalms 66:1

NATIVITY PRIESTS HELP IN RURAL PARISHES

The Seddon church family love to welcome visitors, so when Stevie, the lamb, followed his owners, Angus and Huw, to church, everyone was delighted!



Currently the Awatere Christian Joint Venture parish of 'Anglicans, Presbyterians and Others' is without a resident minister.

Assistant Priest at Nativity, Miriam Taylor, takes services in the Awatere twice a month and Margaret Conway from St. Christopher's, ministers once a month. Church members, ably led by Dr. Rob Cameron and Helen Neame, all diligently use their God-given giftings to keep the church running smoothly until a new minister is appointed.

Music is a feature of services at Seddon with three competent keyboard players and teams of seasonal workers from Vanuatu leading the singing each week. Their presence and their powerful harmonizing voices are a true blessing.



The ACJV is a geographically large parish stretching from Molesworth Station in the Upper Awatere Valley, down the East Coast to Kekerengu. Services are held weekly in Seddon, monthly in Ward and Kekerengu, and quarterly up the Awatere Valley. On fifth Sundays of a month family services are held in different locations such as woolsheds and church members' gardens. Since the earthquakes Seddon services have been held in the Catholic Church in Foster Street. Start time 10.00 am. Come and enjoy a rural service.

You too can be assured of a warm welcome!



ST LUKE'S SPRING CREEK – JOHN NEAL PRIEST IN CHARGE



The story of St Luke's parish in Spring Creek is one of a Church that died but which declined to lie down.

Staffed with a full-time Vicar since its beginnings way back in the 19th century, the parish fell on hard times such, that about a decade ago, the last Vicar departed and, because of declining funds could not afford another, nor could declining congregational numbers justify one, it has since had a string of part-time Priests in Charge. The first of this latter line, basically told to give the parish a decent burial, instead took a different tack, telling people that while there was no full-time

minister in the parish any more, that did not mean ministry would have to stop, for they were all ministers so why did they need an ordained person to do it all for them?



The congregation rose to this challenge and, while the current Priest in Charge takes part in two Sundays each month, the other services, plus the broader ministry within the parish is mostly done by lay people. Thanks to a small core of dedicated and committed enthusiasts for Jesus Christ, the ministries in this small parish have grown and strengthened, so much so that the sentence of death originally pronounced has, in the best Resurrection style, been turned into a new life of greater abundance than ever before.

Congregational numbers are growing; Messy Church, held once a month, continues to involve more and more adults with children. Another successful annual Seniors' Lunch in the local Moutere Rugby Club rooms last month attracted over 100 people.

Thanks and praise be to our Living God, because St Luke's in Spring Creek has found new life! *John Neal*



**Why didn't
they play
cards on the
Ark?**

**BECAUSE NOAH WAS
ALWAYS STANDING
ON THE DECK**

PROFILING NATIVITY CARECELLS



KATHY'S CARECELL

Like the early church recorded in the New Testament, we are encouraged to care and share with each other, break bread together, pray together and study God's word. We join in 'Big Church' activities every Sunday, and look forward to our home group meetings, which 'recharge' us midweek. We usually meet in Kathy Hammond's cosy home; she is our generous leader. We've had some interesting studies recently, including angels; and currently, we're working through Richard Ellena's book on his favourite hymn "O Jesus I have promised."

We take turns to bring supper, organise an activity, and lead group prayer. What is discussed in cell group stays in cell group. We laugh and cry together, support each other through illnesses and family

crises. We know we can rely on each other for first-line support and help.

Living alone can be challenging; we all need to be part of a group of like-minded Christians who accept us where we are and love us too much to leave us there. I thank God for my little band of fellow pilgrims. They have supported me through tough times, just as I endeavour to encourage and help them. Like single strands plaited into a multi-stranded rope, together we are stronger. I encourage all Nativity members to join a care cell. Contact Chris or Sue Donaldson through the church office for more information about our vibrant cell groups.

Here are some comments from people in my care cell.

'My circumstances changed dramatically with the sudden passing of my husband. As I slowly processed this 'new normal' I realised that I needed to find a new church, one that had a welcoming place for someone of my demographic and was geared up to provide the relative support. I found my home at Nativity. I was invited to join a care cell where the members were all widows. Eighteen months later, I feel that I am really one of them.'

'What I value about being part of this care cell:

- The varied teaching and resultant discussions - learning from other's personal experiences which makes the Bible relative to everyday life.
- The weekly cuppa and the occasional outing.
- The feeling that what you have to contribute is listened to, accepted and even valued.'
- The interest expressed when sharing life's highs and the empathy shown when sharing life's lows.

'We are not an exclusive club, not a clique. We are a caring cell, loving, supporting encouraging each other.'

One of our members shared the following. "Who else would understand why I cried when my 5-year-old grandson said he didn't want to stay with Grandma; he preferred going to Nanny's, because there were two of them to do thing with, and only one at Grandma's house.

'I have immense gratitude for our Care Cell, the warmth and caring of our relationships and honest sharing of our faith and lives.



WHAT DO YOU THINK OF THESE CREATIVE AND INNOVATIVE WAYS TO DRAW PEOPLE IN???



Norwich Cathedral in England, built in 1145, has installed a Helter Skelter so people can get a different view of the magnificent roof architecture. But in addition to showcasing the roof, Canon Bryant said it was "part of the cathedral's mission to share the story of the Bible" and was a "creative and innovative way to do that". The Helter Skelter will be in place for ten days.

Norwich Cathedral is not the only place of worship to use unconventional methods to attract members of the public. The central aisle of Rochester Cathedral was converted into a nineteen-hole golf course, with each hole including a model of a different style bridge.

The cathedral staff says it hopes visitors will learn about faith, and building "both emotional and physical bridges".

"The Archbishop of Canterbury said that if you don't know how to have fun in cathedrals then you're not doing your job properly."



THE CHURCH OF THE NATIVITY



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Nurture and Growth for all ages and stages

SUNDAY SERVICES:

8.00 AM - Traditional Eucharist Service

10.00 AM - Worship Service with children exiting to programmes

FAMILY SERVICE – First Sunday of month

5.30 PM – Canvas – Informal Service in hall – All Age/Youth

MONDAY 9.30AM – CARE & SHARE – 2nd & 4th Monday of the month

FRIDAY 9.30 AM – TUNES FOR TOTS - During School Term

FRIDAY 1PM – LINK

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