



Cashmere Connection

Cashmere Hills Presbyterian Church—linking with its community

Issue Number Sixty eight - November 2011

Minister's Meditations

2011 has been a year which will live in our memories as one of both great joy and deep sadness. The sadness has come through the deaths and destruction and deconstruction caused through earthquakes. The joy comes with the birth of many infants, including my grandson Kotaro, and the redesign and reconstruction of many cities in the world, including Christchurch, which have been greatly affected by earthquakes, tsunami and flooding.

During our Christmas Services we will read time and time again the message of the angels to the shepherds watching over their sheep on a moonlit hillside night. It is a message of peace and great joy to all people of the world with the birth of Jesus.

"God's angel stood among them and God's glory blazed around

them. They were terrified. The angel said, "Don't be afraid. I'm here to announce a great and joyful event that is meant for everybody, worldwide: A Saviour has just been born in David's town, a Saviour who is Messiah and Master. This is what you are to look for: a baby wrapped in a blanket and lying in a manger."

...people who are suspicious of religion cannot be blamed for questioning God's existence when they see believers use religion to justify violence.

At once the angel was joined by a huge angelic choir singing God's praises: Glory to God in the heavenly heights, Peace to all men and women on earth who please him."

(Luke 2:9-14)

Peace, harmony, forgiveness and reconciliation are what we all deeply desire in our lives. Yet many lack these gifts in their lives. Conflict, violence, abuse and disharmony are more constant companions than peace and joy, love and harmony.

Communion Services:

We extend a special invitation to join us for Communion, which will be held on Sunday 4th December.



Recently Pope Benedict XVI took 300 religious leaders of many different faiths and people of no faith with him on a pilgrimage to Assisi. The Pope said people who are suspicious of religion cannot be blamed for questioning God's existence when they see believers use religion to justify violence.

"All their struggling and questioning is, in part, an appeal to believers to purify their faith so that God, the true God, becomes accessible," the Pope said.

The Pope condemned the use of religion to excuse violence and the use of violence to impose a religion, as

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ELITE NATIONAL ROAD CHAMPIONSHIPS CYCLE RACE
Saturday & Sunday 7 & 8th January 2012
 The Cashmere Church Centre will again provide Refreshments for spectators during the Elite Cycle Race as competitors race up Dyers Pass Road. Toilet facilities will also be available to the public.

The morning Service on Sunday 8th January will commence at 9am, duration 1/2 an hour, to allow those attending easy departure from the hill.



(Continued from page 1)

well as the growing violence resulting from "the loss of humanity" that comes from denying the existence of God and of objective moral standards.

"As a Christian, I want to say at this point: Yes, it is true, in the course of history, force has also been used in the name of the Christian faith. We acknowledge it with great shame," Pope Benedict said.

Christian leaders, like all religious leaders, he said, must work constantly to help their followers purify their faith and be "an instrument of God's peace in the world, despite the fallibility of humans."

The leaders affirmed the obligation of love

of neighbour, the conviction that true faith never can be used to justify violence, the responsibility religious leaders have to educate their followers to respect others, and the need to continue interreligious dialogue.

Pope Benedict was the last to read his commitment. He said: "Violence never again! War never again! Terrorism never again! In the name of God, may every religion bring upon the earth justice and peace, forgiveness and life, love!"

Surely that is a message of hope for all people and a challenge for us not only this Christmas but for all of life.

God bless.

David

Christian Witness in a Multi-Religious World: Recommendations

The Third Consultation organized by the World Council of Churches and the PCID of the Holy See in collaboration with World Evangelical Alliance with participation from the largest Christian families of faith (Catholic, Orthodox, Protestant, Evangelical and Pentecostal), having acted in a spirit of ecumenical cooperation to prepare this document for consideration by churches, national and regional confessional bodies and mission organizations, and especially those working in interreligious contexts, recommends that these bodies:

1. ***study*** the issues set out in this document and where appropriate formulate guidelines for conduct regarding Christian witness applicable to their particular contexts. Where possible this should be done ecumenically, and in consultation with representatives of other religions.
2. ***build*** relationships of respect and trust with people of all religions, in particular at institutional levels between churches and other religious communities, engaging in on-going interreligious dialogue as part of their Christian commitment. In certain contexts, where years of tension and conflict have created deep suspicions and breaches of trust between and among communities, interreligious dialogue can provide new opportunities for resolving conflicts, restoring justice, healing of memories, reconciliation and peace-building.
3. ***encourage*** Christians to strengthen their own religious identity and faith while deepening their knowledge and understanding of different religions, and to do so also taking into account the perspectives of the adherents of those religions. Christians should avoid misrepresenting the beliefs and practices of people of different religions.
4. ***cooperate*** with other religious communities engaging in interreligious advocacy towards justice and the common good and, wherever possible, standing together in solidarity with people who are in situations of conflict.
5. ***call*** on their governments to ensure that freedom of religion is properly and comprehensively respected, recognizing that in many countries religious institutions and persons are inhibited from exercising their mission.
6. ***pray*** for their neighbours and their well-being, recognizing that prayer is integral to who we are and what we do, as well as to Christ's mission.



CHRISTMAS FARE

Saturday 3rd December 2011

9am start

Great variety of Christmas style food stalls:

All sorts of Delicious Cakes - including Christmas Fruit Cakes

Cookie Corner;

Jams, Chutneys & Preserves

DYO (Decorate your own) Cup Cakes

Visit the Pie Place

Fudge & Sweet things

Gift packed Christmas Treats

Trade Aid:- tea, coffee, chocolate, and lots more -
fresh, flavoursome, sustainably sourced

Food on the spot:

Sausage Sizzle; Korean Snacks; Sushi

Ice Cream; Coffee & Cold Drinks

Guess the Weight Christmas Cake

Lucky Dip Christmas Tree

The White Elephant Sale- 1st October, 2011

What a great result from the sale! Thanks to all the willing helpers who combined like the parts of a Rolls Royce engine, to make the sale run so smoothly and successfully. The final total surpassed \$4,000, a most satisfactory result!

There was a lot to do, but many hands make light(er) work, and Joan Lawson and her helpers in the "engine room" kept the sales staff refuelled and functioning well. Ian Gray's cheery presence on the sausage sizzle was missed but Graham Cook was ably assisted by two of the Aspiehelp members. Special thanks to Bill Swan and his crew of stalwarts. Bruce and Shona Lyford not only observed the whole process as training for next year, but pitched in and helped out as well. The Fair next year is in good hands!

Joy and I thank everyone who contributed goods, sold them and helped before and after. The pack-up was miraculously swift and anything useful was donated to the Salvation Army; the rest was into the skip before you could say "knife"!

Leith McMurray, co-convenor



We should no longer have to tell you that every five seconds a child dies of hunger related causes. Famine, war, and acute hunger were all meant to be

history. Extreme natural disaster, war, conflict and mass migration, continue to trap people in poverty.

With your help, Christian World Service will continue providing real and practical solutions to their hunger:- Teaching and resourcing people to fish; Helping people grow more and better organic food; Establishing livestock farming for income and food; Providing safe and reliable sources of water; Helping less privileged communities to claim their

rights to education, health, water and land.

We plant seeds of reality, hope and dignity. Together, you and Christian World Service can continue this vital work—helping people to grow their own daily bread. Please Share the Care. Donate to the CWS Christmas Appeal.

Bread and Wine at Christmas.

Bread and Wine are symbols of Christ, who took on Himself our human form and flesh at Christmas. There is a lot involved in those symbols, including some searching and disturbing, yet encouraging, aspects which we may overlook—as Geoffrey Preston, a Dominican preacher points out:

“Think of the domination, exploitation and pollution of man and nature that goes with bread, all the bitterness of competition and class struggle, all the organised selfishness of tariffs and price-rings, all the wicked oddity of a world distribution that brings plenty to some and malnutrition to others, bringing them to that symbol of poverty we call the bread-line. And wine too—fruit of the vine and work of human hands, the wine of holidays and weddings....this wine is also the bottle, the source of some of the most tragic forms of human degradation: drunkenness, broken homes, sensuality, debt. What Christ bodies himself into is bread and wine like this, and he manages to make sense of it, to humanize it. Nothing human is alien to him. If we bring bread and wine to the Lord’s Table, we are implicating ourselves in being prepared to bring to God all that the bread and wine mean. We are implicated ourselves in bringing to God, for him to make sense of, all which is broken and unlovely. We are implicating ourselves in the sorrow as well as the joy of the world.”

God identified himself with all that is human, and suffered with and for us through corrupted attitudes and structures and processes. We connect this, as we worship, with our involvement in the Christian World Service Christmas Appeal, to bringing change. And we remember how a former Asian Christian leader, D T Niles, expressed our vocation. He said that we are called to share in evangelism, which is “One beggar telling another beggar where to find bread.”

Earthquake damage at the Church

On 21st October the Property Committee received an Earthquake Prone Building report on the state of the Church. The report contains 41 pages with lots of mathematical calculations but the essential part of the report indicates :-

A detailed specific engineering analysis was performed using the NZ standards and a minimum %NBS 100% was found to be catered for. The analysis included the adequacy of the shearwalls, diaphragms, wall anchorage, building irregularities and foundations. The design capacities of these elements exceeded the loads applied, therefore no strengthening works are considered to be required.

We are now closely working with our Insurance Assessors and the Heritage Department of the Christchurch City Council so that the urgent repairs can be authorised. We are hopeful therefore that the Church will be open for Christmas services. At a future date repairs to the Tower will take place but this will not prevent the Church from being open for Christmas.

R Leete (Property Convenor)

EVENTS TO CELEBRATE CHRISTMAS

Sunday 27 November

1st Sunday in Advent

10.00am Morning Worship

Sunday 4 December *2nd Sunday in Advent*

10.00am We celebrate Holy Communion as part of this service.

Sunday 11 December *3rd Sunday in Advent*

10.00am Join us for the Sunday School presentations and the last **Family Service** of the year, to which everyone is invited. Following this will be a barbeque at the home of David & Joy—27 Riverton Terrace, Westlake. Please bring as follows a contribution to the meal: - surnames A - E finger food sweets/slices; F - L, fruit; M - Z, salads. Sausages will be provided.

Sunday 18 December *4th Sunday in Advent*

10.00am A service of Christmas music with the Choir.

6.00pm: Sausage Sizzle and Carols in the garden of Rachael & Ruurd Bekema, 1 Macmillan Avenue. We record our sincere appreciation to Ruurd & Rachael for their hospitality.

Monday 19 December

6.30pm Taking carols to homes (organizers Annette McAdam & Bill Swan)

Christmas Eve: Saturday 24 December

11.30pm: Carols by Candlelight—Midnight Watch service.

Christmas Day: Sunday 25 December

9.30am: A family service for all ages in which we celebrate together the birth of Jesus Christ. The service will last about 40 minutes.

CAROLS AT HOME

Monday 19th December

We will again be visiting a number of homes to sing carols to those unable to attend other Christmas services. If you would like a visit please contact the Church Office (332 7129).

We extend a very warm invitation to all singers who wish to join us. You do not need to be a good singer, just someone who is interested in bringing some joy to someone at home. Children are very welcome as older people enjoy meeting them so come as a family group.

Please be at the Church at 6.15pm when we will divide into two groups, give you your list of homes, organise cars and send you on your way with a Carol sheet by 6.30pm. Our visits will be completed by 8.00pm, and you are then invited to stay for supper in the Church Lounge.

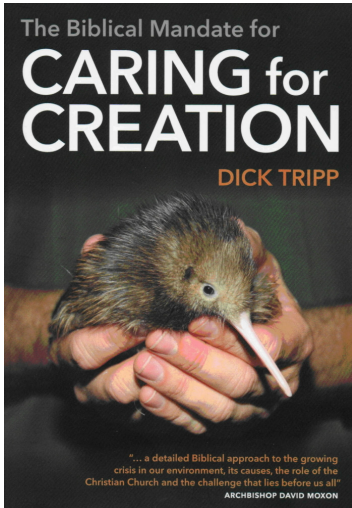
Please join us, you will really enjoy the experience. Note the date and time on your calendar now!

CAROLS AT THE BEKEMA'S

18th December at 6.00pm—1 Macmillan Ave

We will commence the evening with a sausage sizzle at 6.00pm and you are then invited to join the carol singing, which is expected to last about 40 minutes. Music will be provided by The Steadfast Band. Please bring a chair or rug. If cold or wet, singing will be held in the Church Centre.





The Biblical Mandate for Caring for Creation

In his new book Dick Tripp, an Anglican Clergyman with experience in parish ministry in New Zealand, explores the mandate Christians have for caring for the world around us. In his foreword Archbishop David Moxon says: “*Dick Tripp, in this comprehensive expression of the biblical mandate of caring for God’s creation, has provided Christians with a detailed biblical approach to the growing crisis in our environment, its causes, the role of the Christian church and the challenge that lies before us all. Dick’s work provides the biblical and spiritual motivation we need to move forward at this critical time.*”

The author suggests that “it is up to each to decide what we can do individually and collectively”:

“There are so many things that can and need to be done to restore some of the natural environments and ecosystems of this planet and, at the very least, to prevent things from getting worse. We all have different gifts and different opportunities and it is up to each to decide what we can do individually and collectively. The task may seem enormous, but we can do something. As the saying goes, “How do you eat an elephant?” “One bite at a time!”

Numerous websites offer suggestion and tell us what is already being done. On a personal level, I like the six Rs:

Reduce our consumption of non-essentials to healthy living.

Reuse where possible to reduce waste.

Recycle This is what God does.

Resist the temptations that abound in our materialistic society.

Restore what has been lost where that is possible.

Rejoice in the goodness of God in all that he has made and all he provides.”

If you wish to order a copy of this book (\$25) please speak to Gail in the Church Office.

People Events

Baptisms:

We welcome into the family of the Church:
Louisa Daisy May Emerson daughter of Tim and Jessica Emerson (25 September)

Deaths:

We extend our sympathies to the family of:
Raymond John Cordner (13 August)

Forthcoming Services

Sunday 13th November	10.00am	Family Service (Remembrance Sunday)
Sunday 20th November	10.00am	Morning Worship
	11.30am	Healing Service
Sunday 27th November	10.00am	Morning Worship—First Sunday in Advent
	11.30am	Healing Service
Sunday 4th December	10.00am	Christmas Communion Service
Sunday 11th December	10.00am	Christmas Family Service
Sunday 18th December	10.00am	Service of Christmas Music
	6.00pm	Sausage sizzle and Carols on the Green
Saturday 24th December	11.30pm	Christmas Eve
		Midnight Watch Carols by Candlelight
Sunday 25th December	9.30am	Christmas Day Service of Worship
Sunday 1st January	10.00am	Morning Worship
Sunday 8th January	9.00am	Morning Worship (½ hour service)
Sunday 15th January	10.00am	Morning Worship
Sunday 22nd January	10.00am	Morning Worship
	11.30am	Healing Service
Sunday 29th January	10.00am	Morning Worship

Healing Service with Communion

Held at 11.30am on the 4th Sunday of every month - all welcome.

Aspiehelp and Asperger Syndrome—the first year

Aspiehelp—located in the basement rooms of the Church—has just celebrated its first birthday. It has been a bit wobbly at times, but a lot has been achieved. Thank you for hosting us. In case you do not know what we are about, here is a brief introduction.

What is “Aspiehelp”?

Aspiehelp is a service for coaching and mentoring people with Asperger Syndrome, their partners, family and friends. At the moment it is possibly “unique in the world” because it is “peer-driven”. Jan Brooking and I have extensive education and experience in caring for people (pastoral care and social work) and are both “bi-lingual” in that we are Aspies who also understand Neuro-typical (NT) ways (that means normal in ordinary language). Many Aspies have quite serious problems in negotiating the NT world and we assist with this.

What is Asperger Syndrome?

Asperger Syndrome is part of the Autism Spectrum of neurological differences that affect roughly 1 in every 100 births. Neurological differences are “hard-wired” in the brain. *They are not a mental illness.* The differences in the brain can be seen in an MRI scan, in that some neural pathways are very different structures than in an NT brain. This means that we literally think in different ways to NTs as our brains are on different circuits. We tend to have a great talent for seeing the detail of things but sometimes “can’t see the trees for the wood”. In other words, we come at life almost back-to-front from the way most people do.

Sensory problems are very common—light, noise, crowds etc. My most difficult one is noise, otherwise known as Hyperacusis. If you talk to me in a noisy crowd I will not be able to hear you as I don’t have a filtering mechanism for background noise.

Aspies are very much affected by stress and take longer to recover from stressful events than NTs do. Our “normality” might seem effortless, but it’s like the swan gliding along smoothly on the water—but paddling like anything underneath. We

achieve social capability only by effort of observation, will and emotional energy. We can sometimes appear to be blunt or rude but this is not intentional—it is quite OK to gently point it out and, if necessary, give the person time to rephrase. We lack the ability to see things from another’s point of view but can, to some extent, learn social strategies. This is where Aspiehelp seeks to educate and mentor Aspies so that getting a job, or a life, becomes less of a challenge.

Worldwide, fewer than 15% of all Aspies succeed in obtaining a job of any kind—full-time, part-time, paid or voluntary. There are roughly 40,000 Aspies of all ages in New Zealand (including under 18’s), so that’s an awful lot of us being supported by the taxpayer, at a cost of over \$3 million per life. The problem is that, more often than not, our socially odd behaviour is found to be unacceptable in workplaces. The fact that Aspies can focus better, work harder and more efficiently, and produce really creative and original work, in the end counts for less than the fact that people feel uncomfortable around us and are intolerant of our difference.

Aspies have been present since the dawn of time and, without them, it is doubtful that civilisation would have reached the degree of sophistication we enjoy today. Einstein, Steve Jobs, Bill Gates, Mozart, Edison, Newton, Emily Dickinson, Temple Grandin (and Leith McMurray!) are just a few of the Aspies you might recognise.

Do please ask me any questions you might have—but make it somewhere quiet!

Leith McMurray

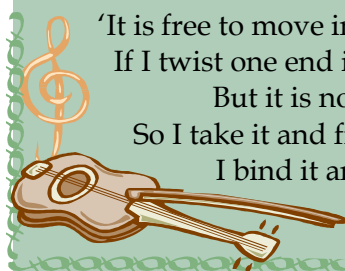
Bound to Sing.

‘I have on my table a violin string’,
wrote Rabindranath Tagore.

‘It is free to move in any direction I like.
If I twist one end it responds; it is free.
But it is not free to sing.

So I take it and fix it into my violin.

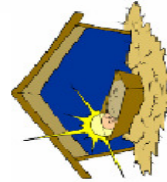
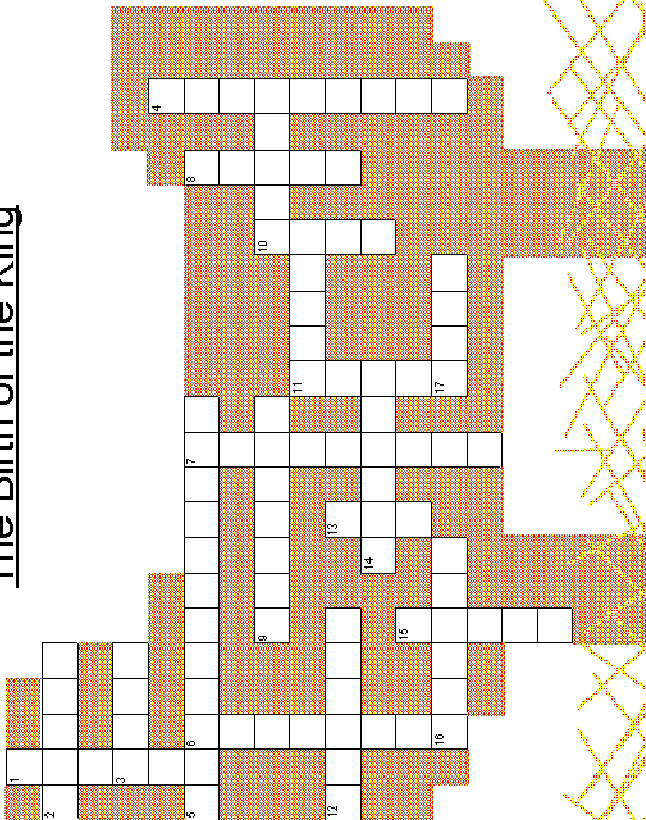
I bind it and when it is bound,
it is free for the first
time to sing.’



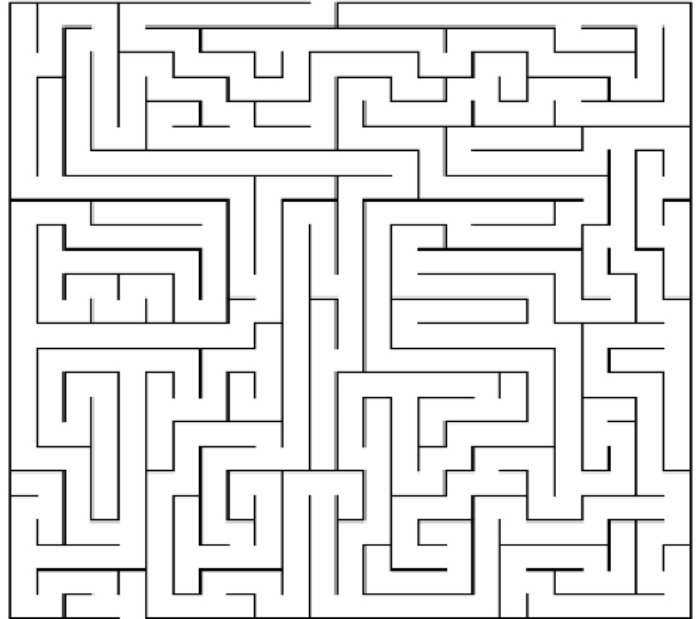
The Back Page

for the young and young at heart

The Birth of the King



www.bibleart.com



- Across**
- Mary and Joseph went to Bethlehem to pay these
 - A precious metal, one of the gifts from the 3 kings
 - A fragrant gum used to make incense; one of the gifts from the wisemen
 - The 3 kings from the east
 - A pungent tasting herb; A gift from the wisemen
 - Bethlehem is here
- Down**
- An open box to hold food for livestock; Mary laid Jesus in one
 - The city of His birth
 - The Roman emperor who taxed everyone
 - Angels told these guys about His birth while they were watching their flocks
 - The king of Judea, when Jesus was born
 - His mother
 - He was born in a stable because there was no room here
 - We celebrate His _____ at Christmas

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1	2	3	6	5	7	4	9	2
A	G	E	O	T	R	O	O	D
6	8	1	4	3	2	2	5	6
T	I	R	D	S	I	N	E	G
4	7	8	2	7	4	3	6	2
S	M	O	F	N	T	O	H	E
7	4	5	6	3	8	1	2	1
P	S	W	A	C	V	T	I	W
2	1	4	2	5	2	8	3	2
O	G	U	R	A	S	B	E	I
3	2	8	5	6	7	1	5	3
E	R	T	M	H	O	E	T	D

Find out the angels' message to the shepherds. Cross out all the odd numbers and put the rest of the letters in their order in the blanks. And solve the maze on the left to guide the shepherds to Jesus.

Your Visitor is:

Phone.....

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 Rev David Coster BA, BTh.
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 Home phone: 322 5612

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 John Willis & Vivienne Boyd
 Phone 339 0262

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Office Secretary: Gail Weaver