

Knox News

September to November 2019

Number 319

Minister's letter

Dear friends,

New Zealanders are presently being asked to decide about complex ethical issues.

The end-of-life legislation is calling forth discussions about how we understand death which inevitably raises questions about how we see the flourishing of life.

Christians draw on scripture, an extensive history of theological reflection and prayerful discernment in reaching a view. Even so, Christians reach different conclusions about the principle of physician-assisted death. Even those who might support the principle suggest there are as yet insufficient protections in the present Bill. Whatever our conclusion, it is important we keep exploring the implications of what our faith upholds – the dignity of life, the value of each human being, humans as socially connected rather than independent units, the protection of people who are vulnerable, the seriousness of death.

The subject of abortion also invites serious discussion. Although there are vocal Christian opponents, not all Christians are opposed in principle. Even some who might oppose abortion see the value of framing the discussion in terms of health or reproductive justice rather than as a matter under the Crimes Act. Much the same discussion is under way in New South Wales as in New Zealand. In contributing to the discussion there, the Uniting Church in Australia acknowledges that its members have diverse views on abortion but holds that it is unjust to criminalise women or doctors for the act



of abortion. It advocates a response based on compassion and sensitivity to the complex realities of human life. The Reverend Dr Margaret Mayman, a New Zealand minister serving there, in an article in the *Guardian* online contends that recognising the moral agency of women, the capacity of women to make good decisions about whether or not to continue a pregnancy, is crucial for human flourishing, which should be the goal of religion.

It is easy to rush to an instinctive view on these or other issues but that is not the nature of Christian discernment. Our tradition takes seriously the limits of a view reached from a particular culture or place. Our discernment is collegial, as we engage with people from a diversity of perspectives even as we seek together to follow Jesus Christ.

This is a time to discern and uphold what is fundamental for human flourishing and explore what that implies in decisions we need to make.

*In peace,
Kerry*

Council News

The Moderator of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church, the Right Reverend Fakaofa Kaio, in a recent edition of a national church publication *Bush Telegraph* referred to Israel's journey from Egypt to the promised land as being a journey far from smooth and peaceful.

He went on to refer to changes in our church communities. While at times we might feel it is too much of a struggle or challenge, he encouraged us not to lose heart as there are a number of exciting things happening.

We continue to evolve as we participate in the Spirit's fresh actions in the world. Recent meetings of Council have addressed how to be a community with a diversity of culture, generation and experience, include people with disabilities, engage with our neighbourhood and establish a sustainable financial model.

We formed two working groups, one to look at communications and one to look at how our buildings can help us continue to be part of God's mission. The Communications review spoke positively of aspects of our welcome and identified further steps we can take.

Council considered a draft budget for the 2019-2020 year. We were deeply appreciative of the work done by Tony Haslam, Finance Committee convener, the committee itself and the Deacons' Court. We support their approach that aims for a balanced budget. To achieve that goal, we need to think about what is really important to us as a church. It has become clear we need to consider a major appeal programme and rely less on congregational giving.

Another challenge is to reach into our community with the good news of Jesus Christ and enable people who respond to



participate in worship. We are grateful for the many people who participate by offering service in the church and we keep extending that opportunity. People who have served in roles for some time are taking up opportunities for a different kind of service.

Prayer and mutual support are essential to being a responsive and evolving congregation. It is exciting to be part of the journey with many others.

With every blessing,

**Alison Tait,
Council Clerk**

Farewell to Benjamin after eight years as Church Officer

Church Officer Benjamin Thew bid farewell to his post of eight years at a morning tea on Sunday 11 August. Kerry paid tribute to Benjamin's tireless work ethic and his good-natured, amiable presence in the church and the halls at all times of day and night, carrying out the thousand small and large tasks to keep Knox running. We wish him all the best in his new career with CityCare.

He is pictured, *second from right*, chatting with Frengky Jigibalom, who is taking over some of the Church Officer duties for the next while, until a permanent appointment can be discussed.



Looking ahead financially: from Knox Council and Deacons' Court

For many years, Knox Church has had small surpluses or deficits each financial year. This has been made possible by steady giving from the congregation, a growing proportion of income from carparks and property, generous donations and tight restraints on expenditure. Inner city congregations in New Zealand and overseas generally have other sources of income which enable them to have more expansive mission and ministry in the city. It has also enabled them to maintain heritage buildings.

The draft operating deficit in the last financial year was \$27,000 which is larger than normal, although some expenditure might be reimbursed from a Synod

of Otago and Southland Fund. Supported by the Deacons' Court, the Church Council believes that in order for Knox to flourish it has to expand its engagement with the wider community to which it is called. We have fewer ministry staff than surrounding congregations and there are green shoots



that need nourishing. We also have care of a heritage building with possibilities for greater use by the

community. The Church Council supported by the Deacons' Court has decided that our present sources of income, even as they evolve, are insufficient to sustain our mission and ministry. We have decided therefore to explore two steps:

1. A capital appeal that focuses on extending the mission and ministry of the church;
2. A building development to produce more income than is possible from our present configuration of buildings and property.

The Knox garden is a valued part of our interaction with the community and will not be affected.

Seeking to restore paradise

Jordan Redding reports from his recent visit to the tropical paradise of Tahiti on the after-effects of its French colonial past.

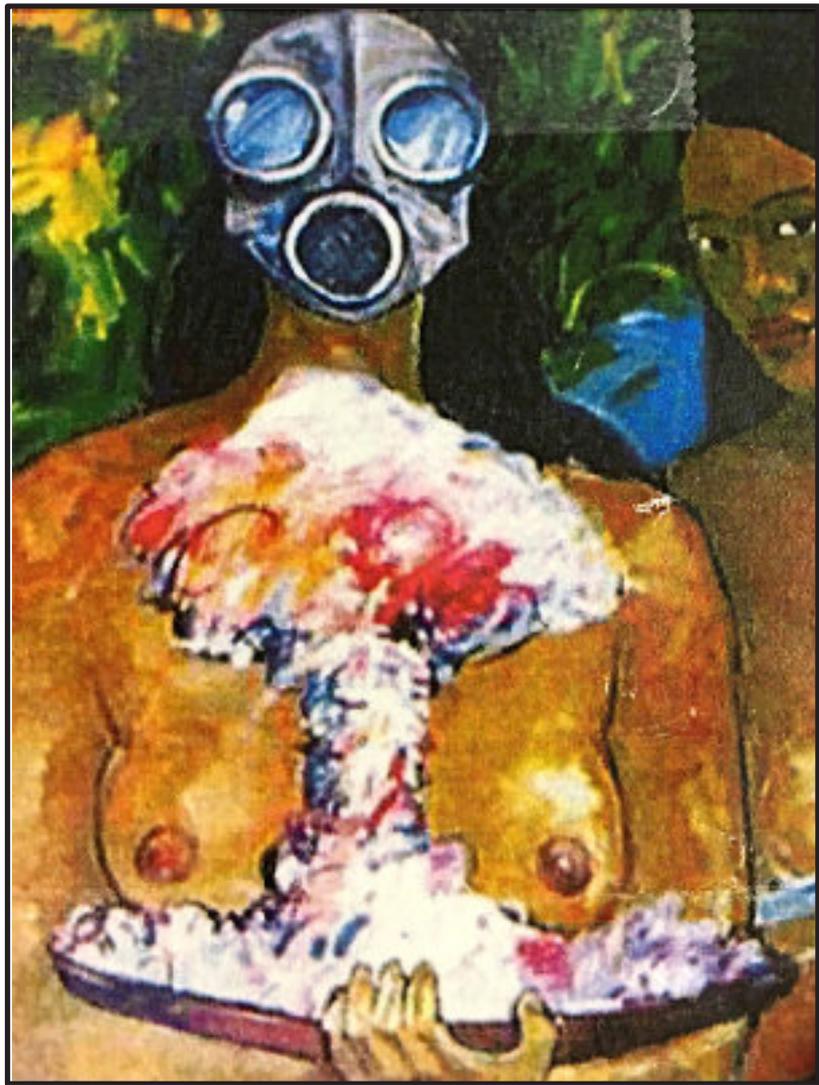
Just recently I was in Tahiti for an ecumenical gathering. Our task was to take part in a series of bible studies through which we explored issues of colonial and racial violence in the South Pacific. During one bible study we were shown an artist's impression of Paul Gauguin's painting *Two Tahitian Women* (1899).

In this new, modern-day interpretation, one of the women now wears a gas mask, and in her hands, instead of a plate of fruit, she holds an erupting nuclear mushroom cloud.

The artist is drawing attention to France's historic nuclear testing at Moruroa (also known here as Mururoa Atoll, 1250km southeast of Tahiti), which caused massive environmental damage and rendered some islands unsafe for human habitation. The negative impacts on health for people and the environment will be felt for generations to come.

Recently the Ètārētia Porotetani Māōhi (Maohi Protestant Church) has been involved with taking the French Government to court to seek justice for the historic abuses of power.

Today, wealthy and powerful nations continue to do violence in the South Pacific: ocean acidification; sea-level rise; coral bleaching; overfishing; fresh-water salification; extreme weather events; climate refugees. These are just a few results of today's environmental crisis caused by overconsumption, unsustainable lifestyles,



and the burning of fossil fuels. We no longer need to detonate weapons of mass destruction to cause desert wastelands — we can do it from the comfort of our homes.

The effects will be, and already are, far-reaching. Just as nuclear radiation stays in the environment for a long time, so too do greenhouse gas emissions. The result of our actions (or lack of action) today will be felt for decades, even centuries to come. But I am not saying anything new. We have known this for a long time.

Read the lectionary Psalm for World Peace Sunday (Psalm 107) with today's environmental and refugee crises in mind. It comes alive with new meaning: the "desert wastes", the "stormy winds", the "wanderers in the desert"

Seeking to restore paradise

looking for a town to welcome them.

Four times in the Psalm the petition is heard: "Then they cried to the Lord in their trouble..." And the response is given: "...and the Lord delivered them."

The Church, it seems to me, exists in tension between the petition and the assurance of salvation; between the cry of God-forsakenness on the cross and the declaration of Peace by the risen Christ; between the ache for a world still suffering from violence in its multiplicity of forms and the promise of a world made new; between the cry for justice and the eternal praise around the eternal throne of God.

The petition needs the assurance of deliverance and vice versa. Only if both are heard does the Church's prayer become an act of defiance at the way the world is; a refusal to accept things as they are; but to share in the work of the triune God by the Spirit who prays with and for us with sighs too deep for words: Lord, deliver us!

Pace Litany (based on Psalm 107)

Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good;

His steadfast love endures forever.

For those wandering desert wastelands

We cry to the Lord: *deliver them from distress*

For those who board boats in search of a better life

We cry to the Lord: *deliver them from distress*

For those forced from their homes

We cry to the Lord: *deliver them from distress*

For those hungry and thirsty

We cry to the Lord: *deliver them from distress*

For those imprisoned physically or in their minds

We cry to the Lord: *deliver them from distress*

For those bowed down under hard labour

We cry to the Lord: *deliver them from distress*

For those with no one to hear them

We cry to the Lord: *deliver them from distress*

For those enslaved by sinful ways

We cry to the Lord: *deliver them from distress*

"Then they cried to the Lord in their trouble..."

For those who battle terminal illness

We cry to the Lord: *deliver them from distress*

For those whose courage has melted away

We cry to the Lord: *deliver them from distress*

For those at their wits' end

We cry to the Lord: *deliver them from distress*

The Lord turns desolate waste into fertile ground,

He feeds the hungry and shelters the homeless,

He raises up the needy from their distress

And blesses them abundantly.

The redeemed of the Lord say so. Amen.

Come upon us, O Holy Spirit

A Pentecost message to the Church from the Rt Rev Fakaofa Kaia, Moderator of the Presbyterian Church of Aotearoa New Zealand.

“The Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you everything and make you remember all that I have told you.” (John 12:26)

Jesus is teaching his disciples; he is preparing them for his departure, his death.

This is our Lord’s promise of the Holy Spirit.

During our family’s recent holiday, I focused my daily Bible reading on the Spirit/Holy Spirit, specifically Genesis, the minor prophets, the Gospel of John, Acts, and Paul’s letter to the Romans.

The description of the Spirit (Holy Spirit) is clear, consistent, constant and concise through these books of the Bible. On the last Sunday before our holiday, Pentecost Sunday, I came across the statement of symbols of the Spirit: fire – power (Acts 2:3); breath – life (John 20:22); and descending dove – love (John 1:32).

These are not all the symbols of the Holy Spirit. This stirred with me, yet again, one of my favourite topics in our Christian faith: the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit in our faith language and understanding is part of the Trinity, the third person of God: Father (Parent), Son (Jesus) and the Holy Spirit – God in three persons. One God – the Spirit part – is both fascinating, mysterious and awe-inspiring to me. I read anything written about the Spirit and I cannot get enough. When people write or talk about their Spirit-inspired experiences, it brings out the gifts of the Spirit (1 Corinthians 12:1-11) and fruits of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22-23).

There is power, there is life, there is love and much, much more. Our own personal



stories connect and make sense for us. But always in awe and with a great sense of peace transcending our being.

Genesis mentions the active presence of the Spirit in its very first words: “In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters.” (Genesis 1:1-2)

In Joel, God says: “I will pour out my Spirit on all people, in those days.” (Joel 2:28)

In Zechariah, God says: “not by might nor by power, but by my Spirit”. (Zechariah 4:6)

In John’s Gospel, John the Baptist gave testimony: “I saw the Spirit come down from heaven as a dove and remain on him.” (John 1:32)

The same event recorded in Matthew’s gospel adds: “and a voice from heaven said, ‘This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased.’” (Matthew 3:17)

Oh, how my soul rejoices, inspired and stirred by the word of God. The teachings on the Spirit, the works of the Spirit fill and move my heart and soul. My head reels as I sense the presence of God over me. My yearning to be filled and to be more aware of the Spirit helps me appreciate my surroundings in sunny Rarotonga. I see life and beauty in this wonderful island. The awe and splendour of the word hovers over the place.

Come upon us, O Holy Spirit

I recall a sermon at a recent ecumenical service in Auckland where the preacher said: “I am not sure whether the Spirit was leading Jesus (Matthew 4:1) or whether Jesus was leading the Spirit (John 14:16-17) “And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Counsellor to be with you forever – the Spirit of truth”.

What mysterious words of God. The Triune God at work in history and in life, to give life for all creation.

The Jewish festival of Pentecost is one of the three main festivals in the calendar, alongside Passover and Dedication of the Temple. For Christians, Pentecost has become a major day in our Christian calendar. It is recalled, remembered and celebrated as the day the Holy Spirit came down. “Suddenly there was a noise from the sky which sounded like a strong wind blowing, and it filled the whole house. Then they saw what looked like tongues of fire which spread out and touched each person there. All were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues, as the Spirit enabled them.” (Acts 2:1-4)

Paul writes in the letter to the Church in Corinth: “Don’t you know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit, who lives in you and who was given to you by God”. (1 Corinthians 6:19)

Finally, for now, brothers and sisters, let us journey on believing and trusting that the Holy Spirit watches over our going our and our coming in each day.

Let us be confident that the Holy Spirit is all that Scripture teaches us, and even more. There is power, life, love, cleansing, peace, joy, justice, reconciliation, truth – steadfast and on and on. The Spirit moves.

Let us be aware of our God-given gift from the Holy Spirit. And understand the fruits that are borne in our lives by the Spirit. Learn about your gifts. Appreciate the gifts you bear in Christ.

Be inspired at what the Bible records of the Spirit’s work, presence and manifestation. It is new every morning. It is constant from generation to generation. It is God’s presence in our world.

Be encouraged to share, live out your life’s experience in the Spirit. For surely, you are a temple of the Holy Spirit.

Paul writes (Romans 14:17) “The Kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking, but of righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.”

Come Holy Spirit, come upon your people and bless us with your presence. Use our lives for God’s glory. Help us, O Spirit, to accept and follow Jesus, and to move closer day by day.



Knox Youth leaders at a recent WOF Training — for ethical codes of practice, health and safety — at Leith Valley.

Pictured, from left, are Jordan Redding, Phebe Chua, Vanessa Sinclair, David Chew, and Janet Sim Elder

Farewell, David Grant, former minister of Knox Church

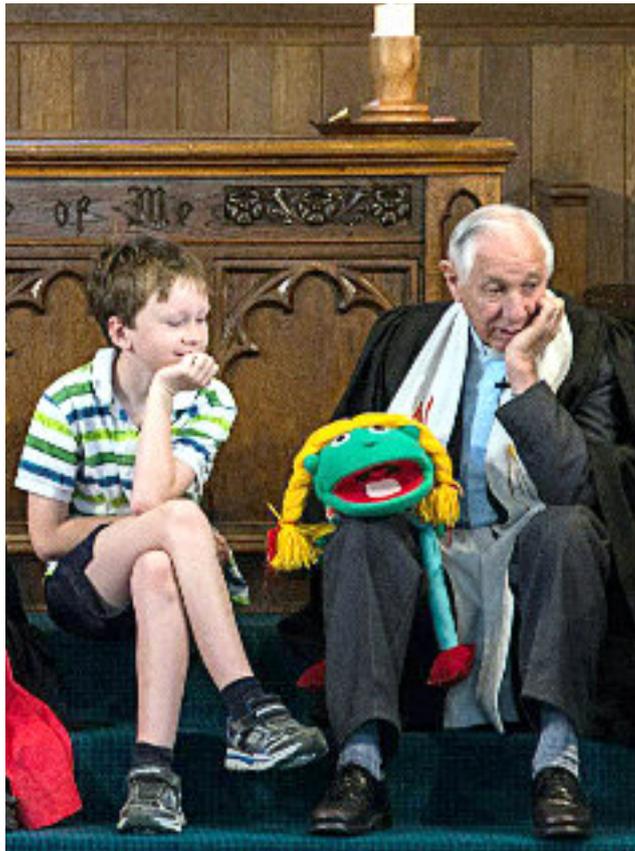
The Rev David Roy Grant, Minister of Knox Church from October 1995 until March 2003, died at Snells Beach, Warkworth, on 4 June 2019. The cause of his death was asbestosis, David having been exposed to asbestos as an apprentice builder 60 years ago.

Born in Rotorua, David moved to Matakana while he was very young, when his father bought a dairy farm there.

David's son David reflected that the Matakana Primary School hall, where his father's funeral was held, was the very place where as a small boy his dad had run around, played bull rush, kicked a ball and enjoyed his childhood years.

An apprenticeship in carpentry was followed by a call to the ministry. David and Alison were married in 1964 and moved to Dunedin where David studied firstly for a Bachelor of Arts at the University of Otago and then a Bachelor of Divinity at the then Knox Theological Hall. Further study at Princeton, USA was followed by parish ministry at Knox Church, Feilding and Scots Church, Hamilton. He was for a time a consultant for the church's Parish Development and Mission Department in Palmerston North and Hamilton.

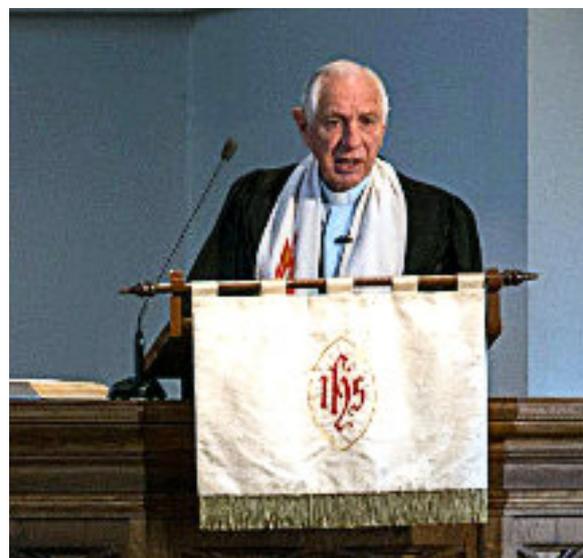
David's ministry at Knox was challenging. There were the ongoing expectations of the public role which Knox needed to play in the city plus the pastoral demands; the building redevelopment programme; the need to update a sexist and theologically inadequate hymnbook; the tension of being a parish



whose stance on homosexuality was outside the mainstream; and the sheer demands of preparing two services each Sunday, mostly without the assistance of a second minister. Despite this David shared his gift for language, his appreciation of the grandeur of the church building, his love for the music, the ceremony and the unexpected. His daughter Helen said: "Dad was not a rational, black-and-white man. He was a fellow inhabitant of the grey area where

there were different perspectives to be explored, subtleties to be revealed and possibilities yet to be discovered."

A creative preacher, David himself said he chose to use the Hebrew Scriptures as a source for reflection in their own right, rather than as making supportive material to Jesus texts. The Old Testament had much to offer.



Farewell, David Grant, former minister of Knox Church



David and Alison are remembered by Knox people for their warm and intentional hospitality, drawing together a scattered congregation through open homes at the manse and introducing “Dinners of 8”.

Poor health meant that David had to take early retirement. He and Alison moved to Snells Beach, close to his boyhood home. Here he took up carpentry again, renovating their home. He made many clocks, including two grandfather clocks which stood in their home, one made of wood from the old macrocarpa tree which had grown on the family farm. They became part of the Snells Beach Community Church, where they shared in the worship and found mutually supportive friendships.

Over six years David researched and wrote *We Gathered Here*, a historical account of his beloved Matakana. It is a significant story of a community which met over the years in the street, by the river, in churches, in schools and on the playing fields. He knew many of the people and this was a gift to them.

It is as a writer that many people came to know David. While he was here at Knox he wrote many reflections on the Psalms, collected in *Grant us your Peace*. David chose one to be read at his funeral. It is one of four based on Psalm 23 and was read by his wife Alison:

God of the living,

O that we could sit with the psalmist in the quiet confidence

that comes of many trust-filled conversations.

You are at the beginning and at the end, the bookends of unfolding stories, holding us upright.

We celebrate the quiet, refreshing moments of still satisfaction,

savoring the restoration of our souls, and the energy for new direction.

We celebrate a presence, a mighty “Thou”, beyond our understanding,

in the dark places beset by evil, terror and anxiety.

We celebrate communal times of bread and wine,

in the warm glow of your sure love, where no biting enemy can snatch us.

Surely in the psalmist’s seat there is satisfying atonement;

clothed in goodness and mercy we are, sharing a dwelling place with the Lord of glory.

AMEN.

Calling all singers: Knox Choir needs you

As regular attendees of Knox will have noticed, choir numbers are down as people “retire” or move on.

We are especially in need of good sopranos. Grace Togneri, at the tender age of 16, has been doing an amazing job of often being our only soprano; but that’s a lot for one person to carry. If you sing or if you know of anyone who does, either come along to a Wednesday evening practice (6pm) or encourage others to do so.

Music is good for the soul and uplifts the spirits! It keeps you young in heart and in mind! Let’s keep the Knox Church Choir a vibrant part of our worship for years to come.

Meet Alexander Heyes

Here’s one new member, a tenor, who is enjoying his time in the choir:

Name: Alexander Heyes

Age: 25

What you do for a living? I’m the manager of the Science and Maths content team at Education Perfect, building online educational resources for high school



students in NZ and Australia. *When and where did you first start singing?* I’ve sung with my family, and as part of a congregation, ever since I was born. My first experience singing in a choir was in Wellington; I joined a student choir, Schola Cantorum, while studying at Victoria University. It was a big challenge learning to sing and sight read at the same time, but I really enjoyed it.

How did you hear about Knox Church choir? I heard about

the Knox Church choir by word of mouth from a few different people. I had been looking for groups to join in Dunedin for a few years, and I finally made a resolution for 2019 to get in touch.

What do you enjoy about it? I enjoy the challenge of learning new pieces every week, moving on quickly from one composer to the next. I’ve learned (and already forgotten) more composers than I ever knew before. I’ve also enjoyed getting used to the formal dress; I’m very grateful for the warm robes during winter!

Do you have a favourite kind of music: I don’t often listen to music, but I enjoy playing jazz and ragtime pieces on the piano.

Calendar

Sunday **25 August** 10am Pentecost 11 Youth Sunday; 7pm communion;

Sunday **1 September** 10am Pentecost 12, Father’s Day; 7pm Worship;

Monday **2 September** University semester restarts; Sunday **8 September** 10am Pentecost 13 Quarterly Communion; 7pm Quarterly Communion;

Sunday **15 September** 10am Pentecost 14; 7pm Worship; Sunday **22 September** 10am Pentecost 15; 7pm Combined Presbyterian service at Knox with the Moderator of the General Assembly; Friday **27 September** School

term 3 ends; Sunday **29 September** 10am Pentecost 16; 7pm communion;

Sunday **6 October** 10am Pentecost 17 World Communion Sunday; 7pm Worship;

Friday **11 October** University semester 2 finishes; Sunday **13 October** 10am; Pentecost 18; 7pm Worship; Monday **14 October** School term 4 starts;

Sunday **20 October** 10am Pentecost 19 Presbyterian Support Sunday; 7pm Worship;

Sunday **27 October** 10am Pentecost 20 Reformation Sunday, Hymns and Psalms; 7pm communion;

Monday **28 October** Labour Day (church office closed); Sunday **3 November** 10am Pentecost 21, Parihaka Day; 7pm Worship;

Saturday **9 November** University exams conclude; Sunday **10 November** 10am Pentecost 22; 7pm Worship; Sunday **17 November** 10am Pentecost 23; pm. Launch of David Grant’s book; 7pm Worship;

Sunday **24 November** 10am Reign of Christ, St Andrew’s day, Kirkin’ o’ the Tartan Service; 7pm communion; Sunday **1 December** 10am Advent; 7pm Worship; Sunday **8 December** 10am Advent 2 Quarterly Communion.

Welcome, Beulah Dunstone Leitch

Jill Rutherford asked Beulah to tell us about herself:

1. Where were you born and when did you arrive in NZ? Born Belfast NI, but haven't lived there since I left after my first degree, BSc Hons, Queen's University Belfast (haven't lost my accent though). I attended Friends' School Lisburn, a Quaker grammar school, where I was deputy head girl. My mother, aged 90 May this year, still lives at our family home in Adlon Park, Lisburn, Co. Antrim, NI. My father died in February this year, aged 87; he would have turned 88 in June. My brother and sister still live in NI. I came to NZ in August 2005 with my husband Nigel and daughter Bethan, who was just five years' old at the time.

2. What do you do professionally? I'm a neuroscientist in Department of Anatomy, University of Otago. Head of the neuroscience research group.

3. When did you come to Knox and why did you choose it? I first visited Knox when I came to interview [at Otago University] in Dec 2004, but when we emigrated from the UK I attended Highgate Maori Hill Presbyterian Church near where we lived. I started attending evening services at Knox in 2018 and then attending morning services regularly.

4. What do you like about Knox? The beautiful church setting, the music, beautiful choir singing and organ playing, Kerry's preaching, and the traditional aspects of the service. Oh and of course the people I've met.

5. What is your faith background? I was brought up in a Christian family. My father was an elder at our family church in Lisburn, and clerk of sessions at the first Presbyterian church we attended as children, which was one of the first to have an ordained woman minister, the Rev Ruth Patterson. My sister and I attended Girls Brigade, my brother Boys Brigade. I became a committed Christian at 16 after hearing the Rev Cecil Kerr preach at a revival service. While at Queen's University in Belfast, I did CSSM outreach weeks during summer breaks with other students in a housing estate in Belfast.



6. What do you do for fun? In my salad days, before premature double knee replacements, I did a number of fun activities including scuba diving, paragliding, horse riding, rambling etc. I still love travelling, good food, reading, going to theatre and concerts and music/singing.

7. Favourite Bible verse, hymn, or what inspires you? I prefer the traditional hymns and words! I'm inspired by music and nature — creation and animals. I'm a bit antisocial, hence the poem choice, *Lake Isle of Innisfree*, by my favourite poet WB Yeats, who just happens to have been Irish. The words, "live alone in a bee loud glade", appeal to me.

Favourite authors and books: Philip Yancey, *Where is God when it hurts?*; CS Lewis, *A Grief Observed*; Ellie Wiesel, *Night*; Jordan Petersen, *12 Rules for Life*. (I'm totally non-PC.)

Favourite Bible verses: Micah 6:8; Psalm 121 King James Version (KJV); Isaiah 65:17-25 New International Version (NIV)

Favourite hymns: *My song is love unknown*, Samuel Crossman/John Ireland: My Savior's love to me; Love to the loveless shown, That they might lovely be....

Art for Earth's Sake! Cool Art for a Cool Climate

Knox Church is hosting a city-wide art exhibition from 6 to 13 October this year.

Artists can use any medium to give expression to their vision, but we are encouraging artists to use recycled or up-cycled materials where possible. All submitted art will be showcased both in and around Knox Church.

While this is a church-sponsored exhibition, the exhibition is open to all faiths and none. Should they wish to do so, artists are free to draw inspiration from faith-based texts of their choice (the Koran, the Bible, Torah, Buddhist teachings, traditional Maori creation stories, etc).

It is being organised by the Outreach Committee — Alva Feldmeier, Jill Rutherford, Peter Matheson, Ben Tombs and Warren Jowett (convenor). Pam McKinlay is also assisting the committee.

The aim of the exhibition is to highlight the climate change emergency, kaitiakitanga and our need to protect it.

There is a rising tide of concern about global warming, but much of it appeals to panic and alarm. This is entirely understandable, especially for young people facing an uncertain future. But the Knox Outreach Committee believes this needs to be complemented by a positive vision for the future. Art can help to nurture this vision.

Art and faith have been integrally linked through the millennia, irrespective of the faith tradition. The committee hopes that there will be a good number of Knox people enter the exhibition.

In our own time, of course, Colin McCahon and Ralph Hotere both worked with biblical themes and imagery to powerful effect. From a Christian perspective, the ancient stories of Creation, the Garden, Exodus, the prophetic Call for Justice, and the Call for a New Creation, all offer perspectives which can be re-interpreted within the framework



of the current climate crisis.

Alternatively, artists can draw inspiration from nature itself, from geopolitics, from local issues or news stories — anything that helps them articulate a vision, be it of anger, lament, hope or action. Knox is a safe and open place to explore any of these themes.

Prizes:

The committee is working towards finding prizes for the exhibition

and has been heartened by the generous response to Peter Matheson's call for financial support from Knox people. If there are more who would like to contribute towards prizes, money can be left at the Knox office or deposited into the Knox Church bank account (03 0903 0016425 00, Reference: Art prize).

Judges and Speakers:

Speakers: Bridie Lonie (Dunedin School of Art, Otago Polytechnic); and Marie Laufiso, City Councillor and activist.

Judges: Peter Crothall and Liz Palmer

Key Dates:

Submissions: Due by Monday 30 September 2019

Opening Event: 2pm, Sunday 6 October 2019, at Knox Church.

Exhibition open: October 6 to 12, 2019

Categories:

Primary School; Intermediate School & High School students; and Adults



ART, FOR EARTH'S SAKE!! COOLART FOR A COOL CLIMATE

Express your anger, outrage, lament, loss, hope. Create a call to action. A vision of Climate Justice. Be inspired by nature, geo-political events, news articles, local or global issues, by ancient stories of faith and courage – whatever sparks you! Use any medium to create your vision of the future in an era of climate change. Use recycled or upcycled materials if you can.

Submission Date: 30 September 2019

Exhibition Dates: 6 to 13 October, 2019

Info: admin@knoxchurch.net

knoxchurch.net/news

**Entries are open to all Dunedin artists,
from students to seniors!**

Vale, Shona MacTavish: dancing defiance and joy

The following is an extract from the eulogy given by friend Peter Matheson at the funeral at Knox Church in June of Shona MacTavish (1920-2019):

Shona loved to dance here [at Knox], and her good spirit is with us now. ... She was our great shining light. Your presence is a marvellous act ... with those closest to her: Terry, Dugald and Alison, Trina and Chas, Louise and David, Tom, Jinty and Niall, James, Karl, Gabby — and all her dancing sons and daughters.

As we gather here around Shona, each of us comes with our own special memories. Shona was part of our living, made us feel we were a glint in the eye of God, and now she is gone. She saw the whole of life as sacred, for all its tragedy, infinitely precious. And now she is gone. Shona Katrine Dunlop MacTavish was born right here in Dunedin, just after the First World War. Her life spans nine decades, connects this land with Vienna (to the end she loved to chat in idiomatic Austrian German), Australia, China, South Africa, the Philippines. Connects the secular and the sacred. She is what Russell Hoban calls a “connection person”.

She has won every honour this country can bestow, civic, academic, artistic. Yet body and mind, heart and will, she remained utterly herself, unfazed by fame. She was and is one of us. She was no angel. A force to be reckoned with! For Shona, the whole of life was dance, an outrageous celebration of being totally alive, a kind of living sermon.

Leap of Faith is the title of her autobiography. Her grandfather was one of the first professors of theology in Dunedin, her father, too, a teacher of religion. She married Donald MacTavish, a Canadian minister, and spent years of her life with him as a missionary in China and then South Africa. How come, this brilliant exponent of



modern dance was a missionary, for goodness sake?

On Donald’s cruelly early death she came to see dance as a way to continue his mission in life. She had zilch interest in conventional religion or in academic theology. Ritual, however, she believed was utterly vital to the human soul.

Witnessing the elemental power of the passacaglia dance in a remote village in South America, “I felt something within me burning with a fire no

sermon and no minister had ever produced.”

We have to dig deeper than words, she believed, find a new language to speak to the human heart. My God, she was passionate. She had seen Nazi brutality against her Jewish friends in Vienna, come face to face with the sickening poverty of the developing world, encountered engrained prejudice at every corner and her answer was: sacred and secular dance.

No theme, she declared, was too grandiose for dance: the titles of her choreographies bear this out: *Hunger; Liberation, Encounter, Requiem for the Living, Easter Canticles*. They dealt with homophobia, with the nuclear threat, with the gap between the rich and the poor.

As a leading exponent of modern dance, she knew the potential of dance to move people on. This sacred liturgy, as she called it, went far beyond a call to social justice. Only a transcendent vision, she believed, could redeem humanity.

Today, as we confront, for example, climate emergency on a sickening scale she is a shining example of the way in which the human imaginations can be captivated, attitudes can be turned around, people’s horizon lifted by beauty and joy.

Dance, for Shona MacTavish was defiance. The words of Hildegard of Bingen: may sum up her credo:

“I, love, am the glory of the living God.... It was I, love, who wrote humanity.”

The fruits of the spirit

Christie Thompson finds inspiration in the humble, pungent durian fruit, and what it might tell us about our own spiritual lives.

Like many people, in uncertain times I seek out the stuff of certainty. In particular, things that tether me to history's ongoing time-line feel very grounding.

Take fruit, for example.

Since time immemorial, few things have remained as familiar and true to form as the produce we eat; varieties change, but grapes today look very similar to those shown being fed to Cleopatra in Egyptian hieroglyphs. And while the contents of the humble fruit bowl might not symbolise luxury and abundance to us in 2019, it's interesting to reflect on how the ancients viewed what today seems so pedestrian.

On a trip to Thailand, Bennett and I heard mysterious legends surrounding the almost mythical durian fruit.

Durian (pictured *above, right*), which is the size and shape of a spiky oversized rugby ball, is fanatically loved by some and utterly loathed by others; it is the only fruit the Thai government has felt the need to legislate against.

Setting aside the outlandish tales of durian intoxication, it seems the durian fruit's smell is what makes it so controversial.

The very strong odour which emanates from the fatty yellow flesh of the durian makes it problematic. And yet, a succession of Thai kings has loved durian since ancient times and, just like the grapes fed to Cleopatra, has become synonymous with luxury and status.

While the ancient ancestors of today's Thai royal family were enjoying durian fruit, across the seas the ancient Israelites were composing the *Song of Songs* where, amongst other things, the pomegranate was used as a powerful metaphor for beauty and fertility.

Modern Christianity reflects a less



luxurious, more subdued understanding of fruit than that of our ancient counterparts.

Generally, we interpret the bible's imperative of giving our "first fruits" as offering some of our resources to be used in God's service. Certainly, time and money are excellent things to be generous with; but things get more interesting when you consider that the resource God is pursuing most passionately is our hearts.

Another verse says, "you will know them by the fruits they bear". Here, fruit refers to the "fruits" of the Holy Spirit; love, peace, patience, kindness, goodness and self-control. We're told they are what "grows" from time spent in the presence of the great "I Am". We offer our whole hearts to the heavenly gardener and his spirit grows in us that which is good.

But it doesn't end there; we need to do something with all that fruit lest it spoil and go to waste.

And this is where a bit of "spiritual ecology" comes to mind. Let me explain: If I am the vine — the steward of God's good crop in me — then returning to God these "first fruits" is a natural and necessary symbiosis, a vital part of the "heavenly ecosystem".

Fruit has grown in every corner of the Earth for centuries. Since the Spirit first hovered over the waters in Genesis, God has grown goodness to nourish the world and its inhabitants.

We all have unique "fruits" to offer; those of time, talents, money, personal character and many others. But whatever they are, the best of them came from God and can return to God as a form of worship.

So whatever fruit God is growing in you this season, don't let it spoil on the vine; offer it up to God so the Great Gardener can nourish the body of Christ and the world around us.

Knox people

Meet recent Knox member Alastair Sime:

Born and raised in Ranfurly, I attended OBHS, then Otago University and Canterbury Engineering School. I worked for the Post Office as an Electrical Engineer for a year in Greymouth, then spent the rest of my career in Auckland, where I ended up Project Managing some major submarine cable works (the NZ section of the Southern Cross fibre cable network, and a Cook Strait fibre cable project with a \$30 million budget which included an Arthurs Pass-Christchurch to Greymouth fibre cable).

On retiring (from Telecom) I moved down to Dunedin (Mosgiel).

I was pleased to be able to get all my children and grandchildren to join me for a



ride on the Central Rail Trail in 2016. I bought an electric bike which towed a trailer for my 5-year-old granddaughter to ride in.

I've had 16 photo-voltaic solar panels installed on my roof (rated at 4.8kW), augmented by a Tesla Powerwall battery system (storing up to 13.5kWh). This enables my solar panels to operate during a power cut (as expected when the major Alpine Fault AF8 occurs).

In Auckland I enjoyed lunchtime pipe organ recitals (mostly by John Wells and Indra Hughes), and choral performances by Musica Sacra.

In Dunedin I joined Highgate Church where my sister Janet was organist, till that building was closed due to earthquake risks, and I moved to Knox with its excellent organ and choir. I subsequently helped a group of volunteers dismantling the Highgate pipe organ for removal to storage by the South Island Organ Company, just before building demolition was expected to commence.



Left: Fred's baptism ... Ryan and Anna High with children Maggie and Fred.

Below: The Dudley Tombs clan met up at Knox, as did Rosemary Meek and her son Phillip.



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