

CHURCH OF TE HEPARA PAI

Sunday 07 December 2014

Te Rātapu Tuarua o te Haerenga Mai / 2nd Sunday of Advent

THE GOOD NEWS

SENTENCE OF THE DAY:

We gather around the Advent wreath today knowing that we are not perfect—that we all make mistakes and do bad things. Only Jesus obeyed God fully. Jesus helps us to live as God wants us to live. Jesus gives us peace.

COLLECT OF THE DAY – *Let us pray:*

Eternal God, we thank you that through all the years you have given peace to your people. Help us to have your peace in our lives. We pray that, in this Advent season, we may, by what we do, show your presence to the sick, to the hungry, and to the lonely, so that they too may have peace. In the name of Christ the Prince of Peace. **Amen.**

 BISHOPS PANUI

NO CLERGY RETREAT

CAROLS IN THE PARK

Wednesday 10th December 2014– 7pm-9pm
Eastside Gallery – Linwood Community Art Centre
388 Worcester Street
Linwood

RANGATAHI/TAMARIKI CHRISTMAS PARTY

Sunday 14th December 2014 after karakia 290 Ferry Road

MINISTRY TEAM CHRISTMAS DINNER

Sunday 14th December 2014 6pm at Sequoia 88 at Redwood Hotel
A shuttle will be provided from the Bishops Centre.



The Good News

What is the Gospel? The word gospel simply means “good news.” The central message of the Bible is the gospel, or good news, about the person and work of Jesus Christ.

The “good news” is that the one and only God who is holy made us in his likeness to know him. But we sinned by disobeying him and cut ourselves off from him. In his great love, God became a man in Jesus, lived a perfect life, and died on the cross, in this

way obeying God’s moral law himself and taking on himself the punishment for the sins of all those who would ever turn from their sin and trust in him. He rose again from the dead, showing that God accepted Christ’s sacrifice and that God’s anger against us had gone.

In the gospel passage for today from Mark 1, God through Saint John the Baptist now calls us to turn away from our sins and trust in Christ alone for our forgiveness. To turn away from our sins is to turn away from the kind of self-centredness that leads to wrong actions, such as lying, cheating, stealing, gossiping, and taking revenge. A person who turns away from sin stops rebelling against God and begins following God’s way of living as given in his Word. The first step in turning to God is to admit your sin, as Saint John the Baptist urged. Then God will receive you and help you live the way he wants.

If we turn away from our sins and trust in Christ, we are born into a new life, an eternal life in relationship with God. The eternal life in relationship with God that we are born into is made up of a new spiritual dimension in this life by which the believer - still struggling with sin - lives under the care and guidance of God and at **PEACE with God**; and an eternal future in the fullness of life with God beyond death. So the message of repentance, of turning away from sin, is “good news” to those who listen and seek the healing forgiveness of God’s love, but terrible news to those who refuse to listen and in this way cut off their only hope.

Finally the “good news” is that during this season of advent and beyond we are waiting for the day when Jesus Christ will return to bring to an end human history (2 Pet. 3:10-11) with its evil and suffering. But on that occasion he will come not as a Saviour but as the Judge of all the human race. Human life is not a continual cycle of birth, life and death, but is moving towards the time when God brings it to an end and judges everyone by the one he has appointed - the Lord Jesus Christ.

God is gathering one new people to himself among all those who submit to Christ as Lord of their life. Has the Lord spoken to you through this message? Do you sense the need to come to Jesus and surrender your life to him to be saved? If so, you can be. If you will come to him and turn away from your sins and put trust in him by opening your heart to him and inviting him into your heart to be your Lord, he will save your soul, forgive your sins and change your life and give you the gift of eternal life. **If you wish to receive this good news, just pray sincerely from the heart:**

Dear Lord Jesus Christ, I admit that I am a sinner. I have done many things that do not please you. I have lived my life for myself. I am sorry and I turn away from my sins. I ask you to forgive me. I believe that you died on the cross for me, to save me, and that you then rose from the dead and am alive now and can see me. I invite you to come into my heart now and ask you to take control of my life; I give it to you. Help me to live every day in a way that pleases you. In your name, Amen.

In the name of God: Father, Son and Holy Spirit - amen.



The Old Testament Reading: Isaiah 40:1-11

A reading from Isaiah chapter 40 beginning at verse 1.

God Comforts His People

¹“Comfort my people,” says your God. “Comfort them. ²Speak tenderly to the people of Jerusalem. Announce to them that their hard service has been completed. Tell them that their sin has been paid for. Tell them I have punished them enough for all of their sins.” ³A messenger is calling out, “In the desert prepare the way for the LORD. Make a straight road through it for our God. ⁴Every valley will be filled in. Every mountain and hill will be made level. The rough ground will be smoothed out. The rocky places will be made flat. ⁵Then the glory of the LORD will appear. And everyone will see it. The LORD has spoken.”

⁶Another messenger says, “Cry out.” And I said, “What should I cry?” “Cry out, ‘All people are like grass. They don’t last any longer than flowers in the field. ⁷The grass dries up. The flowers fall to the ground. That happens when the LORD makes his wind blow on them. So people are just like grass. ⁸The grass dries up. The flowers fall to the ground. But what our God says will stand forever.’” ⁹Zion, you are bringing good news to your people. Go up on a high mountain and announce it. Jerusalem, you are bringing good news to them. Shout the message loudly. Shout it out loud. Don’t be afraid. Say to the towns of Judah, “Your God is coming!” ¹⁰The LORD and King is coming with power. His powerful arm will rule for him. He has set his people free. He is bringing them back as his reward. He has won the battle over their enemies. ¹¹He takes care of his flock like a shepherd. He gathers the lambs in his arms. He carries them close to his heart. He gently leads those that have little ones.

Hear what the Spirit is saying to the Church. Thanks be to God.



The Epistle Reading: 2 Peter 3:8-15a

A reading from 2 Peter chapter 3 beginning at verse 8.

⁸Dear friends, here is one thing you must not forget. With the Lord a day is like a thousand years. And a thousand years are like a day. ⁹The Lord is not slow to keep his promise. He is not slow in the way some people understand it. He is patient with you. He doesn’t want anyone to be destroyed. Instead, he wants all people to turn away from their sins.

¹⁰But the day of the Lord will come like a thief. The heavens will disappear with a roar. Fire will destroy everything in them. God will judge the earth and everything in it.

¹¹So everything will be destroyed. And what kind of people should you be? You should lead holy and godly lives. ¹²Live like that as you look forward to the day of God. It will make the day come more quickly. On that day fire will destroy the heavens. Its heat will melt everything in them.

Share the Good News

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¹³ But we are looking forward to a new heaven and a new earth. Godliness will make its home there. All of this is in keeping with God's promise.

¹⁴ Dear friends, I know you are looking forward to that. So try your best to be found pure and without blame. Be at peace with God. ¹⁵ Remember that while our Lord is waiting patiently to return, people are being saved.

Hear what the Spirit is saying to the Church. Thanks be to God.

The Gospel Reading: Mark 1:1-8

*The Holy Gospel according to Mark chapter 1 beginning at verse 1.
Praise and Glory to God.*

John the Baptist Prepares the Way

¹ This is the beginning of the good news about Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

² Long ago Isaiah the prophet wrote, "I will send my messenger ahead of you. He will prepare your way." (Malachi 3:1) ³ "A messenger is calling out in the desert, 'Prepare the way for the Lord. Make straight paths for him.'" (Isaiah 40:3)

⁴ And so John came. He baptized people in the desert. He also preached that people should be baptized and turn away from their sins. Then God would forgive them. ⁵ All the people from the countryside of Judea went out to him. All the people from Jerusalem went too. When they admitted they had sinned, John baptized them in the Jordan River. ⁶ John wore clothes made out of camel's hair. He had a leather belt around his waist. And he ate locusts and wild honey.

⁷ Here is what John was preaching. "After me, one will come who is more powerful than I am. I'm not good enough to bend down and untie his sandals. ⁸ I baptize you with water. But he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit."

This is the Gospel of Christ. Praise to Christ, the Word.



CHRISTMAS SERVICES

WEDNESDAY 24TH DECEMBER 2014
Christmas Eve at 11:00pm

THURSDAY 25TH DECEMBER 2014
Christmas Day Service at 9:00am

SUNDAY 28TH DECEMBER 2014
Holy Communion Service 10:15am

KURA RAUMATI:

Tuesday, 13th January to Sunday, 18th January, 2015.

AGM 2015

Friday, 13th March 2015—Sunday 15th March 2015

The Gospel is the
"Good News"
of God Providing
Mankind with Deliverance
From Sin and Death