

Loving God with all your Mind!

The month of July is Bible month!

What is the shortest book in the Bible? You can read this book in about one minute. It's 3 John.



We give thanks to God for the Te Paipera (Holy Scriptures) which was written for the whole community of God's people. While it's important to read the Bible for ourselves, it's also important we read it together in community. Reading it together allows people to see things from a different perspective, and encourage each other in the faith. It also helps us hear collectively from God about what God might be saying and doing.

What is a story or verse in the Bible which is a favourite or has encouraged or given you hope in your life?

One of mine is, 'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.' Matthew 22:37

Although, I never really understood the mind bit. I use to flex my muscles and say - God I will love you with all my strength. But, love God with all my...mind? What does that mean? Don't I just believe and that's it! Do I have to use my mind to think about things? I remember someone telling me once, 'Don't over think things - just have faith!' My Youth Pastor once told me that if I went to Bible College to study theology it would mess my mind up.

Well, I went to Bible College and discovered a vast richness to Christian thought and history and a real depth to rigorous study of the Bible. Asking good questions, wrestling with faith issues, testing scripture, appreciating different interpretations, sitting with contradictions, listening to how different church traditions understood scripture, wondering about some of the awkward things in the Bible. Didn't mess me up – made me stronger!

Unfortunately, the study of God is still seen as something done by the professionals and located in universities and bible colleges. One definition of theology I think we need to reclaim is and defined by one theologian, as, 'wisdom proper to the life of every believer'.

In other words – theology is a way of viewing the world through a lens informed by faith, inspired by scripture.

Living in Dunedin we are privileged to have a University with a Theological Department with some God-fearing wise and excellent theologians. I would say practising theologians – living in a faith community, reflecting on scripture and life and wanting to share that wisdom with others. Check out their website as there are often public forums on relevant matters like cloning, climate change, suicide (Centre for Theology and Public Issues). Why not visit Manna Book store which has some great resources and books on both reading and understanding scripture, including books on contemporary matters you might be interested in. Our church library has some great reads also. Local Minister Selwyn Yeoman has a new book, *'Is Anyone In Charge Here? A Christological Evaluation of the Idea of Human Dominion over Creation.*

Did you know that the title most often given to Jesus in the New Testament is not "Lord," but "Teacher"? Occasionally we read that the crowds were astonished, not by miracles, but by his teaching. When Jesus called disciples, he called them to be learners. The Greek word *mathates*, usually translated disciples, could just as easily mean students.

If we don't include our minds in our love for God, the danger is worshipping simple ideas about God rather than humbling ourselves before the 'Great I am'. God wants us to learn. God calls us to love with our minds, because the search for truth leads to God. We discover new insights about our world and things that really matter and that might speak directly to a life situation we are in.

All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.

2 Timothy 3:16-17

Arohanui

Rev. B

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He waka eke noa – We are all in this together: Worship Services at Flagstaff Community Church will meet normally during Level 1. Please stay at home if you are unwell or if you have a compromising health issue or concern. Your health and safety is our top priority. There are a number of Tracer App Posters located in Church building or a clip board in foyer for recording names.

Young Families Camp – ‘The Big Sleep Away Overnighter’. Keep Saturday 25th to Sunday 26th September free for a 24 hour camp at Lake Waihola. Heaps of cool stuff for the tamariki. Details soon.

Octacan and Native Tree Sponsorship - The spirit of winter giving. Thank you to the Flagstaff Community Church for the generosity who have shown during our season of Matariki. The gifts of time, seedling trees from your garden, the money raised to buy some native plants for our School Creek Restoration Project and all the cans of food collected for Presbyterian Support Foodbank.

14 000+ cans collected at Octacan – thank you. A HUGE thank you to everyone who donated to the foodbank! We received 14,474 cans and we are still counting late donations. Your generosity will make an enormous difference to local people this winter! So we are all stocked up for cans but have run out of tea, coffee and milo, if you can help out with these that would be very much appreciated.

A second request is do you have a bursting wardrobe? We are looking for donations of good quality, second hand goods to restock our op shops!

We have two op shops in Dunedin – Shop on Carroll, which supports our Family Works programmes, and Op Shop on St Andrew, which provides affordable clothing options for all. We are running low on stock, especially winter woollies and men’s clothing.

To donate clothing you can:

- Phone PSO 477 7115 and ask for some bags to be posted out to you and then phone back for these to be collected
- You can drop directly into our warehouse at Shop of Carroll, located at 10 Carrol Street, Dunedin
- Or maybe your church is happy to collect the bags and phone us when they have a stock and we can come and collect

Thank you for the many, many ways you and your church support Presbyterian Support Otago, we very much value your support.

Membership Mission Membership: There are a number of people who have moved from the original place where they were baptised and made a confession of faith, and who now make Flagstaff Community Church the place they live out their faith. We will soon be celebrating with a number of people who would like to become members during a service of worship. We invite such people to make a public declaration in front of the congregation expressing their faith and commitment to exercise good stewardship of time, talents and treasure, including financially supporting God’s work. To arrange an appointment to explore fully the implications of becoming a committed member of our congregation please contact Brendon McRae 4763063, 027 356 9200.

Pastoral Visit: If you would like a pastoral visit from someone from within the pastoral team or the minister please ring elder Sarah Barton 021 385905.

Flagstaff Prayer Time: Sharing life, ministry and prayer together. Everyone Welcome. Every Tuesday 8.30 – 9.30 am in Tocher Lounge. Join us as we share and celebrate stories of God's action amongst us and pray for one another and discern God's leading into the future.

Green Fingers: We are currently restoring our awa next to the church. This little creek is showing signs of life and is breathing again and some native birds are showing up. There are a few folks who meet for a couple of hours on a Monday and pot away at planting, trapping pests, removing, weeding, etc. Occasionally we have a project in which everyone is invited including our local school. If you want to join us ring Neil Brown 027 435 4672.

Life Groups: Life Groups @Flagstaff are a vital part of who we are as a community of faith as we seek to grow in Jesus. Not only do we explore the messages God has for us from the Bible but we also have the opportunity to connect with others and experience a place where no-one stands alone.

Discipleship Groups: which focus on study and prayer. Wednesday 1.30 p.m. Contact Sarah 021385905.

Community Facing Groups: Where the focus is on friendship around a common interest. These groups are welcoming which may centre on an activity, a hobby, a talent, a life stage, a project or service. Groups include, Steady as you Go, Hire a Helper, Community Garden, Women's Coffee Group @ Coffee Culture (Held 1st Tuesday of the month at 7.30 pm), Green Fingers, Walking Groups and more! If you would like to join a group, start a group or find out more information then please contact Brendon on 0273569200.

Tithing/Giving: There are many ways we can support the activity of God in our church, community and world. Two ways of making your church offerings.

1. Use internet banking to make direct credits or automatic payments to the Flagstaff Community Church. Westpac bank # 03-0903-0192517-03. Please include your name for reference or if you use Envelopes use your Envelope reference/number.
2. Join the envelope system by contacting Alison Jenkin (Wakari) 021 1052 320. You will receive a set of personally numbered envelopes. This can be placed in the kete/basket at the foyer entrance anytime during Sunday Worship.

If you give to special appeals or missions, you can claim on these donations by identifying the appeal by naming it when you make the internet payment or by putting your number or name and address on an envelope.

Contacts:

Prayer Chain: Sue Yule 476 7655, or Sarah Barton 021 385905

Pastoral Care: Sarah Barton 021 385905

Envelope System: Alison Jenkin (Wakari) 021 1052320

Hall Bookings: Sarah Barton 021 385905

Technical Equipment: Gary Dent 027 4763155

Church Newsletter: Jenny Neill 467 5813 dandjneill@xtra.co.nz

Minister: Rev. Brendon McRae

Phone: 027 356 9200

brendon@churchatflagstaff.co.nz

Elder: Sarah Barton

Phone: 021 385 905

sarahbarton629@gmail.com

Flagstaff Community Church Services 9:30am (Communion 3rd Sunday of each month)

Parish contact details: PO Box 10074,
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Website: www.churchatflagstaff.co.nz;

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