



Made it to Dakar!



Sams getting his hair cut to look sharp for the first day of school

Kia ora Flagstaff whanau ,

We wanted to send you a small update to say we arrived - and send lots of pictures so you can begin to imagine where we are.

The first month here has absolutely flown by as we have been settling in, meeting people, learning how to live here, and the school has kept us busy with lots of orientation and prep for the year ahead.

As you will see from the pictures Dakar is a bit dry and deserty, but its the rainy season so there are lots beautiful booganvilia trees popping up out of ramshackle buildings and the street stalls are full of mangos and colourful veggies. The streets hustle and bustle with cars, horse and carts, vendors that sell strong, sugary lemon coffee, and Talibe boys who beg. The people are incredibly friendly and fun, but there is also a laid back feeling (we are told this is true of Senegalese people). We live about 15 mins walk from the Ocean - which is beautiful; it's all a bit shabby as you approach and then all of a sudden there are



Prayer Points

- **Sam's students: some complex kids who definitely need prayer**
- **Sam and Yo: to be lead by God about where to invest our time (which church, people, activities outside of school)**
- **Yolanda and Nahla: Their day to day, can be a little lonely - prayer for finding good connections and opportunities**

Some of Sam's students + our local meat sandwich spot



fun cafe's and fish kebab sellers that line the water and surfers on a good day! The school is about 20 minutes walk up a steady hill along the coast and is on a small plot of land which is still in the process of being built upwards.

We have loved getting to know the community around our home; our Guard Lati Singwa, and all the other guards along the street are incredibly friendly and very helpful to practice our French and several sentences of Wolof on. We have a shanti housing settlement next to our house and there are two babies that are a similar age to Nahla so its been a great connection! We all cheered on one little lad yesterday who was taking his first steps. Nahla is LOVED by all and she does well to smile and laugh with delight - its been a blessing to have her as an easy friendly way to meet people.

Sam had a true 'Welcome to Africa' with a quick visit to the emergency doctors on our second week here - but thanks to God, it was nothing serious and he bounced back in a couple of days! Thanks for the prayers from the Flagstaff whanau!

It has been inspiring to dive into the Christian community that surrounds Dakar Academy and we particularly enjoyed learning more about the vision and mission of the school. We have been so well looked after since our arrival and have appreciated peoples willingness to welcome us in and help us settle. We will share more about Sam's work and the little bits Yolanda is getting involved with in our next update.

Thats a quick snap shot for you so far. Thank you for so much for supporting us to be here xXx

Newsletter

Flagstaff Community Church

August, 2022



Sam, Yolanda & Nahla's Mission to Dakar, Senegal

The Mephām whānau are very grateful for the generous support from Flagstaff Community Church. At our July hui, Parish Council approved the monthly payment of \$440.00 for two years, with an initial lump sum payment of \$800.00 towards set up costs.. Ngā mihi mahana!



If you would like to be on their mailing list, support them in prayer or finance, please flick an e-mail to sam.yo.meph@gmail.com; Financially, Dakar Academy provide them with housing and a monthly stipend (enough to cover some basic costs), but they need some support to be financially stable. PS. They would love you to go visit them in Dakar!

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Rev. (almost Dr.) Malcolm Gordon: We celebrate (and grieve a little) to hear that Malcolm Gordon has been appointed to a new role at First Church with our old friend, Ed Masters. Malcolm will be a part-time minister at First, helping the existing congregations to think more missionally, and to explore ways for people with no church background to connect with Jesus. Because this role is only part time, Malcolm is planning on still being part of Flagstaff, and Ness and the kids will continue to worship with us. We might like to think of Malcolm as being a missionary that we are sending to work with people in the centre of our city. Malcolm will be starting at First in the next couple of weeks.

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.

Moderator's Message

Season of Creation



1 Sept – 4 Oct

"Listen to creation: move from a theology of plunder, back to a theology of wonder."

Do you remember Climate Change protests many New Zealand school students participated in a couple of years ago? Students took Friday afternoon off school to march together. I was sitting on the veranda of Hagley Golf Club on one such Friday afternoon. Surrounded by my old golfing mates, we saw a huge group of school students coming towards us down the path through the park. They were carrying placards calling for action on climate change. They were chanting and singing. The first reaction amongst my group was 'let's go and tell them that they need to get back to school!' Some of us managed to change the mood to let's go out to them and applaud their passion for creation. And so we did, listening to these young voices as they spoke up for care for the planet.

This is a topic close to my heart as it is so in tune with my Moderator theme of, Empowering Generations. This cause is so important to the younger generations and we who are older need to listen to their voices and respond.

And this story fits so well with the theme and symbol of the Season of Creation 2022, the annual ecumenical celebration of prayer and action for our common home.

This year's theme is, "Listening to the Voice of Creation", and the symbol is the burning bush.

Season of Creation begins on 1 September, World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation, and ends on 4 October, the feast of St Francis of Assisi.

As I reflect on the theme in the context of the Exodus 3 passage where God captures the attention of Moses through a burning bush, I think of these things:



The Burning Bush
Ex 3:1-2

Listen to the
Voice of creation
SEASON OF CREATION 2022

·God called and Moses listened.
·God spoke of hearing the suffering voices of the people.
·Today the suffering voices of people continue to cry out... as I write this message the Leaders of the Pacific Forum lament rising sea levels, villagers in Bangladesh and citizens of Sydney weep over homes and livelihoods drowned under flood waters, residents in Spain, Portugal and France desperately call for more help to fight the fires that ravage their lands, and the United Kingdom experiences the highest temperatures ever recorded.
·And just as God used a part of creation to call Moses, are these rising sea levels, floods and fires, creation itself calling out for our attention?

Moses listened and at the grand age of 80 sprang into action.

In this *Season of Creation*, individuals and communities are invited to spring into action through prayer, sustainability projects and advocacy:

- Prayer: Host an ecumenical prayer gathering that unites all Christians for the care of our common home.
- Sustainability: Lead a clean-up project that helps all of creation thrive.
- Advocacy: Raise your voice for climate justice by participating in or leading an ongoing campaign, such as the fossil fuel divestment movement.

As a Church we can engage with the caring for creation actions that our Church at successive assemblies has committed to support including, most recently, Eco Church. See the Church website for details. Download the *2022 Season of Creation* resource.

The *Season of Creation* website is well worth a look. I was especially touched by a quote on this website from Rev Rachel Mash, Provincial Canon for the Environment in the Anglican Church of Southern Africa:

*"We are recovering the sense of wonder at how the world was made,
and we need to reclaim the theology of why it was made.*

*We need to listen to creation so that we can move from a theology of plunder
back to a theology of wonder."*

When the Rev Sikawu Makubalo of Methodist Church from Southern Africa revealed the burning bush logo of the *2022 Season of Creation* he said that the bush contrasts the fire of so many unnatural fires that aggravate the climate crisis, with the sign of fire as the light of the Holy Spirit that unites Christians. Rev Sikawu Makubalo asked those in attendance:

"Are we listening? What are we seeing? Are we moved?"

Right Rev Hamish Galloway
Moderator Presbyterian Church of Aotearoa New Zealand
moderator@presbyterian.org.nz



The Burning Bush
Ex 33:12

Listen to the
Voice of creation
SEASON OF CREATION 2022

Interested in studying Theology? The Theology Programme at the University of Otago offers a wide range of papers and qualifications, all available via distance learning. Some papers are taught via videoconferences, others include teaching days in Wellington, while a few involve week-long intensives. For further information go to www.otago.ac.nz/theology or ph 0800 80 80 98 or 03 479 8639.

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.



FLAGSTAFF ~ LEITH ~ HIGHGATE

FRIDAY FUN

Years 7 - 10
Fortnightly Friday night
(Term 3: 29/7, 12/8, 26/8, 9/9 & 23/9)
From 6 - 8 pm for dinner & games
Cost is \$5
267 Malvern Street, Leith valley
See your youth pastor for more details
Or call Jono (022 399 6824).

Greetings ISLAND

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.



Listen
to the **Voice**
of **Creation**
an evening prayer series

4 September: earth
11 September: wind
18 September: water
25 September: covenant
2 October: renewal

Knox Church
Ōtepoti Dunedin
Sundays 7pm

 **SEASON OF CREATION** 

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.

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

COVID-19 Protection Framework & Worship @ Flagstaff Community Church

In these challenging days, Flagstaff Community Church will continue to celebrate the good news of Jesus Christ, provide support to each other, worship, pray and reach out in aroha.

He waka eke noa – We are all in this together: We are gathering for Sunday Worship. You are welcome to come and go at any time. We will continue meeting safely and follow advice from Ministry of Health (see (<https://covid19.govt.nz/activities/faith-based-gatherings;>) and our National Church (PCANZ). Your health and safety is our top priority.

The Parish Council thanks you for your own going support as we navigate through the Pandemic.

In relation to our face to face worship at Flagstaff Community Church

- Please stay home if you are unwell.
- We encourage the wearing of a face covering.
- QR Codes remain for those tracking their own movements.
- Physical distancing with those you don't know well is encouraged.
- We are practising good air ventilation so dress accordingly and if cold bring a rug or extra warm top.
- We will refrain from serving morning tea until we're back at Green Light.
- Please put any koha/offering in the kete/basket when you arrive.
- If you have any concerns or queries, please phone Brendon 027 356 9200

For whānau who are not gathering face to face for Sunday worship. If you would like a direct link to a recorded audio version of the service email gary.dent7@gmail.com;

Please ring the Minister or Kāumatua/Elder if you require any support. This could be practical help or needs, you are unsure how to make sense of all these new rules and information or simply you would like someone to pray with.

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 021 1052320

Hall Bookings: Sarah Barton 021 385905

Technical Equipment: Gary Dent 027 4763155

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



Kaumātua - Elders

Presbytery Elder: Sarah Barton

Phone: 021 385 905

sarahbarton629@gmail.com

Vanessa Gordon: ness.gordon@gmail.com;

Alastair & Sue Yule: yules@xtra.co.nz;

Tim Mephram: tmephram@rautakiadvice.co.nz;

Gary Dent: gary.dent7@gmail.com;

Andrew Sims: andrewcarolynsims@gmail.com;

Minister: Rev. Brendon McRae

Phone: 027 356 9200

brendon@churchatflagstaff.co.nz

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

Parish contact details: PO Box 10074,
Halfway Bush, 9042, Dunedin

Website: www.churchatflagstaff.co.nz;

www.facebook.com/churchatflagstaff;

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