



Tena koutou katoa

Easter is early this year – almost as early as it can be. And that means Lent has crept up on us as well. A friend sent me a text, part of which read, “R u giving up anything, or taking up something, 4 Lent?” A good question.

This season of Lent emerged out of the practice of preparing new converts for Baptism on Easter Eve or Easter Day. By the middle of the fourth-century, a 40-day preparation period had been established. Later, Lent became a time for all Christians to prepare for Easter. It remains a 40-day long period, not counting Sundays; Sundays are considered ‘little Easters’, celebrating the Resurrection.

While Lent is no longer seen as a time to enter into a period of excessive gloom and self-denial, it remains a season that invites people into a more reflective mood.

We hear of people ‘giving something up for Lent’. Some give up particular foods for the season. Others give up things like television, Facebook, obsessive use of mobile phones and so on. All of this is designed to help reflect on what is important in life, to focus on the needs of the spirit, to think of one’s faith commitment, to identify with the majority of the world’s population who have so little.

Others prefer to ‘take up’ something new instead, something that will make a difference. Taking time each day to read and reflect on Scripture, to reconcile themselves to someone they have fallen out with or don’t like, to volunteer for a worthy project, to be in contact with people they have neglected, to pick up rubbish in the neighbourhood, and so on. Again, this is about being intentional in looking at one’s life and contributing something positive to the community.

‘Giving up’ something can carry with it the sense of it being a grind, doing it through clenched teeth! However, often when we give up something we gain something valuable.

I recall a recovering alcoholic telling me of the experience of giving up drinking. For years his family had told him he had a problem, but he didn’t see it. One night a television programme on alcoholism spoke powerfully to him and he started his journey of sobriety. He reflected on how much he had ‘gained’ through this. A whole new world opened up - the world looked, smelt and tasted different. He observed colours he hadn’t seen for a long time. Relationships with his family and friends improved. Giving up can lead to freedom.

The season of Lent can be used as an opportunity to slow down, take stock, and reflect upon the direction of our own lives. We contemplate Jesus’ journey to the cross and what that means for us.

I found a little list of popular Lent Bible verses:

Isaiah 58: 6-7	Take on something
Mark 1: 12-13	Find your wilderness
John 3: 16	Remember his sacrifice
1 Peter 5: 6	Reveal your struggle
Matthew 6: 16-18	Keep a secret

Giving up. Taking up. Reflecting on Jesus’s journey to the cross. Let this Lenten season be a time of growing deeper into our faith and seeing the fruits of this play out in our lives and the communities in which we live.

Kia tau te Rangimarie
Rose - **Right Rev Rose Luxford**

Newsletter

Flagstaff Community Church February, 2024



Leith ~ Highgate ~ Flagstaff

JUNIOR YOUTH FRIDAY FUN

Years 7 - 10 Fortnightly Friday nights

(Term 1: 9/2, 23/2, 8/3, 22/3, 5/4)

From 6 - 8 pm for dinner & games

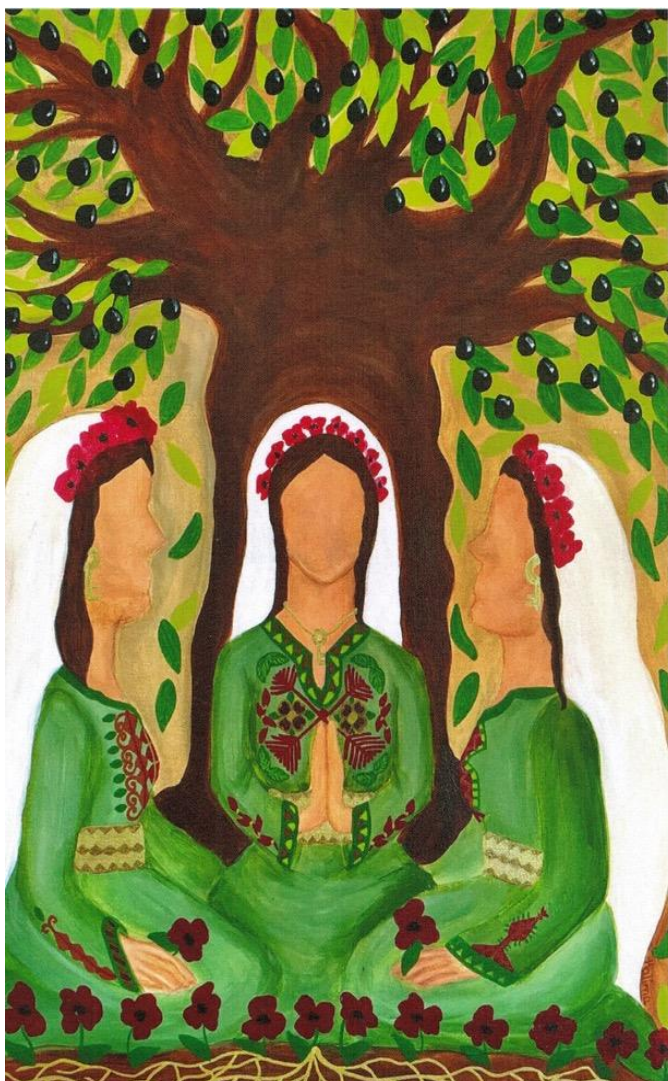
Cost \$5

267 Malvern Street, Leith valley

See your youth pastor for more details

Or call George (020 4156 0250).





World Day of Prayer

Friday 1st March 2024

**“I Beg You... Bear
With One Another in Love”**

*A service prepared by the
WDP Committee of Palestine*

*You are invited to join in
worship and fellowship
at your local church*

Place:

*St John's Roslyn
373 Highgate
DUNEDIN*

Time:

*10:00 am Morning Tea
10:30 am Service starts*

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.



Missing a key? Found outside Flagstaff Community Church. See Katrina Le Cong if you think it might be yours.

GROWING TOGETHER

with your neighbours

Neighbours Aotearoa 1–31 March 2024



Neighbours Aotearoa is a community development initiative dedicated to growing, connecting and strengthening neighbourhoods across the country.

Have an idea? We'd love to hear about it—register it via our website neighboursaotearoa.nz

Have a question? Email kiaora@neighboursaotearoa.nz

NEIGHBOURS
AOTEAROA

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.

Ripple Effect training event at Leith Valley 9 March: Richard Dawson writes: On March 9th Leith is hosting another visit from Julie-anne Laird who works for City-to-City Australia an offshoot of the late Tim Kellers' work in New York and further afield. Julie-Anne was brought to the South Island last year and give a wonderful few hours training at East Taieri which I felt was the best teaching on building relationships with people who are far from the Church I'd had ever heard. I would encourage you to come to a similar training event at Leith Valley Church, 267 Malvern St, on Saturday 9th March starting at 9am. We will be taking up a collection for the event. This would be excellent for any person in your congregation who longs to see the church prosper. You can find City to City on the web here.... <https://citytocityaustralia.org.au/>; Please contact the Leith Office to confirm you are coming as soon as possible.

Ripple Effect

Colossians 2:4-6

How to **pray** for unbelieving friends
How to **prioritise** our unbelieving relationships
How to be **prepared**
How to **proclaim** the gospel well

Training



When: Saturday March 9th, 9am-12 **Where:** 267 Malvern St, Leith Valley
Why: To help us form great relationships with those needing Christ



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.

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. If you would like to join one of our weekly groups please contact Sarah Barton 021 385905.

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.

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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