

MOUNTAINSIDE RUMBLINGS

Mountainside
Lutheran Church

FEBRUARY/MARCH '18
Volume 17, Issue 1

A Lenten Meditation: Being A House of Prayer

Jesus at the Temple (Matthew 21:12-14)

¹² Jesus entered the temple courts and drove out all who were buying and selling there.

He overturned the tables of the money changers and the benches of those selling doves.

¹³ "It is written," he said to them, "My house will be called a house of prayer,' but you are making it ' a den of robbers.' ¹⁴ The blind and the lame came to him at the temple, and he healed them.

For as long as I remember, I had thought of Jesus as the gentle pacifist. He taught his disciples not merely to avoid conflict, but to embrace those who come to fight them. "Love your enemies", he'd said, "and do good to them and tend to them without expecting anything in return." And Jesus lived as he taught, at least almost all of the time. The incident in the temple, a temple brawl, seemed to blemish his otherwise perfect record.

The scene was a man gone berserk—single-handedly overturned tables and benches, chasing people out of the bazaar in the temple courts. It is difficult to understand what triggered this violent reaction from the otherwise gentle healer. It is even more baffling considering that the trade conducted in the temple courts was legitimate business. Traders were in the temple with livestock and bureau de change, to facilitate the giving of burnt offerings to God. Not only does there not appear to be anything wrong with what the traders were doing, the selling and buying in the temple courts appears to have been essential for the worship that was going on in the temple. Much has been written about what the traders had done so to provoke Jesus, many rules have been instituted as to how 'church' should be conducted.

It is probably fruitless perhaps to add to the speculation; what I wish to do is NOT to focus on what the Temple had been turned into, but what it had been turned from. In both Matthew's as well as John's records, the Temple had been turned from the house of prayer to something else. (Matthew and John differ from what the Temple had been turned into: Matthew records that the traders had turned it into a 'den of thieves', while John describes it as a 'market'.) Both agree that the original purpose of the Temple was to be a house of prayer (not a set of written or spoken requests but *communion with God*).

The incident happens as Jesus enters Jerusalem for the final act of salvation—to sacrifice himself in order to remove any barriers separating God from humankind. From henceforth, everyone could be a temple of God and a house of prayer. But already, new barriers were beginning to be erected. People were turning the house of prayer into something else, anything else. The devil's ploy is to turn the house of prayer into anything but a place of communion with God.

The zeal of the Lord which consumed Jesus would not allow it. Not when he was giving his life to make communion with God available to all. Jesus was determined to not let anyone turn the house of prayer into anything that was not a place of communion with God. God treasures our communion with him more than his life itself. And his zeal to make this so, will continue to drive out anything that stands in the way.

The Bible describes our body as the temple of God. By extension, the church, which is the gathering of worshippers of God which is also the temple of God. We were created to be the place where God meets with humankind. In this vein, I believe it is legitimate to say that the focus on prayer as communion with God would mean to go outside the church to 'invite' others to come to the House of Prayer at Mountainside to 'meet' God, which is our outreach ministry.

At Lent, let us reflect on this: Is prayer the primary occupation in our church? Is prayer our primary preoccupation privately and corporately? If not, have we turned God's House of Prayer into something else? Do you see God, bringing back his Temple into what it was meant to be?

Pastor William Chang

Introducing Pastor Brian and Janet Schwarz

Hi Members and Friends at Mountainside Church,

Let us introduce ourselves. We live in the Barossa Valley in South Australia but since retirement in 2010 we have spent a good part of each year doing pastoral work in congregations that have no resident pastor. This has taken us to various places in Australia - north, south, east and west and central - and to Wellington and Christchurch in your lovely land.

Janet taught in Primary Schools for 42 years, and Brian has served as a pastor and teacher since 1969. Our first posting was to Papua New Guinea, where we stayed for 17 years. Upon our return to Australia Brian worked as pastor, teacher and mission director.

We have three children and four grandchildren. Our eldest son, Nick, is assistant to national LCA bishop John Henderson in the area of Public Theology. Our second son, Ben, and his wife, Michelle, are both teachers at Faith Lutheran College, Tanunda, SA. And our daughter, Jackie, owns and manages a shoe-shop in the Adelaide Hills with her husband.

We are excited about being able to worship with you for the next five Sundays, and look forward to getting to know you and making new friends. We pray that we will bring a blessing to you and you will bless us too.

Brian and Janet



Pastor Brian and Janet will be with us until Sunday 18th February. If you would like a visit or have any pastoral needs, Pastor Brian can be contacted by phone on 021 0831 3984.

TIME AND TALENTS NEEDED!

Our sermon on Sunday 14th January highlighted that there are many gifts and talents in the body of the church here at Mountainside. In our vacancy, we need all of them at work supporting our mission in the community and our ministry. Please pray about this and consider your time and talents and how they can be used in some of our mission and ministry. Our programmes are set to start up in February and we need hands on deck!

Please consider our Sunday School ministry, Tiny Tots that runs on a Thursday morning, doing the readings on a Sunday at service, the maintenance service team, coffee/tea service after service, Foodbank which runs 3 months out of each year, music during service, worship planning, or we are starting two new ministries for youth 16-21 and an after school Bible-based programme for primary school ages.

Most of our programmes have a roster of some sort, so by volunteering, it doesn't mean that you have a second full-time job! If you don't know who to speak to, you can start with Marjon Gerson for education, Margaret Lindstrom for the roster, Roxanne Bakke for Tiny Tots or the Foodbank, and Fredric can assist with any other areas of service. Let's get serving and let the lights at Mountainside shine bright!



EASTER SERVICES

MAUNDY THURSDAY 29th MARCH, 7.30 pm:

Service with Holy Communion

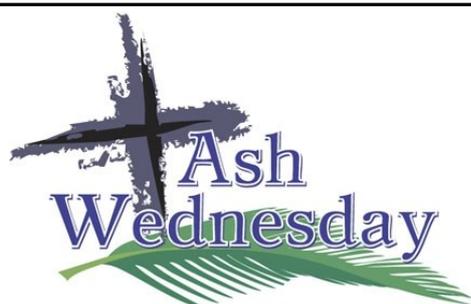
GOOD FRIDAY 30th MARCH, 10 am

EASTER SUNDAY 1st APRIL, 10 am:

Easter Service with Holy Communion

{Note: We will be having a 'Living Cross' again this year, so please bring along any flowers that you have to place on the cross}

ALL WELCOME!



ASH WEDNESDAY SERVICE

14th February, 7.30 pm

@ Mountainside

All welcome!

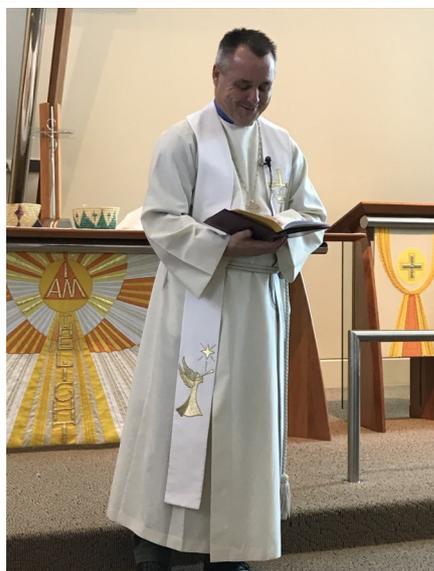


Our Reformation apple tree which was planted outside the church in October 2016 is still thriving, and has a nice little crop of apples on it!!

In Brief ...

- ❖ **CALL MEETING:** There will be a Call meeting after the worship service on **SUNDAY 11th FEBRUARY** at which we will be presented with suitable candidates for us to consider calling as our pastor. Bishop Mark Whitfield will be in attendance to help guide us. All welcome.
- ❖ **PARISH AGM:** The Parish Annual General Meeting will be held after the worship service on **SUNDAY 18th MARCH 2018**. The Book of Reports will be available 2 weeks prior to the meeting.
- ❖ **VOLUNTEERS NEEDED:** We are currently looking for enthusiastic new teachers to join our Sunday school teachers team. Experience not necessary. Please contact Marjon Gerson (marjondewolf@hotmail.com) or Jenna Hewett for more information. (All teachers over the age of 17 have to undergo Childsafe training and police vetting.)
- ❖ The **PRAYER CHAIN** is being rejuvenated. If you have a phone and can pray, then you can join the Prayer Chain. Also if you have any prayer requests that you would like to be prayed for please contact the Prayer Chain coordinator, Janet Mason. If you wish to be part of the Chain, or have prayer requests, please see or contact Janet, phone 638 7897.
- ❖ **LCNZ BISHOP'S VISIT:** Bishop Mark will also be visiting Mountainside 3rd—4th February and will worship with us during this time.
- ❖ **NEW MANSE PHONE NUMBER:** Please note that we now have a new landline phone number at the manse: 09 214 6886.

Farewell Weekend for Pastor Joe, Julie, Lucy, Emily, Alex & Nick Kummerow 30th—31st December 2017



BirthDay greetings

'Happy Birthday' and Best Wishes to the following people celebrating birthdays in February:

Terri McClintock (3rd)
 Ruth, Andrea & Grace Sutton (3rd)
 Kalikula Fifita (4th) Geeta Sharma (5th)
 Mary Jyothsna (6th) Nolla Lippelt (18th)
 Elizabeth Duncan (22nd) Funaki Ongoongo (22nd)
 Malcolm Wisker (23rd)

Wedding Anniversary Congratulations to:

Jorgen and Martha Holgersen 5 years on the 1st
 Floyd and Marjon Gerson 13 years on the 9th
 Peter and Jacque Morris 35 years on the 12th
 Malcolm and Barbara Court 51 years on the 18th
 Lucien and Annette Jorna 24 years on the 19th
 David & Tanya Sutton 24 years on the 19th
 Hayden & Rhiannon Morris 3 years on 23rd

'Happy Birthday' and Best Wishes to the following people celebrating birthdays in March:

Jade Hewett (1st) Marianne Frederiksen (3rd)
 Annette Jorna (5th) Luseanne Masima (5th)
 Nina Sawyer (5th) Betty Muirhead (6th)
 Marianne Kraack (7th) Kristen Lindstrom (9th)
 Eleanor Fraser (9th) Inoke Masima (12th)
 Samuel Doss (13th) Joel Golconda (16th)
 Sarah Kirtlan (17th) Kristina Brock (18th)
 Stephen Lindstrom (20th) Leon Lin (23rd)
 Benjamin Gerson (26th) Jens Meder (29th)
 Isobel Alexander (29th) Neil Lindstrom (30th)

Wedding Anniversary Congratulations to:

Kalikula & Mosiana Fifita 10 years on the 8th
 Ray and Jan Meharg 41 years on the 12th
 Brett & Marcia Thomson 8 years on the 31st

Deadline for articles for the April/May issue of *'Mountainside Rumbings'* is **MONDAY 26th MARCH 2018.**

PRAYER POINTS

In your prayers this month, please pray for the following:



We pray ...

- ✚ With thanks for Pastor Joe and the Kummerow family for the past 5 years spent with us growing in faith. Bless them as they begin their new ministry in Lobethal, South Australia.
- ✚ We also give thanks for the willingness of Pastor Brian & Janet Schwarz to come and worship with us until 18th February. Bless their time in Auckland, Lord and deliver them safely home again.
- ✚ For the members of the Call Committee (Peter Morris, Fredric Doss, Ingrid Phyn, Eris Malcolm & Rachel Kirtlan) as they continue to work through the Call process and present possible candidates at the Parish Call Meeting on 11th February.
- ✚ For the family of Beryl Morris who passed away on 25th January 2018. Lord, grant them comfort during their time of grief.
- ✚ For the Small Group leaders and all our ministry volunteers as they prepare for another year of service.
- ✚ For our Parish AGM which will be held on 18th March. We give thanks for all who have faithfully served on Parish Council and other committees over the past year.
- ✚ For the churches & volunteers involved with the Mt Wellington Foodbank and all who work with those in need.
- ✚ For all who are sick or suffering at this time—may God give them strength and his healing comfort.
- ✚ For people in need of hope that their ears are opened to receive the good news of Jesus Christ and believe in him.

Lent



Don't forget that you have 3 options for receiving this newsletter—a printed copy available in the foyer of Mountainside Lutheran Church, we can post you a copy if you let us know your address, or we can email a copy in PDF format which you can enjoy in full colour!! Just contact Kathy and she will organise it for you. And please remember to let us know if your contact details change so we can alter our records accordingly. Thanks very much.

Mountainside Lutheran Church
 1 Harris Road (P O Box 85-014 Harris Rd),
 Mt Wellington 1545
 Office Ph: (09) 579 4490
 Email: m-side.lutheran@gmail.com
 Website: www.mountainside.co.nz

Pastor: Vacant Manse ph (09) 214 6886
 email: pastor.mside.lutheran@gmail.com
Admin Assistant: Kathy Kirtlan ph: 09 292 4640 / 021 232 9560
 email: kjkl.kirtlan@gmail.com
LCNZ Website: www.lutheran.org.nz