

5th Sunday Service at St Michael's, Hakaru  
led by the Rev. Bob Newman



Ann Dowson with awards at WI  
Flower and Craft Show, Mangawhai



Wayne—Photography judge at  
WI Flower and Craft Show

*CHURCH LIFE*  
*DECEMBER 2017*



Christmas craft made by C+K Community Craft Group

**Magazine for Mangawhai Mission District**

St Paul's Kaiwaka    St Michael's, Hakaru    Christ the King, Mangawhai



## Minister's Musings

A couple of weeks ago as part of a church event we had a "Christmas IQ Quiz", aimed to see what we know about Jesus' birth that comes from the Bible, and what comes from "tradition" or "popular thinking". The results were quite sobering! Now, don't get me wrong, it may have indeed been just like tradition and Christmas card pictures tell us – and it makes for a good story – but it is important to know what is actually recorded in the scriptures. All we know about the birth of Jesus comes from two of our four gospels: Matthew and Luke. So, as a "teaser" let's see what you think:

1. How did Mary and Joseph get to Bethlehem?

A. Camel B. Donkey C. Walked D. Volkswagen E. Joseph walked, Mary rode a donkey F. Who knows?

2. How many wisemen were there? Give the correct number.

3. What animals were present at Jesus' birth?

A. Cows, sheep, goats. B. Cows, donkeys, sheep. C. Sheep and goats only.

D. Miscellaneous barnyard animals. E. Lions, tigers, elephants. F. None of the above.

(answers at the bottom of next page)

There was also a question about whether baby Jesus cried; and the answer is there is no reason to believe he wouldn't! Which reminded me of the incident I read about where a woman accosted the minister after the service saying: "I simply do not agree with your picture of the birth of Jesus!"

The minister replied, "What exactly troubles you about it?"

"Well ... I don't believe Jesus cried the way you said."

The minister gently asked her where in the whole Bible was there anything that would lead her to that conclusion. After thinking for a while the woman, almost in desperation, said, "There's 'Silent Night, Holy Night'. And what about that line in 'Away in a Manger': no crying he makes?"



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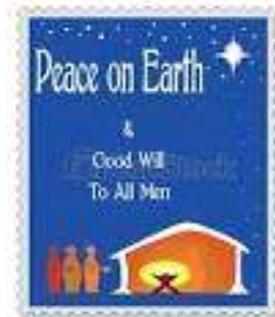
## Last Christmas of the Millennium

Christmas bells are ringing clear  
In supermarket and mall.  
And what's the message that we hear?  
"Come, spend, one and all!  
Spend up large on glitzy trumpery,  
Make cash registers ring!  
If you resist you're surely frumpery  
Let's hear those coins sing!"

This year I yearn for simpler pleasures,  
Love and peace and family joys.  
Glowing faces, these my treasures,  
Turn my back on commercial ploys.  
"Peace on earth" the angels sang  
Two thousand years ago,  
And bells across the hilltops rang  
For One who came in winter's snow.

Came to show us love and tolerance  
Commodities so scarce today.  
Peace and joy not much in evidence,  
Hatred seems to hold the sway.  
So in our hearts let's hear again  
The song the angels sang.  
And "Peace to All" to heal the pain  
Resound again in hearts of men.

*Marjorie Blake*



Which highlights the tendency to incorporate our traditions into the Biblical record of the birth of Jesus. We sing "No crying he makes" and believe it. Perhaps, way back in our minds, we believe Jesus never dirtied a nappy!

These extraneous and even false images of the Nativity have provided the foundation for a distorted picture of Jesus' entire life. They have to go if we are to grasp the reality of God with us that comes to us in the Gospels through Jesus' birth. We know from these Gospels that Jesus wept as a man. It is naive to think he did not cry as a baby. Tears are a basic part of what it means to be human. Jesus came to a real world that includes pain and sorrow, as well as joy – not an imaginary one without tears. Tears it would seem were an even more integral part of Jesus' life than ours. He came as much to weep for us as to die for us.

The theme for Advent – the four weeks leading up to Christmas – is "Watch. Get ready. Be prepared!" I encourage you to get ready by watching for the real signs of the real Jesus, who is really God with us: sharing our life and offering us the gift of life. So much more than just a good story.

Musician, singer and songwriter Michael Card pondered Jesus crying too, and he writes: *my response to this realisation of the weeping of baby Jesus was to write him a lullaby ... a way of coming closer to His birth, to feel the darkness of the night, to smell the smells of the stable, and to hear that fragile newborn voice crying out in the night to His mother, Mary, and in a way to me as well.*

Michael Card's song, "Lullaby for Jesus", makes an equally impressive poem, which I encourage you to read and reflect on.

May I take this opportunity to say thank you for the time, gifts, energy, support, encouragement you have given to the mission of God in this place during the past year. As we look forward and prepare to celebrate again the Good News of God coming into our world in the baby born in a Bethlehem stable, may the blessings of this special season be yours, may you be refreshed, and enjoy a new year of opportunity and promise.

Shalom, Wayne

**ANSWERS:**

1: F – the Bible doesn't say.

2: No one knows. See Matthew 2:1

3: F- again, the Bible doesn't specify

## Six Little Stories

1. Once all villagers decided to pray for rain. On the day of prayer all the people gathered, but only one boy came with an umbrella. That's FAITH.
2. When you throw babies in the air, they laugh because they know you will catch them. That's TRUST.
3. Every night we go to bed without any assurance of being alive the next morning but still we set the alarm to wake up. That's HOPE.
4. We plan big things for tomorrow in spite of zero knowledge of the future. That's CONFIDENCE.
5. We see the world suffering, but still we get married and have children. That's LOVE.
6. On an old lady's shirt was written a sentence - 'I am not 80 years old; I am sweet 16 with 64 years of experience.' That's ATTITUDE.

LULLABY FOR JESUS – by Michael Card

*Baby Jesus please don't cry.  
Now let me wipe the tears from your eyes.  
You cry as though your heart would break.  
Please don't spend your first night awake.*

*Shepherds 'round you mean no harm.  
They long to hold you in their arms.  
To cradle as they might a lamb.  
But You're too small to understand.*

*Cattle lowing long to sing.  
A lullaby to soothe the King.  
A cry so full of pain and fright.  
That pierces through the lonely night.*

*Baby Jesus please don't weep.  
It's night and time for you to sleep.  
The stars that shine don't match the glow  
Of all the ones who'll come to know.*

*The baby sleeping in the hay,  
The Son of God who's come to save,  
The Light, the only Way that's true,  
Who'll die upon a cross for you.*

CHRIST  
THE SAVIOR  
is BORN!

After an engagement party in Vanuatu they were married in Christchurch and have enjoyed nearly forty three very happy years. Shortly after our marriage Robin accepted the Lord into his life through a miraculous healing and soon after Marjorie was healed of cancer. During these years Marjorie was relief teaching in remedial maths and reading, special class children and English as a second language at a number of Christchurch schools.

After retiring she cared for Robin's elderly mother in their own home until her death. Robin continued working in the building industry as contracts manager in a joinery factory, building supervisor for the Canterbury Education Board, managing our building business and rentals then finishing his working life as a property valuer.

We continued to follow our interests in off road driving, dog obedience, trout fishing and camping. Marjorie was, in her spare time cake decorating and doing embroidery and went on to teaching this. She also wrote poetry and enjoyed tramping. Robin was involved in search and rescue and their vehicle maintenance. After Robin retired we carried on our love of camping, sold up and travelled New Zealand in a motorhome for nine years.

Eventually the time came to settle (more or less as they still have a motorhome) in one spot close to doctors, so they chose Mangawhai and a small cabin home near the domain.



## Church Profile - Marjorie and Robin Blake

Marjorie was born in the small village of Holcomb in Northamptonshire, England, in her grandmother's house with a nightingale singing (so she was told.) She started in the village school 6 years later, the year WW2 broke out but spent only 3 years there before moving on to Northampton High School for Girls. We were fairly close to Coventry so the war years brought a few scares. Her father was in the RAM working mostly in a military hospital in India, from where he was demobbed at war's end suffering badly from amoebic dysentery. It was decided that he needed to live in a warm climate, so the family emigrated to Australia to join his brother, and Marjorie finished her school days at Sea Lake High School then went on to Teacher's Training college at Indigo and Melbourne.

She taught at Port Melbourne and then Ivanhoe Girl's Grammar School (both ends of the social scale) until deciding that God was calling her to the mission field. She then spent a year at Sydney University studying linguistics, boarding at The House of the Epiphany, run by the sisters of the Holy Name. From there she was appointed to St. Hilda's Girl's School in the Solomon Islands where she was mostly employed in training student teachers, though she also learnt to deliver babies and later took over the Saneness goat herd at St. Mary's on San Cristobalite.

Then came the bad time – a very unwise relationship where a romantic dream turned into a violent nightmare. They moved to Vanuatu, then called the New Hebrides, a British/French Condominium where she worked as interpreter in the Basque de Indochinite before being asked to start an English speaking school. This offer was directly from God we believe, coming as a salvation with a house provided and home leave to Australia every year. Marjorie decided she would devote her life to running the school and rearing her wee son and would NEVER marry again. Then she met Robin.....

Robin was born in Rangiora, North Canterbury where he went to primary school and then Rangiora High School attaining School Certificate. He then went on to serve an apprenticeship in carpentry and joinery attaining Trade Certificate. He married and moved to Wanganui and worked in a joinery factory. While in Wanganui his first daughter was born. After two years he moved to Wainuiomata and worked on a Maori carpentry training scheme instructing Maori carpentry apprentices to build houses. Here his second daughter was born. He moved to Titahi Bay and took a job as a building overseer for the Ministry of Works in Wellington looking after Police, Army, Air Force, Civil Aviation and Prison buildings. During this period he built a house in Tawa and his marriage broke up. He then took a contract with the British Government in Vanuatu coordinating and supervising a cyclone reconstruction program. During this time he was invited to a reception on board the Royal Yacht Britannia and met the Queen, Prince Philip, Princess Anne, Mark Phillips Lord Mountbatten and also met Marjorie.....

## Christ the King Highlights

On the second Sunday of October we had our traditional "St Francis and Blessing of the Animals" celebration. It was a great service, though we were perhaps a little down on numbers of people and pets due to the adverse weather. However there were two turtles, which was a first! Rhythm'n'Riggle has been enthusiastically attended, and it has been great to have some extra help for the "team". Our Wednesday service attendance varies but it is pleasing to have some attend for whom it is their only church service.

The Wednesday Bible study continues – we have looked at "God's Creation", and are finishing the year with an "Advent" study. On Friday November 3 we hosted a concert given by the veteran Kiwi Christian singer and songwriter Jules Riding. It was an excellent occasion and all who attended were really blessed. It also highlighted the versatility of our facilities, which came the fore the very next Sunday as we helped Rev John McClean celebrate his 80<sup>th</sup> birthday with an afternoon tea in the Lounge.

The second Sunday of November saw the launch of a new venture: "Tea Time Church", with as much publicity as we could (posters, fliers, newspaper articles). There was a lot of interest and it went really well, but not a big attendance. However now we know it works and those who came enjoyed it. It will grow with "word of mouth" and personal invitation. The plan is to continue bi-monthly in the new year.

It is pleasing to see funding coming in for the "Grounds and Driveway Project". Thank you to all who have given so generously towards this. Unfortunately due to the pressures on local contractors we are not able to get started until the new year. However as it is such an urgent issue some interim work has been done to make the driveway safer – a huge thank you to our men who put in a great effort to make things better.

The new C+K Craft Group has continued to grow, and there was a very busy and productive "Christmas Decoration" afternoon. The monthly morning teas concluded with a special Christmas gathering at Christ the King Lounge. And we were pleased to host the Combined Churches Carol Service on the evening of December 10 – a great occasion to sing some favourite carols and enjoy fellowship.

All in all we are in good spirit and good heart, ready to celebrate once more the Good News of God with us in the baby born in a Bethlehem stable – and help our community see God really is in our midst.

*Wayne*

## St Paul's, Kaiwaka

The weeks are speeding by and Advent has finally arrived! Although December is a busy month in practical terms, in the midst of it all we are quietly open and anticipating the fulfilment of a particularly special promise....

Since the last magazine we have been maintaining our usual services and fellowship. John McClean's 80<sup>th</sup> birthday celebration was a special time together despite receiving a number of apologies. John has faithfully served our district and other wider ministries for many years. It was an excellent opportunity to wish him well and to acknowledge his faithfulness and the joy & trust in the Lord which he communicates to us.

On Sunday 1 October the congregation of All Saints, Wellsford, joined our St Paul's communion service. It was a welcome addition of numbers and an opportunity to fellowship together once again. Our two congregations have a number of things in common and we appreciated that they chose to join us for Holy Communion. One little practical step in facilitating sharing across the two districts.

It's been a great few months of birthdays, celebrating with Sara, Mary, Helga and Derek. We generally acknowledge birthdays over morning tea after the service (yum!). Derek was also acknowledged in the Bugle last week as the recipient of the "Good Sort" award. Derek's role in leading the Kaiwaka Can group was acknowledged along with the practical care and support of a number of people given by both Derek and Isa. We so appreciate the many practical things they both do. No doubt Derek is already thinking about the format and content of the carol service, which is to be held at 7.30 pm on Sunday 17<sup>th</sup>. I am sure it will be a special service in which we will once again be aware of the Lord's amazing, redemptive love. To have Christine play for our communion services (and carol service) is also a special gift which is always appreciated. We hope to welcome many from our wider community to share in both our carols and the Christmas day service.

We wish you all a happy and blessed Christmas and trust you will be refreshed over the holiday period.

*Margot Christie-Linnell*



## C+K Community Craft Group

C+K Community Craft Group has had a fun year. Our numbers are slowly increasing. Our ladies have come along and enjoyed fellowship and making new friends. There is chat and craft. Making paper beads, lace flowers, bead angels, peg angels, button Christmas trees to name a few. Knitting, hand stitching, making greeting cards and a visit from Dalleise Jaques from *Close to My Heart* with a paper craft demonstration have also been enjoyed. And we help each other with the wealth of experience among the never ending talents we discover about each other.

Thanks to Christ the King for supporting the group. It is a relaxing space. Next year we will continue with meeting Thursday mornings and extend into the afternoon twice a month with an invitation to patch-workers to join us and sew.

So, more talent will be seen in the new year. First Thursday in February we will be back on deck.

*Kim Thornton*



## ST MICHAELS CHURCH - HAKARU

Well it seems more like 3 weeks than 3 months since the last Church Life magazine.

We are very grateful to Matt who does such a good job with his mowing of the cemetery.

Our service taken by Rev Canon Bob was enjoyed by all on the 29th October, 31 attended and it is great to see new faces in the congregation. The choir sang "Whispering Hope" during communion so lets "HOPE" our next service brings double the congregation, get your voices working as it is Christmas Carols. Rev Wayne officiated at a wedding at St Michaels on 2nd December, we wish Cynthia and Andre' Venter all the best for their future together.

The organ threw a wobbly and had to be fixed before the wedding, we are lucky to have Ralph Cullen( a very busy man) to come at a moments notice. The museum borrowed 4 pews with their blue squabs from Hakaru for the Bows and Bells celebration and they looked quite good in the former Christ the King, they will come home though.

Kevin Dowson's ashes are being interred this coming Sunday 10th December, Paul Perkins is doing a 5yr catch up with the Hakaru Burials which are now up to 433 but 442 in the new Mangawhai Mission book. We would like to carry on with the Original Hakaru book so as not to confuse the Perkins Brothers who have done such a wonderful job putting everything on the computer.

We are looking forward to our Christmas Eve Service at Hakaru beginning at 7 p.m. led by Rev Wayne, so have a "Blessed Christmas" and hopefully we will meet up at Hakaru on 24th.  
Bless you all.

*Ann Dowson*



**Mangawhai Mission District  
Anglican Church Christmas Services**

**Carol Services**



**Combined Churches Carol Service  
Christ the King Church  
9 Molesworth Drive  
Sunday 10 December 7.00 pm**

**St Paul's, Kaiwaka  
Sunday 17 December 7.30 pm**

**CHRISTMAS EVE**

**St Michael's, Hakaru  
Christmas Eve Carol Service  
Sunday 24 December 7.00 pm**



**Midnight Christmas Communion  
Christ the King Church  
Sunday 24 December 11.00 pm**



**Christmas Day  
Family Communion**

**Christ the King Church 9.00 am  
St Paul's, Kaiwaka 9.00 am**

Animal Blessing Service—October 2017



Rev. John McClean's 80th birthday celebrations

