

THE MESSENGER

FEBRUARY 2023



**Unless the Lord builds the house, the builders labour in vain,
unless the Lord watches over the city, the guards stand watch in vain.**

Psalm 127:1

The MESSENGER is the official magazine of the Anglican Parish of Devonport
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From
Rev'd Warren Watson's Desk



The completion of the renovations and strengthening of the Holy Trinity Hall is drawing near. This work has been essential especially for future planning along with a vision to serve the local community. The adverse recent weather conditions and the importance of strong foundations and strengthening for buildings has reminded me of a parable Jesus told in the Gospel of Matthew chapter 7: ²⁴

“Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock. ²⁵ The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house; yet it did not fall, because it had its foundation on the rock. ²⁶ But everyone who hears these words of mine and does not put them into practice is like a foolish man who built his house on sand. ²⁷ The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell with a great crash.”

Jesus knew all about building houses and laying foundations. He spent many years working as a carpenter. The illustration and parable he uses is down-to-earth and practical: two men who each decide to build a house. No doubt they intended to live in and enjoy them, perhaps with their families. Both were building something of long-lasting significance.

Our lives are like these houses, yet their significance is for all eternity. The most important feature of any house is the foundations. The two houses in the parable differed little in appearance. But only one had ‘its foundation on the rock’ (v.25). Similarly, two peoples’ lives can look exactly alike, but the difference in the foundations is evident when the storms of life come. You will face challenges in life. They will come in many forms: misunderstandings, disappointments, unfulfilled longings, doubts, trials, temptations, setbacks and satanic attacks. Success, too, can be a test.

There is also pressure, suffering, sickness, bereavement, sorrow, trauma, tragedy, persecution and failure. Ultimately, all of us will face death and God’s

judgement.

The image in the parable of ‘rain and torrents and winds’ is used in the Book of Ezekiel to refer to God’s judgement (Ezekiel 13:11), but the language of judgement is not confined to the Old Testament. Here, and elsewhere, Jesus warns of the coming judgement, as do the other New Testament writers. When ‘the rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house’ (Matthew 7:25,27), the house built on the rock ‘did not fall’ (v.25), but the one built on the sand ‘fell with a great crash’ (v.27).

These are solemn words of warning for all. The trial may be during this life or it may come on the day of judgement. What is certain, according to Jesus, is that it will come. However, you need not live in fear. It is not easy, but there is a way to be sure that, when *the foundations* of your house are tested, they stand firm. It is possible to know that your future is secure. Jesus tells us that the key difference is that the wise man not only hears the words of Jesus, but he also ‘puts them into practice’ (v.24). The foolish man, on the other hand, although he hears Jesus’ words ‘does not put them into practice’ (v.26).

Knowledge must lead to action – our theology must affect our lives or else we are building our lives on sand. Attending one of our Good Friday and Easter services is just one way to strengthen our Christian foundations and build your life on the rock of Jesus.

Cyclone Gabrielle Relief

The Op Shop Committee have organised for \$1,000 to be donated to the NZ Red Cross to help with Cyclone Gabrielle disaster relief.

Thanks also to our wonderful shop managers who sorted and labelled many bags of good quality clothes and bedding which were transported to the area this week.



2023 Lenten Study

RESILIENT

Restoring Your Weary Soul
in These Turbulent Times

You can watch the first session free:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Kt6Rb182rBk>

In *Resilient*, Eldredge provides skills and tools to strengthen your heart and soul--and reveals a path toward genuine recovery and resilience provided by Jesus himself. Drawing on wisdom from Scripture and Christian tradition, and illustrated throughout with powerful, true stories of grit and survival, *Resilient* will help readers

- recover from the trauma of the COVID-19 pandemic;
- tap into "supernatural graces" like the river of life that God promises his people;
- learn to be patient with themselves--genuine recovery from spiritual and emotional trauma takes time and intentionality;
- create a plan, because resilience and victory aren't going to come with a swipe on your home screen; and discover deep wells of freedom and strength through Christ who lives within us.

Rev Warren Watson will be running two Lenten Study groups on **Wednesdays at 2pm and 7pm**. If you would like to attend, please put your name on the sign up sheet on the church notice board or email: priest@holytrinity.gen.nz

World Day of Prayer at Devonport Methodist Church

**Friday 3
March 2023
10am**

"I Have Heard About
Your Faith"

Prepared by the WDP
Committee of Taiwan.

Everyone is welcome to attend
this service.



Sermon Series for March



5 March	God loves Losers	Psalm 121 Mark 10: 46-52
12 March	There's a War On	Psalm 95 Mark 9: 38-50
19 March	From Fear to Freedom	Psalm 43 Luke 8: 26-39
26 March	The Son of Encouragement	Acts 11: 19-30 Matthew 6:1-4

PASTORAL CARE NEEDS

If you know of anyone who is unwell, who would like Home Communion, or who you would like to be added to the Prayer Chain, please contact Warren on 445-0378 or email: priest@holytrinity.gen.nz

The Parish of Devonport will hold its Annual General Meeting and Vestry Elections

on Sunday 26th March
at 11.15am
in the Church.

This meeting is open to all those who have attended our church services on a regular basis over the past 6 months and who are on our Parish Roll.

May God bless you and your families with a lifetime of shared love and joy



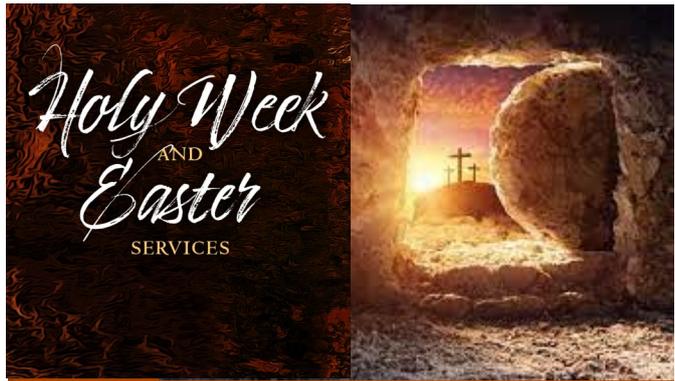
Congratulations to John Herring & Suzanne Stickney who were married by Rev Murray Spackman on Christmas Eve.



Congratulations to David Timmins & Gina Murphy who were married by Rev Charmaine Braatvedt on Saturday 28th February

New Vicar Update

The Parish profile was made available on the Diocesan and Holy Trinity websites in the week before Christmas. In January an email from the Diocesan office advised all parishes and clergy throughout New Zealand of the vacancy. Anyone interested has until February the 24th to submit an application. Please keep the Nominations team in your prayers.



Holy Week AND Easter SERVICES
PALM SUNDAY
 Sunday 2nd April
 8am & 9.30am Services



MAUNDY THURSDAY
 6th April
 Communion Service at 7pm
Remembering the Last Supper

GOOD FRIDAY
 7th April
 Procession up Mt Victoria
 Walk to the summit of Mt Victoria
 Leave at 10am from
Windsor Reserve Band Rotunda



REFLECTIONS ON THE CROSS
 Service 2pm—3pm
 at Holy Trinity

EASTER SUNDAY
 9th April
 6.30am Sunrise Service at Balmain Reserve
 8am Eucharist at Holy Trinity
 9.30am Contemporary All Age Communion

