

Welcome! Haere mai!

St John's Anglican Church, Ōtūmoetai



Sunday, 22 September 2024

OT 25

Liturgy: p.476

Dear Friends

The book of Proverbs begins with Lady Wisdom calling in the streets and ends with a portrait of a woman who embodies wisdom. Yes, she is an astute businesswoman, but her wisdom is also found in her kindness, generosity, joy, her piety and devotion. In our world we are offered wisdom by all sorts of voices. One possible occupation today is to be a “social influencer” - a voice offering wisdom and guidance on what to buy. Those who earn the right to do this do it by being pretty or rich or funny or entertaining. Scripture teaches us these things are superficial and not marks of wisdom. Biblical wisdom has other markers.

James shows us that wisdom is shown in honourable lives - it is pure, peaceable, gentle, willing to yield - that is a challenge in our competitive world. These values and the rest of James' list are to be the values of our church communities. We can sometimes get precious about our ministries. How do attitudes like that fit with James' definition of divine wisdom?

The word wisdom is not mentioned in our Gospel reading and yet Jesus embodies and teaches divine wisdom here. When Jesus asked his disciples who they thought he was, Peter, says “You are the Messiah.” Peter was right, but his understanding was full of earthly wisdom. Israel longed for a political and military leader who would lead them in battle, killing their oppressors and winning them

victory. Jesus' understanding of messiahship is different, it is divine. You don't overcome evil with evil or violence with violence. The only real way is by self-sacrificial love, by suffering the violence offered by humans and transforming it. In Jesus' own body, hate was transformed into love, death into life, violence into peace. The disciples didn't understand it and perhaps if we're honest - we don't understand it - it's still so counter-cultural. The disciples got busy arguing about who was the greatest. The divine wisdom that Jesus teaches is that service is one of the most important values to live by. It is more important than winning or power.

Jesus further illustrates his point with a child, a little child, the most vulnerable group in our human society. What really matters, says Jesus, is how we treat the most vulnerable. Who are the most vulnerable these days, in our community, our country, our world? Children, immigrants, the disabled, the elderly, the poor, victims of war and oppressive regimes... It can seem overwhelming at times, but we are called to live by divine wisdom and how we individually, we as a church, we as a community, and we as a country treat these vulnerable ones is what matters most to Jesus.

Arohanui, *Sue +*

WORSHIP THIS SUNDAY: 22 September 2024

Sentence:

Whoever wants to be first must be last of all and servant of all.

Mark 9:35

Collect:

Give us, we pray You gentle God, a mind forgetful of past injury, a will to seek the good in others and a heart of love; for the glory of Your holy Name. Amen.

OT Reading *Jeremiah 11: 18-20*

NT Reading *James 3: 13 – 4: 3 and 7-8a*

Gospel *Mark 9: 30-37*

Prayers of the People

Today we pray for those who must migrate, rebuild or change their way of life in the face of an ever-changing climate, and for the people of the Rotorua Parish and their clergy.

We pray for those in need, especially those who have asked for our prayers: Craig, Reece, Viv, James F, Hazel, Lynda, Lawrence, Adam.

Farewell for Rev'd Ruth Dewdney

All parishioners are invited to attend a service to farewell Rev'd Ruth Dewdney – 3pm, Sunday 29 September at St John the Baptist, 47 Jocelyn Street, Te Puke.

This Week Beginning: 23 September

Tuesday 7.00 pm Vestry meeting

Wednesday 10.00 am Mid-week Eucharist
 2.00 pm SAYGo

Friday 9.00 am Senior Chef

Op Shop 10.00 am - 4.00 pm Monday to Friday
 10.00 am - 1.00 pm Saturday

Playgroup 9.30 - 11.30 am Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday

Toy Library 9.30 - 11.30 am Tuesday, Thursday, Saturday

Service for Sunday 29 September –

9.30 am Holy Communion

Contact Us

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