



**Northwest Christchurch & Hororata Parishes
Church@Home – Contemporary Service
26 June 2022 – Pentecost (cont'd)**

This is the day that the Lord has made:
Let us rejoice and be glad in it.

Our theme today is: [GROWING THE FRUIT](#)

This weekend we have also celebrated Matariki as a nation.

During Matariki, we celebrate our unique place in the world.

Throughout Matariki, we learn about those who came before us. Our history, our family, our bones.

Matariki signals growth. It's a time of change. It's a time to prepare, and a time of action. During Matariki, we acknowledge what we have and what we have to give.

Matariki celebrates the diversity of life. It's a celebration of culture, language, spirit and people.

Matariki is our Aotearoa Pacific New Year. (adapted from [Māori Language Commission](#))

We remember those that we have lost since the last rising of Matariki (remembrance). We celebrate who we are in the coming together as family and friends by sharing food. Matariki is also about planning and looking forward to a new and bright future.

The stars represent our ancestors and those gone before us, and are reminders to us to be “lights in the world”. The best way for us to be lights in the world is to display the fruits of the Spirit in our lives.

We invite you to take a moment or two to be still and ask God to be present with you as you worship.

Ko te ra tenei i hanga e Ihowa
This is the day that the Lord has made -

**Kia hari, kia koa tatou!
Let us be glad and rejoice in it!**

Christ the Good Shepherd

Christ is the good shepherd
Who knows and cares for every one of the sheep
In different folds.
In Christ there is neither Jew nor Gentile;
In Christ there is no discrimination
Of gender, class or race.
In Christ the poor are blessed,
The simple receive truth hidden from the wise.

Alleluia!

**God of justice and compassion,
You give us a work to do
And a baptism of suffering and resurrection.
From You comes power to give to others
The care we have ourselves received
So that we, and all who love Your world,
May live in harmony and trust.**

A time of confession

In Hosea we read of God's desire for us to turn back to Him
Israel, you fell and sinned against God. So come back to the Lord your God.
The Lord says,
"I will forgive them for leaving me.
I will show them my love without limits,

We pause and acknowledge that as humans, we don't always live in a way that honours a godly life
Silence

We come seeking forgiveness
for all we have failed to be and do
as members of Christ's body.

Silence

In God there is forgiveness.

Loving and all-seeing God,
forgive us where we have failed to support one another
and to be what we claim to be.
Forgive us where we have failed to serve you;
and where our thoughts and actions have been
contrary to yours we ask your pardon.

E te Ariki kia aroha mai. Lord, have mercy.
E te Karaiti kia aroha mai. Christ, have mercy.
E te Ariki kia aroha mai. Lord have mercy.

God forgives us. Forgive others, forgive yourself.
Through Christ God has put away our sin; approach our God in peace.

Rejoice and be glad,
for Christ is resurrection,
reconciliation for all the human race.

We shall all be one in Christ,
one in our life together.
Praise to God who has created us,
praise to God who has accepted us,
praise to God who sends us into the world.

Sentence and Prayer for the day

I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh.

Ezekiel 36:26

Prayer:

Father, you sent your Son to bring us truth and your Spirit to make us holy; open our hearts to exalt you, open our lives to reveal you, our one true God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Amen

1st Reading - Galatians 5:1,13-25

¹ For freedom Christ has set us free. Stand firm, therefore, and do not submit again to a yoke of slavery.

¹³ For you were called to freedom, brothers and sisters;^[c] only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for self-indulgence,^[d] but through love become slaves to one another. ¹⁴ For the whole law is summed up in a single commandment, 'You shall love your neighbour as yourself.' ¹⁵ If, however, you bite and devour one another, take care that you are not consumed by one another.

¹⁶ Live by the Spirit, I say, and do not gratify the desires of the flesh. ¹⁷ For what the flesh desires is opposed to the Spirit, and what the Spirit desires is opposed to the flesh; for these are opposed to each other, to prevent you from doing what you want. ¹⁸ But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not subject to the law. ¹⁹ Now the works of the flesh are obvious: fornication, impurity, licentiousness, ²⁰ idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousy, anger, quarrels, dissensions, factions, ²¹ envy,^[e] drunkenness, carousing, and things like these. I am warning you, as I warned you before: those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.

²² By contrast, the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, ²³ gentleness, and self-control. There is no law against such things. ²⁴ And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. ²⁵ If we live by the Spirit, let us also be guided by the Spirit. ²⁶ Let us not become conceited, competing against one another, envying one another.

Hear what the Spirit is saying to the Church. **Thanks be to God.**

Gospel Luke 9:51-62

51 When the days drew near for him to be taken up, he set his face to go to Jerusalem. **52** And he sent messengers ahead of him. On their way they entered a village of the Samaritans to make ready for him; **53** but they did not receive him, because his face was set towards Jerusalem. **54** When his disciples James and John saw it, they said, 'Lord, do you want us to command fire to come down from heaven and consume them?'^[k] **55** But he turned and rebuked them. **56** Then^[l] they went on to another village.

57 As they were going along the road, someone said to him, 'I will follow you wherever you go.' **58** And Jesus said to him, 'Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests; but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head.' **59** To another he said, 'Follow me.' But he said, 'Lord, first let me go and bury my father.' **60** But Jesus^[m] said to him, 'Let the dead bury their own dead; but as for you, go and proclaim the kingdom of God.' **61** Another said, 'I will follow you, Lord; but let me first say farewell to those at my home.' **62** Jesus said to him, 'No one who puts a hand to the plough and looks back is fit for the kingdom of God.'

This is the Gospel of Christ.

Praise to Christ, the Word.

SERMON / REFLECTION for 26 June 2022

Galatians 5:1,13-25; Luke 9:51-62

(An audio recording of this sermon will be available this week)

<https://www.northwestchchparish.org.nz/sound>

Moya

Growing the Fruit

Fruit of the Spirit

I am going to quote the only bit of Hebrew I know, apart from Hallelujah! "Shema, Israel, adonai elohenu, adonai echad". "Hear O Israel, the Lord our God the Lord is one", said by orthodox Jews for thousands of years at their morning and evening prayers and quoted by Jesus in answer to the first commandment from Deuteronomy. The word 'echad' or 'one' is not a single apple or orange but a cluster like one bunch of grapes, and I think the fruit of the Spirit is like that too, they grow together. I am going to talk about them in Jesus' life, and in our lives with some suggestions for cultivating them.

We heard them in the Galatians reading: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. There are others too: righteousness in Hebrews, perseverance in Romans and I wonder about hope and humility. Jesus is the true vine and the root stock of the fruit and the Holy Spirit is the sap. Jesus has the Spirit 'without measure', John tells us, and we can see that in his life. He said, "My peace I give you", and "As the Father has loved me so have I loved you". "I have told you these things that my joy may be in you and that your joy might be full". "Take my yoke upon you...for I am gentle and lowly of hearts..." Jesus was faithful to death, he was patient with his disciples (often saying "O you little-faiths!"), who recorded that he was "without sin", the essence of goodness. He showed immense self-control during his trials bearing accusations without response.

He came to bring us life in its fullness and all the fruit in his life is for us. What do we do with fruit? Eat it and enjoy it and give it away! (I have been given a bag of feijoas and then a bag of apples in the last couple of weeks). But this lovely fruit for us came at great cost. On the cross, Jesus lost every vestige of them all as the sins (also in the Galatians reading) of the human race were poured into him. Paul says "He became sin for us that we might become the righteousness of God", and "He was made a curse for us" as he endured the full weight of the holy wrath of God against sin, causing that dreadful cry of "My God, my God, why have you abandoned me?" His suffering and death were the only way for us to receive the fruit of the Spirit by our turning to Jesus in thankful repentance and faith, by which we are filled with his presence.

What about the fruit in our lives? We know that love in New Testament language is 'agape', and means a choice of the will to act in love, not just a feeling. But I have longed for what I call "warm fuzzies" that I have seen and felt in others (and some here). Sadly, it is not in my nature or in British stock in general I think to act with warm fuzzies! My current psychotherapist asked me recently, "What do you like about yourself?" A good question that you can ask yourselves too. After some thought I said I am kind and faithful, and added, "But that sounds boring!" However, thinking about it later, I remembered the Hebrew word for God's love is "chesed", which is variously translated mercy, lovingkindness, steadfast love, covenant love, which convey both kindness and faithfulness in the love of God. So I felt better about it! There are a number of people here who are kind and faithful too I know. Joy is not a fruit I am strong in but I read of 'Nabila' in the Middle East who was so full of the joy of the Lord when she received forgiveness of her sins and assurance of heaven (neither of which are sure in Islam), that within six months she had led fourteen of her wider family and friends to the Lord! And I do not have a good amount of patience and self-control at crossroads when I am seeking to cross or turn right, especially when someone is waiting behind me. I have thought I need to change my routes to avoid an accident!

When I was young we had a grapevine that bore the delicious black grapes, not like the supermarket ones! But sometimes the bunch had a tiny green or black one, or even a wizened little black one that had stopped developing among the ripe grapes. It can be so with us. We may not have all the fruit that Jesus had but we have the potential for all of them. It takes time, as we know for fruit to grow, and it takes time in the Spirit as well. Jesus said, "If you abide/remain in me and my words remain in you, you will bear much fruit". So we need to take time in his presence with the Bible as an essential element to fruit-bearing. It is good to read the Bible for relationship and worship, as well as knowledge. We can marvel that he found us like the shepherd who left the ninety-nine to find the one. We can thank him for calling us into life like Lazarus from the tomb or worship like the sinful woman who wept at his feet and anointed them with precious ointment. I have found it is easy to feel guilty and judged by what I read in the Scriptures as I don't measure up to the standard, but as I have grown in assurance of the love of God and the completeness of our salvation in Jesus, so I have been free to understand the "love-letter from God" as the Bible has been called. Coming to church strengthens the Spirit within us as we worship together and Hebrews tells us not to neglect meeting together, even though times are difficult.

When our lives have good fruit growing, we can be a blessing to those we meet in giving love in word and deed. Many of us have received the gift of the Spirit with the laying on of hands through Confirmation and Paul tells us to "Stir up the gift that is within you by the laying on of hands". Desire the presence of the Lord and seek him until you are blessed to be a blessing for that is the way the fruit grows.

Let's pray:

Father God, in this dark world, people need to see the fruit of the Spirit that Jesus won for us at the cross. Give us the willingness to persevere in our relationship with you until we bear Jesus' likeness in some small measure, and bring light to the world. Amen

Response Prayers

Father God, you are the giver of all good things. I pray to ask you to give me the fruits of the Spirit. Help me to love, be full of joy, peace, and patience. Help me be kind, good, faithful, and gentle when dealing with others. And finally, give me the self-control to bear the fruit so others can see. Amen.

If there is a particular fruit or fruits that you would like to pray for for yourself, you are welcome to take the time now to ask for that fruit – some prayer suggestions have been included below

Prayers for the Fruits of the Holy Spirit

Fruits of the Spirit Prayer for Love

Lord help me to fix my eyes on the love you share with me every day. And, may I be reminded of the grace and mercy you extended through Your Son as I go through my life. Lord, may I look to your love as a guide to love others. And not just those who are easy to love. But God give me your eyes so that I may see all your children the way you do. Help me please God to love myself the way that you love me. For I am fearfully and wonderfully made.

Fruits of the Spirit Prayer for Joy

Lord help me to find my joy in you. God, you are the source of all good things and a life that draws its strength from you is a life of true and deep joy. Even in the tough times help me to rejoice in your goodness and your plan for my life. And, help me to seek you, as the well that never runs dry so that Your joy can overflow through me into the lives of everyone I meet.

Fruits of the Spirit Prayer for Peace

Father, please help me find peace. I have placed my life in your hands. Help me to remember that there is no reason to worry or be anxious for you have a plan much greater than anything I could ever understand. May I find peace in your steadiness, your faithfulness, your strength and you desire not to harm me. May I fix my eyes on you in the storms of life to find the peace that passes all understanding, a peace found only in you.

Fruits of the Spirit Prayer for Patience

Help me Lord to find patience. As the tests and trials of life come at me day by day help me to find strength in you to make it through. Lord help me to learn to wait for your timing and your plan instead of rushing forward with my own. May I trust you enough to remember that vengeance is not mine. When I am ready to snap remind me, Lord, of all the times you have been patient with me. Help me to be present in the season you have placed me in instead of hurrying life away.

Fruits of the Spirit Prayer for Kindness

Lord help me to be kind. Help my words to uplift and show your love. Lord, may my actions build others up so that they too will know the love of Jesus. May I be generous with the things you have blessed me with. May I give to others expecting nothing in return, the way you give me blessings upon blessings every day. Lord help me to remember that one act of kindness in your name may not change the world, but it could change a life. Let me be kind in all things just as Jesus was kind, even to those who persecuted Him.

Fruits of the Spirit Prayer for Goodness

Lord help me to find true goodness. May I do the right thing, not just because I should but because I can glorify you through it. May my thoughts be good, wholesome and righteous. Help me God to do the right thing so that I can show others your way through obedience and a pure heart. Lord, you are good. In all things, in all times even when we don't understand, God - you are good. Remind me Father that though I am called to be good, it is your goodness that has saved my soul.

Fruits of the Spirit Prayer for Faithfulness

Help me Father, to be faithful to you in all I do. Lord may I put all my trust in you. May I faithfully give you control of every matter in my life. May I focus on your will for my life and follow you even when you call me to things I may not understand. I have complete confidence in your will for my life. May I be as faithful to others as you are to me, Lord. Make me steady and dependable a pillar of strength for those around me as you are for me. So, my faithfulness inspires others to put their trust in you.

Fruits of the Spirit Prayer for Gentleness

Lord God please make me gentle. Remind me Father God of all the times you have been gentle in your responses to me and my sin and foolishness. May I be so gentle in my interaction with others. Lord may I show your strength through my meekness. If I am to raise my voice Lord may it be only to raise my voice in prayer and praise to you. And, may my gentleness turn away anger. Help me, Father, to be gentle as your Son Jesus Christ was gentle.

Fruits of the Spirit Prayer for Self-Control

Father God give me the strength to have self-control. I have my struggles and temptations and I know that Satan will use them against me. Lord help me to have the self-control to fight my temptations and remain steady on the path you have set before me. I know that if I give in my feet will fail me and I will stumble. If that happens, Lord, convict my spirit to not continue in my temptations. And, help me, Father, to stand up strong and lean on you to continue in the way set before me. I pray that in my self-control I will hear you more clearly so that you can change me to be more like you.

Lord thank you. Thank you for the example that you have given us in your son Jesus Christ. God, please come alongside me as I work day by day to be your hands and feet here on Earth. And, may the fruits of your spirit inspire my spirit to bear fruit for you! Amen.

(Adapted from <https://www.godupdates.com/fruits-of-the-spirit-prayer-2/>)

Song Holy Spirit Come

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6zq3kG2K45Y>

The Affirmation of Faith

(or listen to: **This I believe (Hillsong)**)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h0mPk_3dXSg

I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried;
he descended to the dead.

On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven,
is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and will come again to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.

Prayers of the People

E te Atua, Loving God,
As we come together at this time of Matariki,
we thank you for friends and family.
We pray for those we have left behind,
for those we have loved and lost on life's journey.
(take some time for your own prayer)

We remember them with gratitude,
and when we look up and see the stars,
may we always thank you for them,
and know that they are at peace with you.
(silent prayer)

We pray for our world in the challenging present, for race relations, for justice,
for health care and peace.
Help us to remember that you can make all things new by your amazing grace,
that you can bring hope alive in people's hearts
and give them strength for the days ahead.
(silent prayer)

We also pray for ourselves in the days ahead –
inspire and encourage us as we set goals and look to the future.
Be with us and all our loved ones on our journeys through the year.
Amen.

The following is adapted from [Auckland Diocese Prayers](#)

For the Church – that we seek to be a people, walking together, following Jesus and preaching the Gospel, loving neighbour and loving ourselves.

(Silence) E te Ariki **Whakarongo mai rā ki a mātou** (*Lord, Hear my voice*)

For leaders of nations – that war will end, and people live in freedom and peace, free from fear of aggression and oppression.

(Silence) E te Ariki **Whakarongo mai rā ki a mātou** (*Lord, Hear my voice*)

For all Christian people – that people of all Christian denominations find ways to pray, work and celebrate together.

(Silence) E te Ariki **Whakarongo mai rā ki a mātou** (*Lord, Hear my voice*)

For people who have been taken into slavery – that nations and societies will be just, establish legal processes to protect the vulnerable and eliminate slavery in all forms.

(Silence) E te Ariki **Whakarongo mai rā ki a mātou** (*Lord, Hear my voice*)

For young people – that their hearts be open to the guidance of the Holy Spirit, facing the future with hope, and a willingness to work for what is good, just, right and loving.

(Silence) E te Ariki **Whakarongo mai rā ki a mātou** (*Lord, Hear my voice*)

For Matariki – that people will celebrate Matariki with respect for tikanga Māori, that bicultural relationships will be strengthened and that our sense of appreciation for and dependence on the natural world will be renewed.

(Silence) E te Ariki **Whakarongo mai rā ki a mātou** (*Lord, Hear my voice*)

Concluding Prayer

Loving God, whose hand has brought forth the wonder of all creation, lead us to love and care for all you have made, that we may ever more faithfully bring forth your kingdom in all we do. Hear the prayers we bring you and grant them, through our Lord Jesus Christ who lives and reign with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever. **Amen.**

Lord's Prayer

Audio - The Lord's Prayer (Said)

Or in Te Reo - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TJeKOoplK00>

Our Father in heaven
Holy be Your name
Your kingdom come Your will be done
On earth as in heaven
Give us today our daily bread
Forgive us our sins
As we forgive those who sin against us
Save us from the time of trial
But deliver us from evil
For the kingdom the pow'r and the glory
Are yours now and forever
Amen

We invite you to be ministered to by the following song

Song **Tuhia**

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=K_ckefBgfSo

Final Prayer

Blessed be God who calls us together

Praise to God who makes us one people.

Blessed be God who has forgiven our sin.

Praise to God who gives hope and freedom.

Blessed be God whose Word is proclaimed.

Praise to God who is revealed as love.

Blessed be God who alone has called us

Therefore we offer all that we are and all that we shall become.

Accept, O God, our sacrifice of praise.

Amen, Accept our thanks for all you have done.

Our hands were empty, and you filled them.

Blessing

In the light of the risen Christ. all is transformed.

May we look in upon ourselves,

and out upon the world, and see all in a fresh light.

May we see people, and pray with the resurrection eyes of the Lord Jesus.

May the beauty of the earth fill us with wonder.

May the love of those who have gone before us wrap around us like a cloak.

May this new year be bursting with possibilities unfurling like fern fronds.

May our lives be filled with blessings as numerous as the stars.

And the blessing of God Almighty – Father, Son and Holy Spirit be with us all ever more. **Amen.**

Song

The Summons

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o469PRLdbHU>

Dismissal

Haere i runga i te aroha. Haere i runga i te Rangimarie

(Go now to love and serve the Lord, Go in Peace)

Ameni. Ka haere matou i runga i te ingoa o te Karaiti

(Amen. We go in the name of Christ)

Kororia ki to Atua

(Glory to God)

Go out into the world with hope!

We go knowing that the God of hope goes with us this day and in the days to come, Amen.