



Kaurihohore Historic Church

P O Box 4118, Kamo, Whangarei 0141



Kaurihohore / Kamo Co-operating Parish Sunday 27 March 2022 – Lent 4

Our service today has been prepared by Freddy De Alwis

We are saddened that we are unable to welcome those into our midst who do not have Vaccine Passes. We will continue to provide emailed, posted or hand-delivered service outlines for those unable to participate in person, and also to find creative ways of doing Church so all are included in some way.

To prepare for sharing in this service I invite you to arrange 7 candles which can be used over the next few weeks leading up to Easter. Light 4 of them before you begin your Worship time.

Today we also share together in communion, so please join in with a cuppa and a biscuit, knowing that you are part of a wider faith network.

Welcome and Introduction

Call to Worship

As we started our Lenten journey with you God,
We travel roads that are sometimes hard.
Roads we do not want to be on-
That take us where we don't want to go

**But you are there with us, beside us, behind us, before us;
always with us on our journey.
God of each new journey - we adore you.**

We are not individuals on our own
but compatriots with each other in this world.
We are always in relationship with others-
our family, friends, co-workers and neighbours.
In all of our relationships you are there gracious Lord,
encourage us to keep going when the relationships get tough.

God of each relationship - we adore you.

We love you and adore you.

God of all our days,

all glory be yours, now and forever. Amen.

(Silent time.)

As we extinguish this light, we acknowledge the darkness and pain caused by the lack of basic needs—lack of food, of shelter, of education, of healthcare, of love.

(A candle is extinguished.)

Let us pray:

Loving God, we thank you that you are with us, and that we may call upon you no matter where we are, or what we are feeling. Keep us mindful of your presence and trusting in your promise—that you are working with us in the moment-by-moment unfolding of our lives. Amen.

Hymn FFS 79: *Who Will Carry the Cross With Me* (selected verses)

Who will carry the cross with me?

Asks the Christ, the Son of God,

Who will carry the cross with me,

Walk the way of love?

Who will turn then and follow me?
Asks the Christ, the Son of God,
Who will turn then and follow me,
Hear the call and come?

Who will live every day through me?
Asks the Christ, the Son of God,
Who will live every day through me,
Showing fruits of grace?

Who will eat of my bread with me?
Asks the Christ, the Son of God,
Who will eat of my bread with me,
Broken and renewed?

Prayer of Confession and Healing: Psalm 32 (selection)

What joy for those
whose disobedience is forgiven,
whose sin is put out of sight!

Yes, what joy for those
whose record the Lord has cleared of guilt
whose lives are lived in complete honesty!

**I confessed all my sins to you
and stopped trying to hide my guilt.
I said to myself, "I will confess my rebellion to the Lord."
And you forgave me!**

All my guilt is gone.

Therefore, let all the godly pray to you while there is still time,
that they may not drown in the floodwaters of judgment.

**For you are my hiding place;
you protect me from trouble.
You surround me with songs of joy.**

The Lord says, “I will guide you along the best pathway for your life.
I will advise you and watch over you.

So, rejoice in the Lord and be glad, all you who obey him,
Shout for joy, all you whose hearts are pure!

Hymn MP 1201: *Christ Be Our Light*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qibAAo0JiEQ>

Reading: Luke 15: 1-7

Reflection: “God’s own glory is our happiness.”

This parable has been called “The Gospel in the gospel” It contains the purpose and objectives of his preaching.

This parable came out within a hostile situation where Jesus was accused for his association with the so called “**sinners**” they are Tax collectors and outcast – people of the land (Palestinians) – there was a complete barrier with the orthodox religion and the people of the land.

The Pharisees have laid down very clear rules to the Jews in the light of Ezra 9:12 Therefore, do not give your daughters in marriage to their sons or take their daughters for your sons. Do not seek a treaty of friendship with them at any time. And also, in Nehemiah 13:23-25.

The Orthodox religion has closed the door for (Others) these people ...Ezra 9;12ff Therefore give not your daughters to their sons, neither take

Their daughters for your sons.....

“When a person is one of the **people of the land**,

entrust no money to him,

take no testimony from him,

trust him with no secret,

do not appoint him as a guardian of an orphan,

do not accompany him on a journey,

forbidden to be the gust of any such man –

This is mainly to avoid any contact and dealing with them.

But in Jeremiah 29:4ff tells the opposite. *This is what the Lord Almighty, the God of Israel, says to all those I carried into exile from Jerusalem to Babylon:* ⁵ “Build houses and settle down; plant gardens and eat what they produce. ⁶ Marry and have sons and daughters; find wives for your sons and give your daughters in marriage, so that they too may have sons and daughters. Increase in number there; do not decrease. ...not only Jeremiah most of the 8th century Prophets have the same concept towards other people...Story of Ruth, Elimelech and Naomi move to Moab – daughter in law Orpah and Ruth – Boaz married Ruth, had son Obed, Obed had a son Jesse who was the father of David Ruth 4:17.

Look at the present war in Ukraine and Russia, over 3 million-people have left the country, nearly 1000 people dead, destructions due to the heavy bombardment, **for what?** On the other side, heavy sanctions from Europeans, USA and UK.

Those who are supporting this bloody war, have forgotten the **human values and Peace negotiations**, but trying to provide the best **lethal weapons** to beat the other side, the thought behind putting fuel into the fire, is somewhat good for their own economy Russia will be cornered and defeated economically at the expense of millions of Ukraine innocent lives, they don't care about that, do they?

Have you seen any European country or USA, UK including their own media asking from both parties to lay down arms and talk????

I am so sad to say most of them are blood thirsty war mongers. They do not think of innocent civilians at all. They only care about OIL and gas more than human lives. For them OIL is thicker than blood.

The result of the world leaders making wrong and bad decisions, people end up with destruction, the innocent always caught up in situations in which they are not responsible, but will suffer and die. Secondly, we have observed the double standard with the refugees; African, Asian refugees from Ukraine were not welcomed into neighbouring countries. According to some media they are not educated, civilized like blue eyes, blond hair white Europeans. It doesn't matter what the colour of your skin, eye or hair is, they are all refugees.

It is very clear with this war the **hidden inner racism** has come up very clearly. Another factor is very clear **polarisation** of camps USA, UK, Europe Vs. Africa, Asia and Middle East. This is not really what we need in 21st century.

- **God is a good shepherd to all the nations**

But they were shocked beyond their imagination to see how Jesus was with them – Jews wanted destruction upon them, not to save them. The tax collectors, outcasts, sinners are beyond any redemption and they deserve nothing but destruction. When we compare this with the present conflict, what Jesus is saying to us today?

God is a good shepherd to all the nations – God is the author of life – **everyone is equal, unique and precious** in the presence of God.

- Through Jesus Christ and his crucifixion, we understand the self-giving love of God, we meditate this during Lent.
 - God as a Father/Mother who is waiting, waiting...for sons and daughters to return home.
 - Joy and Glory of God when He found the lost.
- God is like an ever-flowing fountain of living water, poured out on earth through the Holy Spirit, earth is still breathing and is creating, healing, redeeming. God's own glory is our happiness.

Last Sunday we talked about the Parable of the barren fig tree. There we had a question - God is merciful ...but? In my theory there is NO BUT. God is merciful FULL STOP....

We need to understand the redeeming work of God continues – whether we are in or out St. Augustine said it wonderfully, **“Many whom God has, the Church does not have; and many whom the Church has, God does not have.”**

Do you want to dance? Do you want to join in that great Conga Line that has moved through the world since the beginning of time and which is also the heartbeat of God's deepest self? The dance will go on whether we are in or out. But if we do join, we won't regret it.

As we dance to bring wholeness, healing justice and peace in the world, we ourselves will become whole, be healed, and be graced with peace.

Even if we don't join in the dance, we will be its beneficiaries. But the dance goes on, the movement which is God continues to move, God continues—joyfully. God's own glory is our happiness. Amen.

Hymn HFTC44: *The King of Love my Shepherd Is*

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

Greeting of Peace:

Lord Jesus Christ, in your tenderness, bind us with bonds of love that cannot be broken. My brothers and sisters, the peace of Christ be with you.

And with you also.

The Great Thanksgiving

(The People Stand)

The Spirit of God be with you

And also with you

Lift your hearts to heaven

Where Christ in glory reigns

Let us give thanks to God

It is right to offer thanks and praise

It is right indeed to give you thanks most loving God,
through Jesus our Christ and our Redeemer,

With us always, one of us, yet from the heart of God.

For with your whole created universe

we praise you for your unfailing gift of life.

**God's love is shown to us: while we were yet sinners,
Christ died for us.**

In that love, dear God, righteous and strong to save,

you came among us in Jesus Christ, our crucified and living Lord.

You make all things new.

You pour out your Spirit on all. You empower us to know your truth
and fearlessly to proclaim your gospel among the nations.

Your love fires our hearts; and in your Spirit

we hunger and thirst for justice in the world.

**Now is the acceptable time,
now is the day of salvation.**

Therefore with saints and martyrs, apostles and prophets,

With all the redeemed, joyfully we praise you and say,

**Holy, holy, holy! God of mercy, giver of life;
earth and sea and sky and all that lives
declare your presence and glory.**

Hosanna in the highest!

Blessed is the One who comes in the Name of our God!

Hosanna in the highest!

Accept our praises, living God, for Jesus our Christ,
the one perfect offering for the world,
who on the night that he had supper with his friends,
took bread, gave thanks, broke it, gave it to his disciples and said:
*Take, eat, this is my body which is given for you;
do this to remember me.*

After supper he took the cup; and when he had given thanks,
He gave it to them and said:
*Drink this, all of you. This is my blood of the new covenant
which is shed for you, and for many, to forgive sin;
do this to remember me.*

Empower our celebration with your Holy Spirit,
breathe on these bodily gifts that they may be for us
the Body and Blood of Jesus, our Christ.

**Feed us with your life, fire us with your love,
confront us with your justice, and make us one in the body of Christ with
all who share your gifts of love.**

Therefore, God of all creation, in the suffering and death of Jesus,
our redeemer, we meet you in glory.

Amen! Come, Lord Jesus.

Here and now, with this bread and cup, we celebrate your great acts of liberation,
ever present and living in Jesus Christ, crucified and risen,
who was and is and is to come.

Amen! Come, Lord Jesus.

And now, as our Saviour Christ has taught us, let us join together in solidarity
and say . . .

**“Abba, Our Mother, Our Father who art in heaven hallowed 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 and deliver us from evil. For the
kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours now and for ever. Amen.**

An Invitation to Communion

May you love God so much that you love nothing else too much;
Come, all you who hunger and thirst for the living God.
Come to the table to eat and drink.

Communion:

Prayer after the Holy Communion:

Let me be at peace within myself. Let me accept that I am profoundly loved and need never be afraid.

Let me be aware of the Source of Being that is common to us all and to all living creatures.

Let me be filled with the presence of the Great Compassion towards myself and towards all living beings.

Let me always be an instrument of liberation and not oppression.

Let me see the face of Jesus in others;

let me be the face of Jesus for others.

Let me be at peace within myself. Amen.

Hymn HFTC 584: *To God Be the Glory, Great Things He Has Done*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-15v9iworAU>

Benediction & Grace:

Go now to love and serve

We go in the name of the Christ.

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with us all. Amen, Amen, Amen.

A reflection by William Arthur Ward entitled Fasting and Feasting.

Lent should be more than a time of fasting. It should be a joyous season of feasting. Lent is a time to fast from certain things and to feast on others. It is a season in which we should:

Fast from judging others; feast on the Christ dwelling in them.

Fast from emphasis on differences; feast on the unity of all life.

Fast from thought of illness; feast on the healing power of God.

Fast from words that pollute; feast on the phrases that purify.

Fast from discontent; feast on gratitude.

Fast from anger; feast on patience.

Fast from pessimism; feast on optimism.

Fast from worry; feast on hope.

Fast from complaining; feast on appreciation.

Fast from negatives; feast on affirmatives.

Fast from bitterness; feast on forgiveness.

Fast from self-concern; feast on compassion for others.

Fast from discouragement; feast on hope.

Fast from suspicion; feast on truth.

Fast from thoughts that weaken; feast on promises that inspire.

Catholic Charities USA

<https://www.nacc.org/docs/resources/The%20Season%20of%20Lent.pdf>