



St David's posy on the left




ST DAVID'S PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OTOROHANGA

MAY 2023

Ranfurly St Otorohanga

OUR MISSION STATEMENT
 Linked together as disciples of Christ to share our faith with and give loving service to the community.



A Maniapoto Street shop window display

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Managers were unable to meet in April because of the illness of many members.

Preaching Roster

May 7	Terry Cowland
May 14	Keith Budge
May 21	Dawn Phillips
May 28	Terry Cowland
June 4	Terry Cowland

Session report

According to The Book of Order, the functions of Session are: leadership in worship; leadership in mission; pastoral care and oversight of the congregation; spiritual nurture.

I speak here about the first function, leadership in worship. We have only four active elders, two of whom take their turn at leading worship. We are grateful for the input of Dr Terry Cowland who leads two services a month.

As you may imagine, if one leader is ill or absent, the Impact is strongly felt. Recently we had to cancel a Beattie Home service, which was a great disappointment to us all. Please pray for us.

Rev Des Botting compared the worship service to a shop window since it is the visible evidence of the presence of the church still in the community.

May the Lord keep us all in his grace.

Dawn Phillips Session Clerk

Church bank account number: 02 0392 0018524 00

Website: saintdavid's.org.nz

By Shirley Murray

Honour the dead, our country's fighting brave,
honour our children left in foreign grave,
where poppies blow and sorrow seeds her flowers,
honour the crosses marked forever ours .

Weep for the places ravaged with our blood,
weep for the young bones buried in the mud,
weep for the powers of violence and greed,
weep for the deals done in the name of need.

Honour the brave whose conscience was their call,
answered no bugle, went against the wall,
suffered in prisons of contempt and shame,
branded as cowards, in our country's name.

Weep for the waste of all that might have been,
weep for the cost that war has made obscene,
weep for the homes that ache with human pain,
weep that we ever sanction war again.

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Copy for the June newsletter is
requested by Monday 22 May

The Editor

Calendar for May

Fri 5 10.00am Cuppa & Chat
 Sat 6 Presbytery Gathering, Tauranga
 Sun 7 10.00am Morning Worship
 Wed 10 2.00pm Managers
 Sun 14 10.00am Morning Worship
 Wed 17 9.30am Session
 Sun 21 10.00am Morning Worship
 Sun 28 10.00am Morning Worship
 June 4 10.00am Morning Worship

Cuppa & Chat

On April 14, thirteen people came. We had morning tea, then Pam Sanson displayed blankets that she had knitted, double size. She was helped by her daughter, Karen.

Our next meeting will be on 5 May.

All welcome.

Nina



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**“O God, our Help in Ages past” was written by Isaac Watts
about 1738.**

It is a paraphrase of Psalm 90, a psalm of Moses. It is more than a metrical version of this Psalm; it is a grand commentary on the whole subject of time, which is the theme of the Psalm.

Originally consisting of 9 verses, now usually only 5, the hymn ranks as one of the finest of all Watts's 600 or more hymns. It is the one hymn that is still sung at all festive occasions in England.

Isaac Watts was born on July 17th, 1674, in Southampton, England. He was the oldest of 9 children. His father was a deacon in a dissenting Congregational Church, and at the time of Isaac's birth, was in prison for his non-conformist beliefs. As a boy Isaac displayed literary genius, writing verses at a young age. It is said that he had an annoying habit of rhyming even in everyday conversation, and that one day when he was scolded by his father for this practice, he cried out, “Oh, Father, do some pity take, and I will no more verses make”.

One of Watts's early concerns was the low ebb of music in the churches. The singing consisted of ponderous hymn/psalms only. His father one day challenged Isaac to write something better for his congregation, a challenge which he accepted. For the next 2 years he wrote a new hymn every Sunday. Because of this bold departure from the traditional Psalms as well as his use of his new “hymns of human composure” Watts was generally considered to be a radical churchman of his time.

Although Isaac Watts was frail in health during much of his life, he was a scholarly genius in many different fields. His writings include essays, discussions of psychology, three volumes of sermons, catechisms, twenty-nine treatises on theology, textbooks on logic amongst other. All these works had a powerful influence on the thinking of the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries.

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Isaac Watts died in 1748 at the age of 74. His monument was placed in Westminster Abbey, the highest honour that any Englishman can have. His grave can be seen in the Bunhill Cemetery in London where many 17th and 18th century Dissenting Preachers were buried.

Other hymns of his include, “I sing the Mighty Power of God”, “Jesus Shall Reign”, “When I Survey the Wondrous Cross”, and “Joy to the World.”

A great hymn text deserves majestic music. The tune St Anne was composed by William Croft in 1708. It was originally intended to be used with a version of Psalm 62 but did not gain recognition until later when it was set to these words.

As evidence of the musical worth of this tune, master composers such as George F Handel and J S Bach have borrowed it for their own works – Handel in an anthem entitled “O Praise the Lord” and Bach in his Fugue in # Flat Major – often called St Anne's Fugue.

Acknowledgement to Kenneth W Osbeck.

O God, our help in ages past,
our hope for years to come,
our shelter from the stormy blast,
and our eternal home.

No one has greater love than this: that he lay down his life for his friends.

John 15:13 Tree of Life Version