

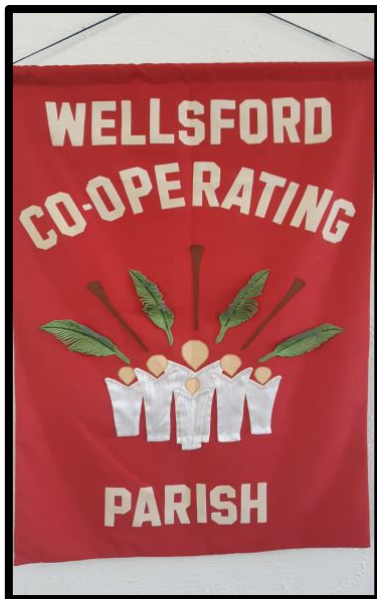
Wellsford Co-operating Parish

MAY 2020

DIGITAL BULLETIN

View this bulletin IN COLOUR, view video clips and other information on our website:

<http://wellsfordmethodistpresbyterian.weebly.com>



Church Office Phone: 09 423 8076
Church Centre,
253 Rodney Street, Wellsford 0900

If you know of someone who was absent from church today, or who is new to our community, would you kindly deliver a copy of this bulletin to them... To Show We Care... Thanks.

WHAT'S UP IN MAY?

PASTORAL: Please keep in your thoughts and prayers those who are sick and recovering at this time. If you know of any person who is ill or would particularly appreciate a visit, please contact a member of the Pastoral Care team. With Covid-19, please take care.

Women's Fellowship: Women's Fellowship is cancelled due to Co-Vid 19.



Service at the Heritage Rest Home: This month's service is cancelled due to Co-Vid 19.



Parish Council: The Parish Council will not meet this month.



Birthdays: If your birthday is in May, a very happy birthday to you!



Shared Lunch: This is cancelled due to Co-Vid 19.



COMBINED CHURCH SERVICES: This year Wellsford churches will continue to hold the combined evening services every two months at 7:00pm.

28 June 7:00pm Co-operating Methodist/Presbyterian Church, 253 Rodney Street, Wellsford. Please mark these dates in your diaries.

Loaves and Fishes have been available during the lockdown. We have put practices in place to safeguard everyone from Covid 19. The Foodbank has had a donation of 20 heaters. We have already distributed some. Joe Dodd's at Wellsford Four Square donated these and also a good number of toilet rolls. We have had terrific support. I wish to thank all those who have supported us during this unusual time. We are very privileged to be able to help families in need at this time. Thank you again for all your support.

Pastor's Blurp

Greetings, beloved, in Jesus' name. How is the blessing counting going? Paul says in Philippians 4:11-13: *'I have learned to be content whatever the circumstances. I know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty. I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well-fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want. I can do everything through him who gives me strength.* I just want to give you three points of encouragement in this email. If we take the advice of that beloved hymn, 'Count Your Blessings', here are three blessings that I have counted from this lock-down (there are many more!):

1. There is the blessing of the many silver linings of this 'cloud'. There is the increased family time, which is a real blessing. And if you don't have your family around you, in your bubble, you will have more time to call them, or Skype them, or Zoom them (I'm having to do a crash course in these technological wizardries, and that's another example of the blessings I count). There is the increased amount of time to work on your house or in your garden. Our neighbour is putting a new roof on his shed. I hope that he's counting the blessing of having this compulsory opportunity to do his home improvements! On our daily walks, we keep seeing cars passing us pulling great trailer-loads of vegetation waste to some dumping ground. They will have spotless gardens once this is all over. How many of you are availing yourselves of the gift of time to learn a new language, such as Hebrew or Greek? Or French, or German, or Chinese? And how many of us are using the gift of time to read new and amazingly good books? I'm loving 'Our Mutual Friend' by Charles Dickens. I haven't ever read it before. You should read it! Our daughter, Jean, in Oxford, is being blessed by the opportunity of catching up on necessary sleep, and getting her work done from home due to the *impossibility* of socializing. She's experiencing the blessing of being *prohibited* to socialize!

How many of us are using the gift of time to 'meditate on God's law day and night'? (Psalm 1:2). How many of us are taking the opportunity to 'let the word of Christ dwell richly within us (Colossians 3:16) thereby remaining 'filled with the Spirit' (Ephesians 5:18). How many of us are spurring one another on toward love and good deeds? (Hebrews 10:24) (even if we can't do the second part of the exhortation "Let us not give up meeting together" (Hebrews 10:25).

2. There is the blessing of this crisis raising and answering some teaching points. Never forget the exhortation in Proverbs: 'to let the wise listen and add to their learning, and let the discerning get guidance' (Proverbs 1:5). The addition to your learning will bless not only you, but your loved ones. For example, I have got a cousin in Surrey, England, who has a senior friend who thinks that this corona-virus is the end of the world. How would you encourage this older sister in the Lord? Go to the Book! Matthew 24:4-8 says, 'Jesus answered, "Watch out that no one deceives you. For many will come in my name, claiming, 'I am the Christ', and will deceive many. You will hear of wars and rumours of wars, but see to it that you are not alarmed. Such things must happen, *but the end is yet to come.* Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. There will be famines and earthquakes (and Luke adds 'pestilences'. The corona-virus is a pestilence.) in various places. All these are the beginning of birth pains.' Corona-virus is a *non-sign* of the end of the age! The end is not yet!

3. But the corona-virus is a judgment. This morning I heard and saw (on Zoom) a fellow minister of mine, and a lovely, wise, Christ-like, gentle guy. He had some good insights to offer with regards to being a pastor in lock-down. But he also said that he was worried about 'the amount of Christians who say that this virus is a judgment from God. I don't think that is very helpful,' he said. But why not? What are the grounds for saying that it's *not* a judgment from God? If we don't know: let us go to the Book! Revelation 6 teaches about the six seals of judgment, in God's unfolding plan to bring all things in heaven and on earth together under one head, even Christ. The Lion of Judah has overcome and He is worthy to take the scroll and open the seven seals (Revelation 5:5). The fourth seal is the rider on the pale horse, who is called Death, and Hades was following close behind him. They were given power over a fourth of the earth to kill by sword, famine and plague, and by the wild beasts of the earth.' (Revelation 6:8). The immediate agents of judgment and destruction are demonic, but the *authority* for the judgements comes from heaven. I make this point for two reasons: (a) it is biblical. Romans 1:18 'The wrath of God is being revealed from heaven.' (b) For those who have put their faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, you are unharmed by any judgment from God, because our judgment fell on the shoulders of our Lord and Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ two thousand years ago. The end of Chapter 6 of Revelation asks the question, 'The great day of their wrath has come, and *who can stand?* Chapter 7 of Revelation answers the question: 'Who can stand?' 'The people of God who are sealed with the seal of God *can stand.*' Those who have been sealed with the seal of God ('having believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit (Ephesians 1:13)), are able *to stand* and endure through the great tribulation, with its wars, earthquakes, pestilences and persecution of believers, and, having come through the tribulation, are able *to stand* before the throne of God. And he said, "These are they who have come out of the great tribulation; they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Therefore, "They are before the throne of God and serve him day and night in his temple; and he who sits on the throne will spread his tent over them. Never again will they hunger; never again will they thirst. The sun will not beat upon them, nor any scorching heat. For the Lamb at the centre of the throne will be their shepherd; he will lead them to springs of living water. And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes." (Revelation 7:14-17).

Rejoice, and again I say, rejoice! 'And my God will meet all your needs according to his glorious riches in Christ Jesus'.

Love in Christ to you blessing-counting saints, from your blessing-counting brother,

Your brother,

David Balchin

With Covid-19, please take care.

Our Mission: 'Love God, Love Each Other and Extend that Love beyond our Church'

Bible Verses for these Testing Times:

The onset of the COVID-19 pandemic caught us off guard. It has shaken the stability we felt in our world in many hard ways, and has put us all on an unknown path, living one day at a time, week-to-week, and month-to-month. Perhaps you're battling anxiety, stress, or trying to adjust to a new reality of how you live your life.

God's word is incredibly relevant and is the source of hope, encouragement, and truth we can turn to in the midst of this pandemic, and any hardship we will ever face. Look to these verses to give you hope.

God Is Our Strength

1. "God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble. Therefore we will not fear, though the earth give way and the mountains fall into the heart of the sea, though its waters roar and foam and the mountains quake with their surging" ([Psalm 46:1-3](#)).

2. "I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world" ([John 16:33](#)).

The reality is that we will face trials. We will endure pandemics, we will face many unexpected and difficult battles on a global level and in our personal lives. God knows all of this and the details of what you face. He will be with you as your help and source of strength to get through whatever you go through. We can even let go of fear and let faith take over our biggest concerns. Jesus overcame the world so that we could have peace, hope, and faith in Him.

Turn Your Thoughts

3. "Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things" ([Colossians 3:2](#)).

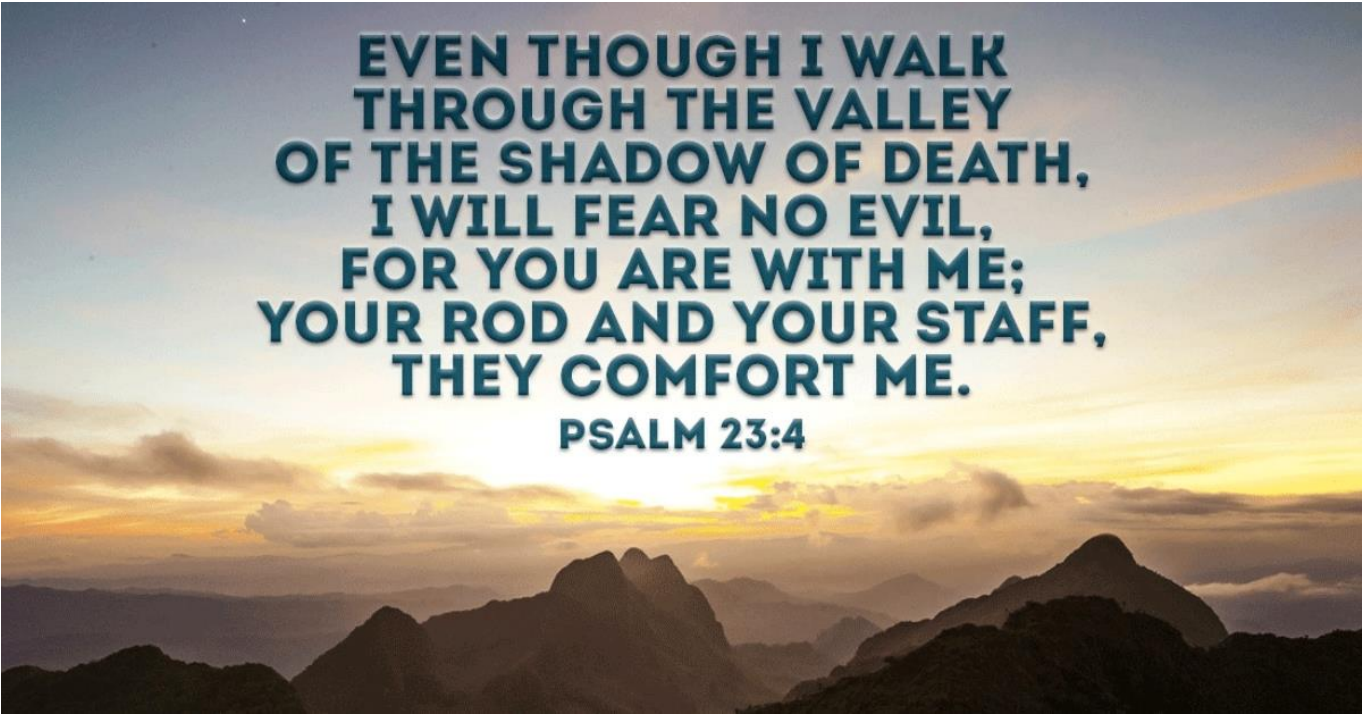
4. "Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. Brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things" ([Philippians 4:6-8](#)).

We may be overwhelmed with fear, anxiety, and worry. We may constantly be thinking about the pandemic, watching the news about it, and searching the internet to find out more about COVID-19. May the instruction from God's word give us new practices to direct our minds to God and His goodness, love, and mercy during the most difficult of times. Whenever our minds wander to what causes us fear or anxiety, we can stop and instead, begin to pray and give our worries over to Jesus.

You can read the rest of these verses at:

<https://www.biblestudytools.com/bible-study/topical-studies/hopeful-bible-verses-to-remember-during-the-coronavirus.html>

Our Mission: 'Love God, Love Each Other and Extend that Love beyond our Church'



**EVEN THOUGH I WALK
THROUGH THE VALLEY
OF THE SHADOW OF DEATH,
I WILL FEAR NO EVIL,
FOR YOU ARE WITH ME;
YOUR ROD AND YOUR STAFF,
THEY COMFORT ME.
PSALM 23:4**

Photo credit: Crosscards.com

God Is with Us

5. “Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for You are with me. Your rod and Your staff comfort me” ([Psalm 23:4](#)).

6. “And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age” ([Matthew 28:20](#)).

What a comfort that one of the last things Jesus wanted to tell His followers was that He would be with us to the very end of time. However lonely or isolated we feel, we can remind ourselves and meditate on God’s promise that He is with us every step of the way. God is our comforter, and He is with us no matter what we are going through.

You can read the rest of these verses at:

<https://www.biblestudytools.com/bible-study/topical-studies/hopeful-bible-verses-to-remember-during-the-coronavirus.html>

**Unite
against
COVID-19**

Featured Hymn- Abide with Me

Source: <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/culture/music/3668058/The-story-behind-the-hymn.html>

A hymn which, as Erik Routley put it, “looks death itself in the face” and embodies the human craving for companionship in *extremis*.

The text is the work of Henry Francis Lyte (1793-1847), a neurotic curate who spent most of his career in the fishing village of Lower Brixham in Devon. He had been haunted by the phrase, repeatedly muttered by his close friend, William Le Hunte, as he lay dying.

It was misremembered from Luke 24:29, where the disciples meet but do not recognise the resurrected Jesus. “Abide with us,” they ask him, “for it is toward evening, and the day is far spent.”

As has often been remarked, the change to the singular pronoun is what gives the hymn its comforting emotional intimacy. Lyte wrote Abide with me to his own tune, but today it is sung to Eventide, composed in 10 minutes by the organist William Monk, during what his widow recalled as “a time of great sorrow. Hand in hand we were silently watching the glory of the setting sun (our daily habit) until the golden hue had faded... Then he took paper and pencilled the tune which has gone all over the world.”

Abide with me was hugely popular in the trenches of the First World War, and was sung by Nurse Edith Cavell the night before the Germans shot her for helping British soldiers to escape from occupied Belgium. A great favourite of the Royal Family, it was played at the weddings of the future George VI to Elizabeth Bowes-Lyon and their daughter Elizabeth to Prince Philip.

It is a fixture of the FA Cup final, Anzac Day and the British Legion’s Festival of Remembrance at the Royal Albert Hall. On Sept 21, 2001 it was unforgettably played at Ground Zero by a Salvation Army band during the commemoration of the September 11 attacks.

It also features on the soundtracks of several movies – The Full Monty, 28 Days Later, A Bridge Too Far – and is always associated with mourning and tragedy.

Abide with me

Abide with me; fast falls the eventide:
The darkness deepens; Lord, with me
abide:

When other helpers fail, and comforts
flee,
Help of the helpless, o abide with me.

Swift to its close ebbs out life's little
day;
Earth's joys grow dim, its glories pass
away;
Change and decay in all around I see:
O thou who changest not, abide with
me.

I need thy presence ev'ry passing hour;
What but thy grace can foil the
tempter's power?
Who like thyself my guide and stay can
be?
Through cloud and sunshine, Lord
abide with me.

I fear no foe, with thee at hand to
bless;
Ills have no weight, and tears no
bitterness.
Where is death's sting? Where, grave,
thy victory?

I triumph still, if thou abide with me.
Hold thou thy Cross before my closing
eyes; Shine through the gloom, and point
me to the skies:
Heaven's morning breaks, and earth's
vain shadows flee:
In life, in death, o Lord, abide with me.

Featured Hymn

Listen some of her hymns by clicking the links below...

[hymn here](#), or [another hymn here](#), or this [hymn here](#).

Download this copy of the bulletin on our [church website](#) and read the lyrics on the next page...

Service Schedule for May 2020

Due to COVID-19 these notices are subject to change

The Preaching Plan:

MAY due to Co-Vid 19 there are no physical services

Wellsford Duty Schedule for May- Duty Stewards- Cancelled

Steven and Nelleke Duinkerke	W & R MacGillivray	Albert & Ria Olivier	Ann Clegg / J Daken	Steven and Nelleke Duinkerke
------------------------------	--------------------	----------------------	---------------------	------------------------------

Morning Tea- Cancelled – have it at your place

Steven and Nelleke Duinkerke	W & R MacGillivray	E Nolan/ K Lennon	Ann Clegg / J Daken	Steven and Nelleke Duinkerke
------------------------------	--------------------	-------------------	---------------------	------------------------------

Parish Directory: For Ministry please contact a member of the Parish Council. **Church Centre Office: 253 Rodney Street, Wellsford 0900.**

Phone: 09 423-8076

Bulletin: Mr Mark Lorenzen

Minister: Rev David Balchin 423 7150

Ria Olivier: 423 9396

Treasurer: Mr Willis MacGillivray: 423-8273

Secretary: Ann Clegg: iresyn@yahoo.co.nz

For contributions, e-mail the editor Mark at marklorenzen73@gmail.com
