

WEEKLY NEWSLETTER

Fourth Sunday in Lent



Jesus healing the Blind Man, Painted by Brian Jeke

15th March 2026

Notes from Yukiko's Desk

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

Last Friday, four of us from AGAC attended the **World Day of Prayer (WDP)** gathering held in Northshore. WDP, observed on the first Friday in March each year, is a worldwide movement of informed prayer involving people of many denominations and languages in more than 170 countries. For 2026, the focus country is Nigeria and the theme was ***"I will give you rest. Come."*** The altar table was set beautifully with Nigerian cultural items (see the photo in this page). During the service, several testimonies written by Nigerian women were read. I was particularly struck by the one written by a lady called Jato who has a daughter called Amina (14 years old). In the testimony, Jato says her heart tightens with worry when Amina leaves for school every morning. That is because Leah, their neighbour's girl was a was taken from school when she was 14 due to her Christian faith. Leah refuses to deny Christ even in the face of captivity, and it's been eight years, and still, she remains their prisoner.



Jato knows that Jesus teaches us to love our enemies and to pray for those who persecute us. But when she hears of another attack, another kidnapping, she feels anger rising in her heart. But Jato chooses to live as Christ does. In the face of persecution, she says, ***"we don't simply await rescue; we actively live out our faith, knowing that each act of love and forgiveness is a testament to Christ's enduring power in our lives."*** Jato continues, ***"Leah's story reminds us of the cost of this faith. But it also shows us its power."*** The community still gathers to pray for Leah's return. Their hope, their persistent faith, inspires her to keep believing, to keep loving, to keep living alongside all her

neighbours. As she watches Amina leave for school each day, she prays not only for her safety but also for her heart. She prays that Amina, like Leah, will have the strength to stand firm in her faith. She also prays that Amina will have the love to see the image of God in everyone she meets, regardless of their faith. She concludes, ***“This is how we find rest in God - not by harbouring hatred or intolerance, but by letting Christ’s love flow through us, even in the face of persecution. It’s a daily choice, a daily surrender. But in making this choice, we find that our burdens truly do become light, and in God, we find our rest.*”**

Her testimony really challenges me. Let’s join Jato and others who faithfully pray. May we find rest in God as they do.

Yukiko

News and Upcoming Events



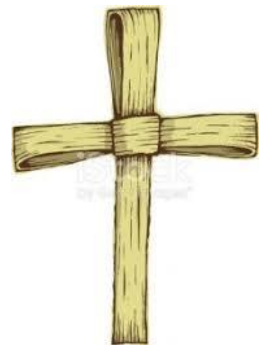
Coffee Fellowship

Settler’s Morning Tea:

We will meet again on **18th March** Wednesday at **10 am** at Settler’s Lounge.

Lenten Study & Making Palm crosses

We meet at **10: am** on **Wednesday 18th and 27th March, 1st Apr** at **Holy Cross**. (We need to change the date as Yukiko is moving house on the 25th!) We are **making palm-crosses** around noon after Lenten Study on the **27th**. It would be great if some of you could come to help making them. If you do not know how to, not to worry! We will show you how!



St. Michael's in Greenhithe turning 70!

On Palm Sunday in 1956, St. Michael's All Angels was founded at the heart of Greenhithe. **On 12th April** we are celebrating this special milestone. We will gather for the service at 9 am, and a special morning tea around 9:30. If you have some stories or photos of St. Michael's, let Yukiko know. Please invite anyone who has been part of the St. Michael's whanau. If you think you are able to help this small yet special celebration (making a cake, putting photos etc), please let Yukiko know.

Dates to remember:

Special General Meeting

will be held on **Sunday 22 March** straight after Sunday service at Holy Cross. We will present our 2025 financial accounts, and we will confirm the budget for 2026. This is a short but important meeting so please try to attend.

St. John's Ambulance's AEDs refresher' course: Sunday 29 Mar

Easter Services AGAC



Palm Sunday Service 29 March

9 am St. Michael's

10:30 am Holy Cross

Maundy Thursday@ Holy Cross 2 April

6:30 pm Soup and Bread meal

7.30pm Maundy Thursday Service

Good Friday: 3 April

9:30am Combined denominational

Easter walk, begins from Holy Cross and finishes at the Presbyterian Church

Easter Sunday: 5th April

9 am St. Michael's

10:30 am Holy Cross

All Welcome !

Helpers wanted for the above Services

Please get in touch with Yukiko if you are available to help with any of the following:

- Have some **palm leaves** and can bring them **on Palm Sunday 29th March**.
- Helping with the soup and bread meal prior to the **Maundy Thursday service 2nd April**. (Yukiko will make chicken soup. If someone else can bring another pot of soup, that would be great!)
- **TV set up for Good Friday** service at Holy Cross on **3rd April**.
- Bring large **flowers** (e.g. hibiscus, dahlias etc.) that we can use to flower the cross on **Easter Sunday 5th April**.

We pray for:

- Iran and the Middle-East as conflicts escalates
- Young people who are experiencing homelessness in Aotearoa
- Those who are in transition and change in our community.

This Week's Bible Question

How many of Jesse's sons passed before Samuel in total before he asked about others?

- A. Five B. Six C. Seven D. Eight

This Week's Service Songs at Holy Cross

Opening: Immortal, Invisible, God Only Wise
Gospel: Lord is my shepherd (Psalm 23)
Offertory: Be still my soul
Recession: Amazing Grace

Sentence for the day

I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness but will have the light of life. John 8: 12

Readings

	<u>This week</u>	<u>Next week</u>
1 st Reading:	1 Sam 16: 1-13	Ezek 37: 1-14
Psalm	23	130
2 nd Reading:	Eph 5: 8-14	Rom 8: 6-11
Gospel:	John 9: 1-41	John 11: 1-45

Summary of the Scripture for this Sunday

1st Reading: In about 1010 BC Samuel chooses and anoints David as king. The story is probably a combination of various versions of that event.

2nd Reading: Paul contrasts the two ways of living, one Christian, the other pagan.

Gospel: This long gospel explores the nature of spiritual enlightenment in contrast to spiritual blindness. It includes one of the great 'I am' statements of Jesus.

Collect for the Day

God of light and truth,
You see us as we are and call us into new life.
Open our eyes to your presence and our hearts to your grace.
Lead us through shadow and uncertainty,
and shape us to live as people awakened by your light.
Through Jesus Christ our Lord, Amen.

Liturgical Colour: Violet

This Week's Bible Question Answer: C

Rosters

Holy Cross

	<u>This week</u>	<u>Next Week</u>
Sacristan	Val	Alison C
Welcomer	Ria	Barry
1 Readings	John	Christian
2 Readings	Valerie	Alison T
Presiding	Yukiko	Yukiko
Prayers	Yukiko	Robert
TV Setup & Slides	Gary	Graham
Morning Tea	Karenne & Trish	June and Rhona
Music	Anne	Karin

St Michaels

	<u>This week</u>	<u>Next Week</u>
Prayers	Bruce	Bruce
Readings	Brian	Bruce
Presiding	Yukiko	Bruce

Contacts

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Feedback welcome:

If you have feedback on any aspect of our church activities, please contact the wardens, Dorothy & Trish – contacts as above – or via the office at the email above.

Albany Greenhithe Anglican Parish

Bank details: ASB – 12-3136-0041622-00

www.agac.org.nz