

A special welcome to visitors to West, a place of shelter, faith and laughter. We are an all-age, all-stage community where everyone is included.

We especially love having kids involved in the whole service on Sundays, in all their wriggling, noisy glory, so please don't worry if you or anyone with you makes a bit of a racket - we're glad to have you with us!

Morning tea is part of our time together, so you're warmly invited to stick around for a cuppa and a chat after the sitting-down part of the service.



A MONTH OF SUNDAYS

DECEMBER 2009

6 DEC	THE PEACE WE FIND OURSELVES IN	13 DEC	THE JOY WE FIND OURSELVES IN
	Advent 2		Advent 3
	Gary Bedford curating		Simon Cannell curating
	Thalia Kehoe Rowden preaching		Thalia Kehoe Rowden preaching

20 DEC	THE LOVE WE FIND OURSELVES IN	25 DEC	THE CHRIST WE FIND OURSELVES IN
	Advent 4		Christmas Day!
	The Last Sunday before Christmas!		9.30 am, bring your friends and family
	Thalia Kehoe Rowden preaching		Thalia Kehoe Rowden preaching

27 DEC	PRE-SCHOOL JESUS
	Matthew 2:1-12
	Cairan Finnerty curating
	Simon Velvin preaching



west:pastor

Thalia Kehoe Rowden

Baptists are a distinctive bunch of Christians in a few ways, and not just because we baptise adults, not babies.

Lots of the other 'Baptist distinctives': autonomous local churches; no national hierarchy; decisions made democratically; ministers, not priests; freedom of conscience... they all bubble up from the deep belief that God can speak to each Christian through the Holy Spirit. And if that's true, then surely the Holy Spirit can speak to the church through the community of Christians. We believe that when we get together to listen to God, and ask God to speak to us, that the Spirit is present in our conversation, so we'd better listen up.

That's why we vote at meetings: not because the majority should rule, but because if we're all listening for the Spirit's voice, we should be able to agree on how to move forward.

The early Baptists agreed with other reformers that the church was a 'priesthood of all believers'. They were reacting against

a system that said God can only speak and act through special, anointed people called priests. There's a terrible risk in switching systems, though. The reform wasn't supposed to get rid of priests. It was supposed to mean expand the priesthood so every Christian is a priest. If we get it wrong, we don't get the 'priesthood of all believers', we get the 'priesthood of no believers.'

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You are a priest to our community. Yes, you!

At West we have always tried to hear the voices of all our priests. We have quarterly church meetings, where anyone can speak. We have our annual Year in P/Review Service, with an open mic. And we now have one more way we can hear God's voice through each other: the church blog!

So check out our fabulous new website: www.westbaptist.org.nz, and click on 'blog' to join in the conversation. Exercise your priesthood! Get blogging!

☺ Thalia

west:making a difference

The basics: **Meryl Ashworth** works in education in Ethiopia with SIM; **Graeme and Christine T** work in business and medicine in South Asia; **Juam** is a student whose

education and board we sponsor in Feni Baptist Hostel in Bangladesh; the **New Plymouth Street Vans** provide friendly and safe hospitality downtown on weekend

nights; **Kingdom Resources West** provides budgeting help and interest-free loans to people in New Plymouth; we have a special relationship with **Spotswood School** over the road.

Meryl is very pleased that another family has

arrived back from home assignment to help out in Makki.

Graeme and Christine T are going to help run a business that sews bags, aprons and blankets with girls from a local slum.

west:people

Our sympathy goes out to **Valerie S** who is in hospital having surgery on her elbow following a nasty bike accident.

Congratulations to **Alana B** on her 21st Birthday and to **Simon V** on his 20th birthday and to **Claudia McK** who turned 5 and started school.

Several of our young folk have done well this year. **Matt C** achieved his Honours Badge at Highlands and has been selected in the Taranaki Under 13 Development team for cricket. **Bethany L** was Dux at Spotswood College and **Caitlyn S-M** passed her first Ballet Exam. Well done!

Emma and family will be joining **Jun** in Malaysia over the holidays. He is enjoying his job there.

Address and e-mail changes:

Valerie S is at 1/8 Belt Rd, 757 5046.

Cath and Eric P's email is ericath@xtra.co.nz

Graeme and Christine T's email is

gandctaylor@gmail.com.

A farewell note from the **Velvins**:

We would like to say a big thank you to all of you at West for being our Community. It has been the place where Simon and Charlotte have grown from toddlers when we planted the church at West to the young adults they are now.

You will always be very special to us. We are really not going very far away and many of you travel to Wellington from time to time so please come and see us or come and stay. We have a rental in Newlands and will be building in Churton Park. Marilyn has a job at Newlands College.

We believe God has great things for West and we will always feel a part of it even though you won't see us every Sunday.

Blessings to you all,

John, Marilyn, Simon and Charlotte.

west:groups

Anyone is welcome to come to the **movie and discussion group** meeting at Grant and Megan C's place, 7pm on Tuesday nights; Carol and James M host a **study group** on the first and third Thursdays of the month; the **Rainbow Ladies** meet at Heather H's home, on Tuesdays at 1.30pm.

Everyone in the church is in one of four **family groups**, who meet for social activities throughout the year and help out in practical ways in tricky times.

In December, we'll have a **combined Family Group farewell** for the Velvin family. Come

to the Lovegroves' place straight after church, 12pm on Sunday 13 December, for a pot-luck lunch to send them off in style.

Central Baptist has invited the young people from West to visit and try out their **youth group** this term, meeting on Friday nights from 7.30pm-9.30pm.

The last **Get Real** for the year is a combined mentor-mintee event on 6 Dec. Meet at church at 3.45pm for the Amazing Race: Family Edition! Come in pairs, all welcome - see Anna-Lee for more details.

west:events

The season of Advent is now upon us, when we prepare to celebrate the Word of God who put on flesh and blood and moved into the neighbourhood. This year we'll be treating ourselves to some highlights from Handel's *Messiah* as we head towards Christmas. Bring your singing voices!

P-10! The Parachute Music Festival is on Jan 29-Feb 1, and this month is your last chance to get the cheapest tickets and the best camping spot by joining the Naki Group. Tickets are \$132 until 31 Dec, so get in quick to Heather B (751 3113) for a registration form!

3 Dec	Music practice, 7pm - last one for 2009
6 Dec	Church Quarterly Meeting after the Service
6 Dec	Mentor-Mintee Amazing Race, 3.45pm, starting from church
6 Dec	Carols by Candlelight at the Park by the rotunda
13 Dec	Combined FG Pot Luck Lunch at Lovegroves', farewelling the Velvins, 12pm
13 Dec	Christmas at the Bowl
16 Dec	Board Meeting, 7.30pm

west:pitching in

Thanks to everyone who helps out cleaning the Church. Following the break-ins in November please be extra careful with security and check the downstairs windows and door are locked before you leave.

Thanks very much for all your contributions to our **food cupboard**. Please keep this in mind - there is always a need for food or supermarket vouchers.

Syd and Cela coordinate the **prayer chain**. Please ring 753 3459 with any requests.

Alan and Gwen B take care of **church bookings and hireage**. Please remember to check with them (751 2095) whenever you want to use the building.

If you'd like to set up an automatic payment or coded envelopes to **contribute financially** to the church, please see Erin R, our treasurer. You can get a whole third of your giving back as a donations rebate at the end of the tax year, now.

Margaret S collects information for this **newsletter**, which comes out on the last Sunday of the month. Please contact her (753 6621, mjsewell@actrix.co.nz) with any info by the previous Wednesday. We'd also love to feature a different **photo** of west NP on the cover of each newsletter - let Thalia know if you've got one that might suit. The mountain counts! Pics that we can put text over are best.

	6 DECEMBER	13 DECEMBER	20 DECEMBER	27 DECEMBER
Cleaning & Morning Tea	Alison D Margaret O	Judith M Lisa A	Kevin F Sue F	Brent G Murray L
Lawn Mowing	Alison D	Wayne L	Alan W	Grant C

	3 JANUARY	10 JANUARY	17 JANUARY	24 JANUARY	31 JANUARY
Cleaning & Morning Tea	Val W Alan W	Tania S-A Erin R	Ricky M Ruth M	Brian M Cathy M	Liane L Wayne L
Lawn Mowing	Simon C	Alan B	Stuart W	James McK	Daniel L

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