



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 fairtrade tea or coffee after the sitting-down part of the service.

Look out for people assembled in the area near the side exit door – they will be happy to pray with you after the service.

See inside for more....

A MONTH OF SUNDAYS

NOVEMBER 2015

1 NOV Celebrating Sexuality #4
Celebrating Grace

8 NOV Mark 9
Doubts, a father, and a faith that fits no formula

15 NOV Celebrating Life – Megan and baby Noah
Baptist Hui Feedback

22 NOV Year in Review
Everybody invited to contribute

29 NOV Advent # 1
Hope

6 DEC Advent #2
Peace



The most helpful resource I've found on the topic of thinking Christianly about same sex marriage and the LGBTIQ (Lesbian, Gay, Bi-sexual, Transgender, Intersex, Queer) topic is a book by David Gushee. Gushee is the/a leading evangelical ethicist in America. The evangelical part means he is a Christian who believes Jesus is too good not to share, and that the Bible has authority in faith and life. The ethicist part means he works from the Bible to make clear the best ways of living life on a wide range of topics. Gushee is one of the best, he's highly respected, and he has changed his mind to now have a positive view on same sex marriage – and this is why I find his book so helpful. He clearly articulates the topics, the history, the challenges, and various positions individuals and churches could hold. Over the first third of the book he focuses on the important stuff that all Christians (I think!) should agree on (such as the quote below). The middle third of his book engages with the biblical texts. The final third Gushee shares his own story of changing his mind on his previous beliefs. It is well written, funny, insightful, very readable, based on solid academic work, and warm. I highly recommend this informative book regardless of which side of the topic we sit on.

In his chapter entitled “Change we can all support,” Gushee says:

“...it is increasingly agreed, even on the traditionalist Christian side: gay people exist. It is wrong to call them names or use slurs about them. Their relationships should not be criminalised. They should not be discriminated against in employment, housing and public accommodation. They should not be bullied. They should never have to be afraid of violence as they go about their daily lives. They should not be blamed for America's security problems or social ills. They should not be stigmatized or treated with contempt. There should be no space in church life or culture for their dehumanisation and mistreatment.

Any Christian reader, anywhere in the world, regardless of your views on Christian sexual ethics, ought to be able to agree with that last paragraph. If you do agree, you already support significant change from what the Christian status quo was not so long ago.”

The content of this quote seems obvious to us all. It is terrible and sad that agreeing with this quote is in fact quite radical (liberal in fact!) in many Christian circles. Through our Sunday evening discussions it's become very clear to me that on this topic we are a doing very well at thinking and acting Christianly. I hope this is an encouragement.

So, look out for a couple of copies of “Changing Our Mind” – they're coming here soon. I trust they will be helpful in lessening confusion, raising understanding, and increasing compassion - regardless of what you think about homosexual ethics.

Love and respect

Andrew ☺

west: making a difference

We have a portfolio of people & communities we support around New Plymouth & the world. The basics:

Meryl A (Korea) You may remember a previous update I wrote back in April, written about taking students to the Foreign Missionary Cemetery. I spoke about how the Bible was first translated before the early missionaries arrived here, and how the printing of the Bible using the Korean alphabet (Hangul) helped it to be established as the accepted form of writing in this country. We went back to the

cemetery just a few days ago, taking our present group of students to experience and learn about the impact many missionaries made in Korea. I have been to the Foreign Missionary Cemetery 6 or 7 times, yet I learn something new each time I go there and it seems to make an impact on our students too. One of the girls made a comment "God must love Korea very much, because so many people died

for us." Oh, so true! Please read Meryl's recently e-mailed newsletter.

Paul and Sarah, Mikayla & Malachi: Continue to pray for us as a Family as we strive to have a healthy work/life balance. Pray the children at their new school will make good friends, have fun, and learn heaps. Pray too for the women we serve that we may see more of God at work in their lives.

Jo R. (India) Please pray as I settle back into South Asia after my break. Give praise that my Visa was renewed so promptly. Work is about to get super busy so pray for patience, focus, wisdom & clear-headedness, and that language learning will not have gone backwards during my break in NZ.

Carley (Dhaka, Bangladesh) Thank you for your prayers and for remembering me during these very busy days. Please pray for joy in the midst of the busyness, & strength when I am tired or worn down.

Alton Chakma (Bangladesh) Please pray for primary school aged Alton whom we sponsor to live in the Baptist Hostel in Feni. Our sponsorship provides him with accommodation, christian nurturing and education, food, clothes, medical care, and full education at the local school.

west: groups

Play and Parent Support Group. 10am Thursdays at Naomi's. All (aiming for local) parents/caregivers with children under 3 are welcome.

All men are welcome to share a drink and good conversation every second Monday at **Blokes and Cokes**, 7.30pm at WestBar. See Brian M or Will M, and the events section over the page for dates.

Lasses & Lattés. A chance for the women of our church (and friends) to get together, every second Monday, at 7.30pm at the Treehouse on Devon St West. All women welcome.

The Rainbow group meets fortnightly on Tuesday afternoons, at 1pm at Heather H's home. See 'events' section for dates.

Carol and James McK host a fortnightly '**Chocolate Fish**' Bible study at their home. See 'events' section for dates.

Get Real is for all young people from year 7 students and upwards. We meet once a month on

Closer to home:

Kingdom Resources West provides budgeting to people in New Plymouth.

We love & partner with Spotswood Primary School, across the road. We're involved with HPP Reading, KickStart Breakfast Club, Pastoral Care, Mother's Day Brunch, Morning Tea for staff at the start of each term, Citizenship Award, and other areas individuals volunteer in. There are many ways you can serve our school community if you're interested.

Just letting us all know, there are children and teens in our Spotswood community that we have had a fair amount of contact with, who would love to have, and need to have an adult spend regular time with them.

Kickstart Breakfast Club: Many thanks to those who have volunteered your time to serve our community's children. We've started a new connection with Spotswood College! A few of their Year 9 (13 year old) students will be helping soon too.

Sunday evenings. When we hang out, we eat, have fun, and talk about life, faith, and Jesus. See 'events' section for our next date. Speak to Hester or Andrew for more information.

The Movie Group will meet weekly at Grant & Megan's home on Tuesday nights to watch and discuss movies on the themes of our sermon series. On the first Tuesday of the month members take part in a Quiz night at Westbar at 6.30pm.

The Music Group practices will be on 12 & 26 November at 69 Barrett Road, starting at 7pm. If anyone is interested in joining the Music Group, we would love to have you come along and join us. We would especially love to have some new musicians and singers. Most practices concentrate on learning new songs.

west: people

Please continue to pray for and support those who are struggling with ongoing health difficulties, and

those unable to meet on Sundays, **Cath P, Lyn S, Lloyd D, and Marlinka R.**

west: events

Over 60's Group This month's Over 60's **Christmas function** will be held on Sunday 29th November, 12.30pm, at the Kassaba restaurant in Gover Street. Please bring a present (value \$5) marked either for a man or lady. RSVP to Valerie Armstrong by 20th November.

Sunday 15 November. Get Real. Doors open 5:50, dinner at **6pm.**

1 Nov	Church Meeting after service	9,23 Nov	Lasses & Lattés, 7.30pm at Treehouse, Spotswood
2,16,30 Nov	Blokes & Cokes at Westbar 7.30pm	10,17,24 Nov	Movies night at Grant & Megan's home
3,17 Nov	Rainbow Group at Heather H's home, 1.00pm	12,26 Nov	Music Practice, at Gary & Heather's, 7pm
5,12,19,26 Nov	Play and Parent Support Group, 10am at Naomi's	15 Nov	Get Real, 6.00pm at Church
5,19 Nov	Chocolate Fish at James&Carol's		
5-7 Nov	Baptist Hui		

west: pitching in

Each month we will keep the church informed of our progress. We have budgeted for \$9,600 per month in offerings; in September our offerings were \$9,979.20.

Prayer If you have a prayer request, please see Andrew. If you'd like to join the e-mail prayer chain as a pray-er, please talk to Andrew.

Alison D is co-ordinating our building bookings, and **Andrea M** is checking the Hall before use. Please contact Alison (751 1005) if you wish to make bookings.

If you'd like to set up an **automatic payment** or use envelopes to contribute financially to the work of the church please see our treasurer, Brent G. (751-0010) The government will rebate a full third of what you give.

We have our **John D Memorial DVD collection** downstairs. If you'd like to borrow something, please take it, record it in the notebook, and return it to the correct place on the shelves.

Maureen C now collects information for the **Newsletter**, which comes out on the last Sunday of the month, so please contact her with any info by the previous Tuesday.

Trust Stuff

Did you know that if you volunteer for the **Bread run**, you only do it once a month? It takes about 2 hours on a Tuesday. If you want any further details please contact Alison D.

Cleaning & Morning Tea Lawnmowing

7 NOV
Alison
Lisa
Syd Beale

14 NOV
Liane L
Wayne L

21 NOV
Bedford family
Allan West

28 NOV
Cory G

5 DEC
Kathy M
Brian M
Stuart
Watson