



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.

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.

We especially love having kids involved in the service on Sundays. So please don't worry if anyone with you makes a little bit of noise – we're glad to have you with us!

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

APRIL 2023

2 APR Renew Together
Week 2
With Andrew

6 APR Service of the Shadows
Thursday 7pm

9 APR Resurrection Sunday!
Christ is Risen! 10am

16 APR West Partner: Hospital Chaplaincy
With Joe Gray

23 APR Renew Together
Week 3
With Andrew

30 APR Campfire Stories
With Ethan



Kia Ora whānau,
Ants, Jesus and Posie.

Apparently, if you put 100 black ants and 100 red ants in a jar, nothing will happen. But, if you shake the jar hard, the ants will start killing each other. The red ants will consider the black ants their enemies, and the black ants will consider the red ants their enemies. The real enemy is the one who shakes the jar.

Does a similar thing happen in human society?

Easter is coming. Jesus has 'turned his face towards Jerusalem,' has travelled through nearby Bethany and is now descending the Mount of Olives into Jerusalem and is heading for the cross. In Luke's gospel (Luke 19:37) we're told "As they reached the descent from the Mount of Olives, the entire crowd of disciples joined them and began to rejoice and praise God loudly for the display of power they had seen, saying, "Blessed is the One who comes in the name of our God! Peace in heaven, and glory in the highest!"

But not all were celebrating. There was this crowd, but also, another crowd – the Pharisees.

Some of the Pharisees in the crowd said to Jesus, "Teacher, rebuke your disciples!"

Jesus replied, "I tell you, if they were to keep silent, the very stones would cry out!"

Jesus then weeps over the city saying "if only you had known the path to peace today!"

Jesus then begins teaching in the temple area every day. "Meanwhile, the chief priests and religious scholars were looking for a way to destroy him, as were the leaders of the people, but they had no idea how to achieve it – the entire population was listening and hanging onto his every word." (Luke 19:47+48)

Here are crowds of people (one protesting the old rules and celebrating Jesus, and another wanting to stick with the old rules) and an enemy looking to cause pain and division – the chief priests and religious scholars (those who think they know best, who have studied the scriptures, who like to make the rules and have people keep the rules).

This week has seen crowds gather at Albert Park in Auckland too. Some people who hold genuine fears about sharing bathroom spaces (being one key example) with trans women need to be well listened to. Another crowd of Rainbow community (and their allies) who have a history of and still experience harassment, abuse, bullying and discrimination. Enter Kelly-Jay Keen-Minshull, AKA Posie Parker. She shakes the jar of ants. She, like the chief priests and religious scholars in Jesus' day looks to cause pain and division.

I suspect the religious leaders in Jesus' day had 'read the room.' They had a history of success with removing (read: cancelling, destroying) God-led prophets. They got what they expected. I suspect Posie didn't read the room. Holding a minority view that speaks hurt against a variety of people groups (Rainbow Community, Immigrants, People of Colour), having had protests at many previous events, not paying attention to the disinvite of other far-right activists in Aotearoa, hosting an event in such a public place as Albert Park, speaking so arrogantly to our country's leaders – surely Posie hadn't read the room. This was always going to end messily. Jesus made a whip and used it to shut down hurtful, divisive, mis-led actions. I'm glad the counter protestors didn't go that far!

"Everyone deserves to feel safe, loved, cared for. Everyone has value. Our Trans whānau deserve no less than that. Regardless of where one sits politically, theologically, or ideologically, we should all be able to agree that people – regardless of how they identify – should be able to exist without fearing harassment, abuse, bullying and discrimination." A.J Hendry.

"If only you had known the path to peace today!" Jesus.

With love

Andrew ☺

west: making a difference

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

Charlie & Jo (S Asia): We have been reminded afresh of the amazing community we have here, everything we do, we do together. Recently that has looked like grieving together for our young friend, Surjo. Work and life continues to be full and enjoyable, and we would love your prayers for the whole community as we continue to run amazing vocational training programmes.

Paul and Sarah have been phasing out their time with Arotahi, and are no longer needing our support. They have been transitioning out of leadership while they support the new local leadership with Loyal Workshop.

Closer to home:

We love and 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, such as sports team coaching. There are many ways you can serve our school community if you're interested.

Spotswood Primary Chaplaincy. Andrew spends Wednesday mornings at the school. He is a part of regular pastoral care team meetings which seek to collaboratively support children and families, and he spends time with anybody connected to the school community.

west: growing

The Movie Group On the first Tuesday of the month members take part in a Quiz night at Westside Grill at 6.30pm. We meet on the third Tuesday night of the month to watch and discuss movies. Phone Megan C for details of venues.

Carol and James McK host a fortnightly 'Chocolate Fish' Bible study at their home. See 'events' section for dates. Anyone looking for a fortnightly home group is welcome to check us out. If anyone new would like to join us, you're welcome to come along.

Music & Play group got off to a good start for 2023. Once again we had new mums and littlies join us and we welcomed 2 new babies after the Christmas holiday break. Music and Play group is for preschool children and their parents or caregiver. We meet on Friday mornings at 10am during the school term.

We begin with fun, interactive songs with lots of musical instruments, parachutes and ribbons and many other props. We follow this up with a yummy morning tea and play time. The group is an open welcoming space for all who would like to be a part of it.

Term 1 finished on Friday 31 March. Term 2 starts on Friday April 28th at 10am. For more information feel free to check out the Music and Play Group Facebook page or phone Carol on 027 738 5465.

Local Preaching Day Course with Carey Baptist College principal John Tucker. Saturday 6 May at

Northpoint Baptist Church. 9.30 – 4pm \$20, Lunch provided. Register at info@northpoint.org.nz

If you'd like to find out more about **study at Carey Baptist College**, or tapping into their wonderful webinars, hit <https://www.carey.ac.nz/>

board@westbaptist.org.nz This e-mail address can be used to contact our church Leadership Board. We are keen to hear from you. We love serving you.

The Music Group meet at 9.15am Sharp on a Sunday Morning before the service to go through the songs for the service.

We would love to have more singers join us. If you feel this is something you could do on a Sunday please talk to Gary, Heather or one of the team.

Mosaic Youth is for school year 9 – 13. This is our collaborating youth group with a variety of other churches. We meet fortnightly during term time for fun, food, and faith discussions. It's a great place to make friends!

Twenty people from Mosaic Youth are off to Easter Camp in Feilding. Please note Youth group will start again for Term 2 on Friday April 28th.

Pre-teen Ministry We have an amazing group of school year 6, 7 and 8's (10 – 12 year olds.) We'd love a couple more adults to come along to love

these kids. Please contact Ethan or Andrew if you are interested in finding out more.

Please remember that if you have a concern – ‘go to the source. That means, go and speak to the person you have a concern with, lovingly, gently,

and with an open mind and heart. Ask questions to understand. If your concern still isn’t resolved, or you’d like support to ‘go to the source’, contact me or your favourite Leadership Board member: Andy L, David, Erin or Andy G.

west: events

APRIL CALENDAR:

6 th	Mosaic youth leave to Easter Camp	18 th	Movie Group at venues TBA
13,27 th	Chocolate Fish Group, at McK’s	28 th	Mosaic youth starts Term 2
18 th	Movie Group at venues TBA	28 th	Music & Play at West, 10am

Easter Camp! We have four West connected teenagers heading to Easter Camp with Mosaic, along with Ethan and Sophie. Please be praying for them and for the camps around the country.

Easter Camp needs more volunteers. The biggest practical support needed is CREW. Crew for traffic, cooking hot chips, village stalls, cart parking etc. If you can help, please contact <https://www.ec.org.nz/>

west: people

Congratulations to Kimberlee Downs and Ollie Ritchie who were married on 10th March at The Bungalow. They were thankful the torrential rain stopped and the sun came out in time for their nuptials. It was a wonderful day full of love and laughter. The happy couple are honeymooning in Europe for two months.

Happy 65th! Birthday Alison!

The Church is people... if you are thinking of somebody or praying for somebody, how about letting them know. Make contact. Ask how they are. Perhaps offer to share a coffee at your home/their home/café.

I’m sure it would be a huge encouragement. Is there somebody you’re thinking of right now that might like a phone call or coffee visit? An older person? Somebody less able to get out?

West has a private Facebook page for connecting with each other. **“West Baptist New Plymouth Connection.”**

Please continue to **pray for and support** those who are struggling with ongoing health difficulties, and those unable to meet on Sundays – **Margaret S, Heather H, Ruth S, Lyn S, Marlinka R.**

Being family, we want to celebrate things in each other’s lives. Each month, we’ll acknowledge Birthdays and Anniversaries in the newsletter, with special birthdays acknowledged on Sundays.

Here are dates for April:

1 Apr	Sophie S-M	
3 Apr	Megan & Grant C	WA
5 Apr	Caitlyn S-M	
15 Apr	James & Carol M	WA
25 Apr	Ian M	
26 Apr	Tiffany R	

west: pitching in

Prayer: If you have a prayer request, please contact Andrew who would be delighted to pray with you and/or put your request on the prayer chain.

Each month we will keep the church informed of our progress. We have budgeted for \$10,583 per month in offerings; in February our offerings were \$10,360.

We have an **e-mail prayer chain** where a dozen people are committed to praying for any request, as they are able. All West people are encouraged to be a part of this. If you'd like to join the prayer chain as a pray-er, please contact Andrew.

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.

	1 APR	8 APR	15 APR	22 APR	29 APR
Cleaning & Morning Tea	James M	Bedford	Andy G	Wayne L	Brian M
	Carol M	family	Lou G	Liane L	Kathy M
Lawnmowing	David S		John V		Allan W



At Easter – Christ is risen. Christ is risen indeed! The underlying message is that we are too.

Richard Rohr.