

SEASONAL GUIDE | 2021



5 MARKS OF MISSION



Isaiah 52:7 How beautiful on the mountains are the feet of those who bring good news, who proclaim peace, who bring good tidings, who proclaim salvation, who say to Zion, "Your God reigns!"

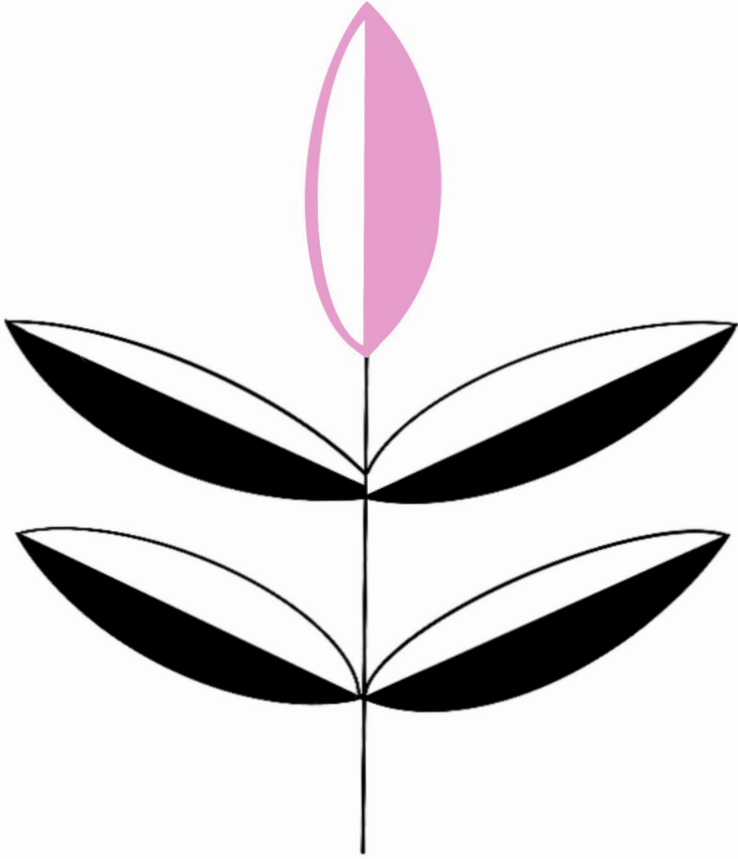
God has always been on a mission to seek, save, redeem and restore. This is the meaning of *missio dei*, a God who has a purpose and intention for the world. God is on mission, and God invites us to join the adventure. David Bosch beautifully describes it: "mission is, quite simply, the participation of Christians in the liberating mission of Jesus... it is the good news of God's love, incarnated in the witness of a community, for the sake of the world."

But without connection to the source of love in God, mission can degenerate into our own projects, and our hearts can become hardened when things don't go our way. We must continually remember that we ourselves need God's love - we are recipients of God's mission - even as we are participants in God's mission. The two are not distinct, we freely receive and freely give.

This seasonal guide explores the Five Marks through the stories and reflections from friends from Re-New Communities and our wider Anglican Movement. We have inherited these Five Marks from our global Anglican whānau and they help us imagine tangibly what God's mission encompasses. These are:

1. To proclaim the Good News of the Kingdom
2. To teach, baptise and nurture new believers
3. To respond to human need by loving service
4. To transform unjust structures of society, to challenge violence of every kind and pursue peace and reconciliation
5. To strive to safeguard the integrity of creation, and sustain and renew the life of the earth

Throughout the guide you'll notice that these five marks are not rigid categories but rather they flow into one another with beautiful synergy. They are distinct, and yet uphold one another. So while certain marks may come more naturally to one person or one community, we are called to all of them in season. It is our hope that we may continue to be challenged and inspired to join in the mission of God through these marks of mission and the experience and example of our friends.



SERVICE

TO RESPOND TO HUMAN NEED BY LOVING SERVICE

Scottie Reeve
(Brooklyn Anglicans)

In 1978 Richard Gillard penned a hymn called “The Servant Song”. It goes like this: “Brother, sister, let me serve you; Let me be as Christ to you.”

It’s an interesting angle. The songwriter is begging another for permission to serve them. As if they’re pleading: “I don’t get to become like Jesus unless you let me serve you! So please, LET ME!”

The song captures two powerful theological truths of service.

Firstly, when we serve someone we get to enter into the ministry of Christ: The Servant King. We get to see this person as Jesus sitting before us, and offer ourselves up to them as if we are serving Christ himself.

Secondly, when we submit to the service of another, they minister to us as the presence of Christ too. We come closer to Jesus in experiencing having our feet washed (John 13:1-17), and to be hosted with wine and bread (John 13:21-30). Their hands touching

SERVICE

our skin become the physical presence of Christ.

The great mystery of service is that two people - one taking and one receiving - both have the opportunity to understand a part of Christ's character and his ministry. In this way the mark of mission, "to respond to human need by loving service" is both essential to reaching the world with Christ's love, but also to our own growth as his followers.

With this in mind, we know that there are many in our neighbourhoods who are never served because they have no friends, or never get to serve others because they are perceived as having nothing to offer.

Considering this, we must never forget that there is no service more powerful in Christ's eyes than service offered to, and received from, the poor.

QUESTIONS

- 01** Of these two ideas about service, which one makes you most comfortable? Which one is least comfortable? Why?

- 02** What does loving service look like in your life practically at the moment? Who do you serve and how?

- 03** Where might you be called to serve those who have no friends, or to be served by those who seem to have little to offer?



TRANSFORM

**TO TRANSFORM UNJUST STRUCTURES
OF SOCIETY, TO CHALLENGE
VIOLENCE OF EVERY KIND AND
PURSUE PEACE AND RECONCILIATION**

Anna Cusack
(Blueprint Church)

“...And what does the Lord require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God.” Micah 6:8

I am really passionate about people, the power of civil society, and structural change. The inherent value of each individual and the environment is fundamental to the story of creation and underpins my worldview. However, we also live in a really messed up world, with deep hurt and injustices.

While studying at university, I became increasingly drawn to working toward systemic change, and to see what that can mean for people’s lives. Today, I am lucky enough to work for Amnesty International, an awesome organisation that advocates for everyone to be able to enjoy their fundamental human rights.

In my job I see awful abuses of human rights, but I also see incredible people around the world challenging injustices. I am inspired by those people who

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enable change through their care, hard work and perseverance in pursuit of a more just world. For example, after many years of campaigning, more people who are seeking refuge can now be welcomed into Aotearoa.

I see in the person of Jesus the call to challenge systemic injustices and take action. He overthrew tables in the synagogue and stood with those that faced structural and societal oppression. I believe we are called to also challenge unjust structures and support restorative solutions. I also want to acknowledge that the institution of the church, at times, has and continues to perpetuate harm, as well as making positive impacts.

It is essential that we continue to humbly listen, learn and engage. There are big questions that our country and world are facing. I encourage you to support NGOs and community groups who work on issues you care about. Getting involved really matters.

QUESTIONS

01 What is a structural injustice that you have been thinking about and/or are passionate about changing/ you feel called to challenge?

02 What are some ways big or small that you can contribute to the transformation of unjust structures?

03 Where would you like to see Aotearoa in 2050? What changes do we need to make to get there?



PROCLAIM

TO PROCLAIM THE GOOD NEWS OF THE KINGDOM

Jessica Johnson-Pirika
(Blueprint Church)

“Preach the word; be prepared in season and out of season; correct, rebuke and encourage—with great patience and careful instruction.” 2 Timothy 4:2 NIV

When I was 17 I started hearing from Jesus to tell everyone I passed on the street that Jesus loves them. At the time I didn't know how to be sure it was from God, but 10 years on he still asks me to do the same thing, tell this person on the street that God loves them.

What I've been preaching has

changed in the last 10 years from preaching randomly God loves you to God set me free. He took my sins away as if they've never been done, so when I say to the people Jesus loves, he died on the cross for your sins, hold your head up high, you don't need to be ashamed, these people say oh, thanks for that, because that's what the Good News is.

One time I had an experience where the Holy Spirit literally let me feel His Heart and showed me that it was for the lost. That's why

PROCLAIM

we should keep praying for ways
and opportunities to tell them
what God has done.

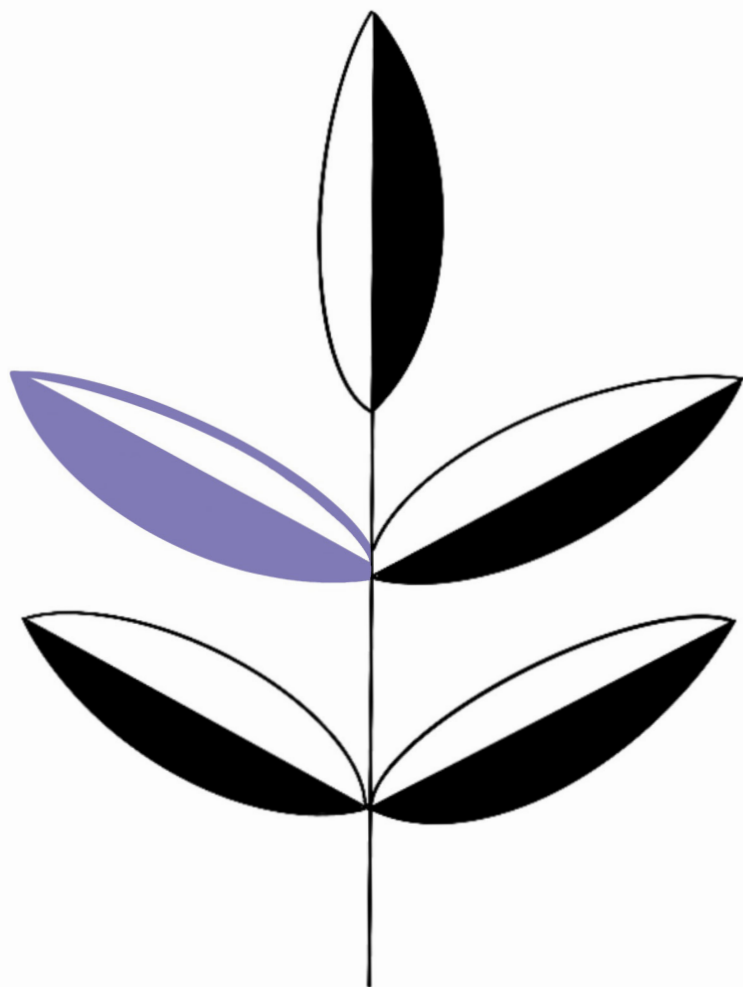
Mission is kind of a day-to-
day thing, because of how
I preach the Good News. I
don't intentionally set time to
evangelise because it seems to
work best if God asks when I
am not expecting it. This goes
hand in hand with praying. You
need to pray for the people you're
gonna meet the next day before
you leave the house because if
you preach and the ground is not
prepared it's not gonna go well.

QUESTIONS

01 How does Jess' story of proclaiming God challenge and encourage you?

02 Have you ever been prompted by God to share his love with someone?
What did that look like?

03 If you were to boil down the truth of what Jesus' good news has meant for you - what would you say? How would you share this?



CARE FOR CREATION

TO STRIVE TO SAFEGUARD THE INTEGRITY OF CREATION, AND SUSTAIN AND RENEW THE LIFE OF THE EARTH

Andy Newport
(Lyall Bay Community Church)

“What are mere mortals that you should think about them, human beings that you should care for them? Yet you made them only a little lower than God and crowned them with glory and honour. You gave them charge of everything you made, putting all things under their authority—the flocks and the herds and all the wild animals, the birds in the sky, the fish in the sea, and everything that swims the ocean currents.” Psalm 8:4-8

For as long as I can remember,

I have been frustrated as I’ve watched as governments around the world have tried and mostly failed to do anything meaningful to deal with ecological issues that we have faced. It seems that humans are generally just not great at being in charge, which is why the biblical vision for humanity is so audacious to me.

During the week I work for a tech company that tries to give people the information they need to live more sustainable lives. We regularly talk with people

CARE FOR CREATION

that are living everyday lives in radical ways to reduce their impact on the planet. While most don't know Jesus, I see in their sacrifices a sacred care for creation that emulates the sacrificial kingship of Jesus.

Every month, our church forgoes a regular service to instead join our local beach clean. While it is mundane, I believe it is an incredibly spiritual act. In outworking our faith by caring for a small part of creation we testify to our community what God's sacrificial reign looks like.

In Genesis, we read about an eternal God who created humans in their likeness to rule over the garden alongside them, tending to it and causing it to flourish.

This is a wild claim if we really think about it. However, in seeing God's image in people doing the mundane activities that put our planet first, I find myself more hopeful about the biblical ideal for humans. We are all called to bear the image of God and lead creation to flourish, and I find that both comforting and challenging.

QUESTIONS

- 01** How does picking up rubbish as an act of worship and mission challenge your ideas about what worship and mission are?

- 02** Is there a space or place in the natural world where you find it easier to meet with God? What do you do to care for this space?

- 03** Spending time listening to the Holy Spirit, is there somewhere in your life where you feel called to strive - to show sacrificial love - for God's creation? Is this something you could join with or invite others into?



TEACH

TO TEACH, BAPTISE AND NURTURE NEW BELIEVERS

Lynley Webster
(The Free Store & Blueprint)

“A farmer went out to sow his seed. As he was scattering the seed, ... some fell on rocky places, where it did not have much soil. It sprang up quickly, because the soil was shallow. But when the sun came up, the plants were scorched, and they withered because they had no root.”

The day I was asked if I could write this reflection the gospel reading was **Matthew 13:1-9**. I remembered back to my first Alpha course in Wellington, where a young person chose to

follow Jesus. However, after the course, there was no ongoing growth. There is still a small plant today, twenty-six years later, but the plant has not been watered enough. As I read Mick Duncan’s book ‘Alongsiders: Sitting with those who sit alone,’ I understood why he reflects on a selfless pastor who made himself available to him day and night. Through these encounters, Mick was disciplined to a level of maturity that led him to disciple many. We can’t do that for everyone but I believe the Holy

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Spirit will highlight to us those we need to give ourselves to.

I love the Alpha course and seeing people discover the joy of knowing Jesus. But as Greg Ogden states in his book ‘Transforming Discipleship: Making a Few at a Time,’ “Each disciple is a unique individual who grows at a rate peculiar to [them]. Unless disciples receive personal attention so that their particular growth needs are addressed in a way that calls them to die to self and live fully to Christ, a disciple will not be made.”

This type of discipleship is often slow and can be costly. I have

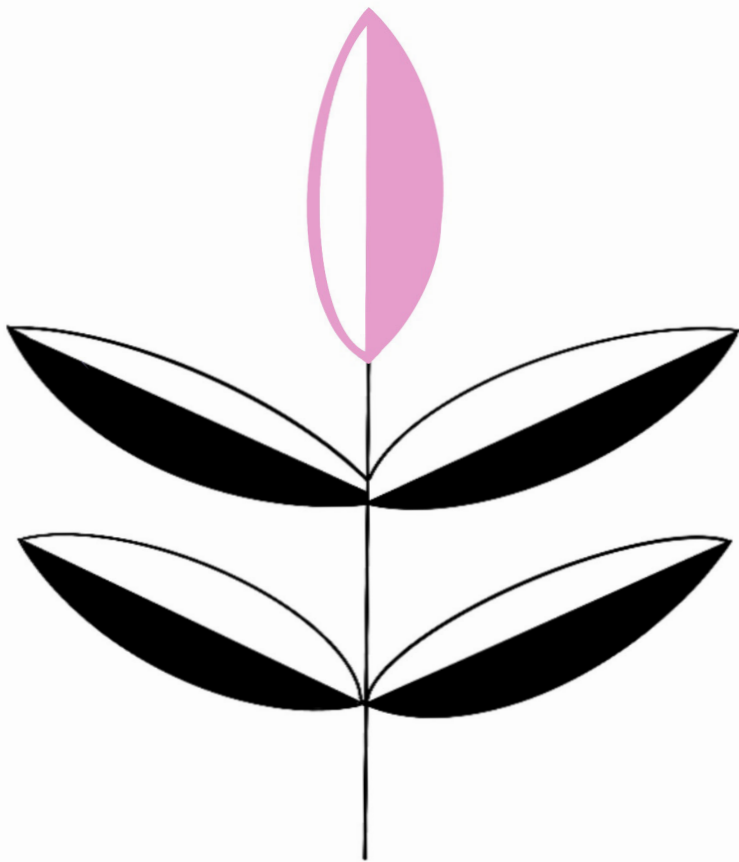
had to die to myself, alongside other amazing people, seeking to disciple people from The Free Store community. Many of these people we get for just a short time. As their health and wairua are restored through re-engaging with or discovering Jesus, they move on to employment, homes, or into leadership roles within The Free Store community. It makes the sacrifice worth it to see a person grow and flourish.

QUESTIONS

01 What stands out to you from Lynley's reflection?

02 Where are you growing in your faith at the moment? Who is close enough to notice this and for you to share?

03 To nurture something is to pay attention to it, recognise its needs and respond in love. Where do you see people who need nurturing in their faith? What is it that you could offer them?



SERVICE

TO RESPOND TO HUMAN NEED BY LOVING SERVICE

Sharon Williams
(Shannon Kai Hub)

“But you must defend those who are helpless and have no hope. Be fair and give justice to the poor and homeless.” Proverbs 31: 8 -9 (CEV)

Food insecurity is a very real issue in Shannon and this was further highlighted during lockdown.

In April 2020, a member of the community approached me with an idea that eventually became the Kai Hub.

The main kaupapa of the Kai Hub is around a free food store, with no criteria, so anyone can come in. It is also part of a hub

which includes the Helping Hands Community Network office which provides essentials like electric blankets, socks, and heaters during the winter; a free seed bank; and a cheap op shop. We also have a social space where people can come grab a cup of tea, a biscuit and sometimes morning tea.

There is a parallel process that happens at the Kai Hub. As people come and get free food they spend less on their grocery bill. This means, for example, that they could maybe afford to

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pay their child's touch rugby fees,
or put a new tyre on their car so
they can go and get a job.

Proverbs 31:8-9 is so fitting, as
for the Kai Hub, our aim is that
it will bring hope. By having
no criteria, it means that the
poorest and the richest person in
Shannon can come and receive.
We provide universally and that
takes away stigmatisation. That is
so important, as when we set up
the Kai Hub it was always about
the whole community. Everyone
can be a part of it, whether they
are customers or volunteers,
members or supporters; the Kai
Hub is for everybody.

QUESTIONS

01 When was a time in your life where someone shared a need with you and with God's help you were able to respond to this?

02 Is there a group of people or a person in your life at the moment who you feel called to serve in love? What does this cost you?

03 How do you keep your love refreshed so that your service can remain loving and not become obligatory?



TRANSFORM

**TO TRANSFORM UNJUST STRUCTURES
OF SOCIETY, TO CHALLENGE
VIOLENCE OF EVERY KIND AND
PURSUE PEACE AND RECONCILIATION**

Martin Robinson
(St David's & Naenae Urban Vision)

"During those many days the king of Egypt died, and the people of Israel groaned because of their slavery and cried out for help. Their cry for rescue from slavery came up to God. And God heard their groaning, and God remembered his covenant with Abraham, with Isaac, and with Jacob. God saw the people of Israel—and God knew." **Exodus 2:23-25 - God responds to Israel's Groaning (ESV)**

"The Word became flesh and blood, and moved into the neighbourhood. We saw the glory

with our own eyes, the one-of-a-kind glory, like Father, like Son, Generous inside and out, true from start to finish." **John 1:14 (MSG)**

"You say you care about the poor? Then tell me, what are their names?" – Gustavo Gutierrez

Because of the size and scope of this Mark of Mission, one initial thought is that it begins with a desire to be present, to relocate, to move into the neighbourhood and become a neighbour. This is a powerful, humbling spiritual act in itself.

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With this obedient act, we then have some chance of hearing the voices and knowing the names of those who are suffering under the burden of injustice. Only then will we get close enough to know what is going on for people and hear the specific invitation of Jesus in the midst of it, instead of abstractly theorising from a safe distance and purporting to speak for those we don't know.

The ultimate example of this is Jesus Christ, but there was powerful precedent in the Old Testament. We see this succinctly expressed at the end of Exodus chapter 2. In most English translations, the last line is softened and the meaning trivialised. In the Hebrew,

however, the words create a downward ladder of deep identification with the pain of God's beautiful human creation. To say "God knew", is to say God experienced their pain exactly as God's own pain and suffering.

The text summarises an intense period of many years. The cry of the people went up. God 'heard'. God 'remembered', and then - God 'knew'. What did God 'know'?

The Hebrew word used there is used only twice in the entire Old Testament. The first usage was for Adam "knowing" Eve. An act of physical, spiritual intimacy and one-ness. This is the meaning in the Exodus passage too: that God so deeply identified with his

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people that God one with them in their pain and suffering. Their oppression was God's own oppression and suffering. A supreme example of compassion, that sparked a series of events leading to freedom from slavery and becoming a new people.

If we desire to transform unjust structures, this initial step of presence can't be bypassed. We must be informed through genuine relationships with those that suffer. Our first step is to move into the neighbourhood – to look, listen, remember and know. And knowing will inform our next steps.

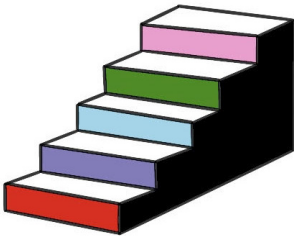
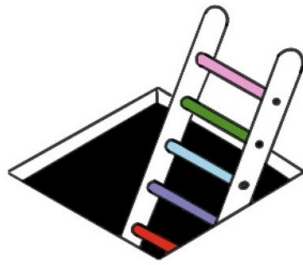
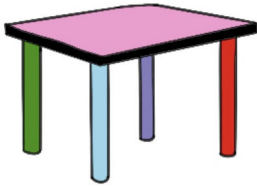
QUESTIONS

01 What stands out to you from this reflection?

02 How does this reflection on a God who chooses to suffer our pain challenge your idea of what it means to follow Jesus?

03 Whose suffering and injustice have you been present to? How is God empowering you to respond to this?

**CHOOSE YOUR OWN IMAGE TO
REMEMBER THE 5 MARKS OF
MISSION**





PROCLAIM

TO PROCLAIM THE GOOD NEWS OF THE KINGDOM

Sophie Sylvester
(St Tom's Newtown Wings team)

“No one has ever seen God; but if we love one another, God lives in us and his love is made complete in us.” 1 John 4:12

We believe that God is speaking to people who aren't in church contexts and He wants us to meet them - so we take our Jesus community on the road and head to places we think they might be. At St Tom's, we have a team who travel around with their families in house buses (and other mobile homes). We go where people are spiritually open, like festivals and

freedom camping sites. These are places where people have time to be curious, connect and time to be prayed for. It's also easier to park the buses there!

We share meals, hold a rhythm of prayer and worship, share looking after each other's kids and have fun together; we are simply ourselves together in a space where people can see and join us. They enter into the abundance we have of sharing God's love as a community. There's this thing that Mark Johnson says about

PROCLAIM

our community: “If we go on the road and love each other, people will see God.” That has been our experience.

We connect with our neighbours – as you do when you’re at a festival or freedom camping. When we talk, we aren’t shy about who we are or our belief that God is good and wants to connect with people. If a pastoral need comes up, we ask, “Would you like us to pray for you?”

If I offer prayer, I say something like:

“When we pray we ask God how He wants us to pray and what He wants to say. Often words, pictures or scripture verses come to mind. And so, we’ll say them. Our aim is to encourage; we know God is for you.”

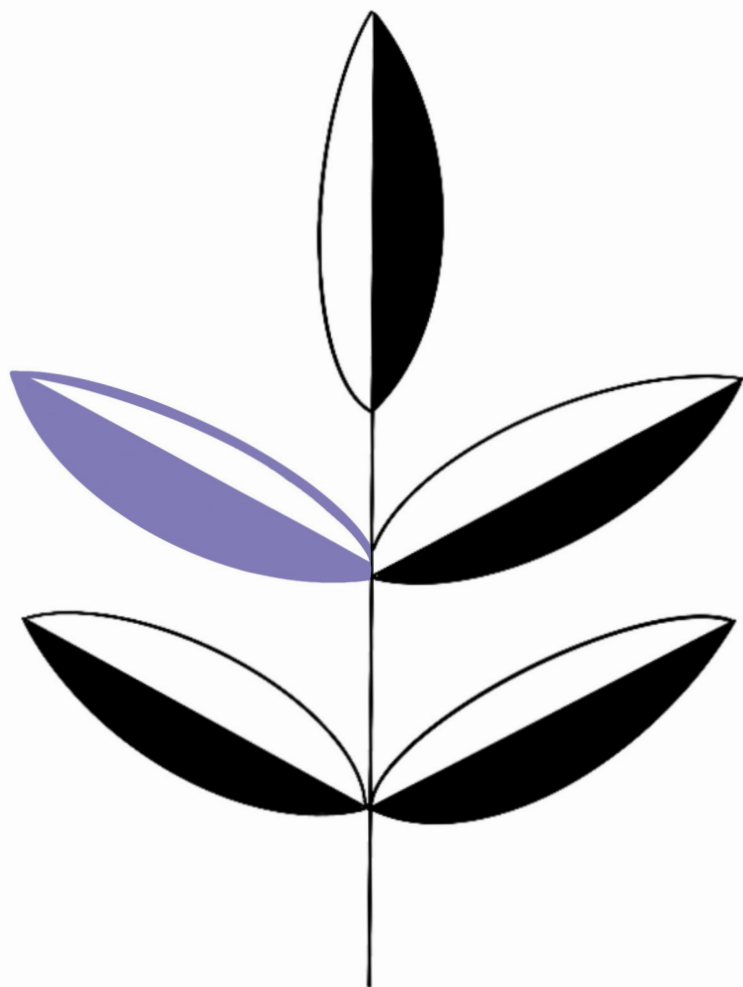
Sometimes people are connected to God, and are searching for more. Some people have beautiful prayer lives, and are really interested in Jesus, but never heard how he might be part of the picture. Or they want a spiritual community but have found ‘church culture’ alienating. Other times people didn’t even know they were looking for God - but they discover they’re known by God and that God wants to connect with them. They find they really want to connect with Him too! Any aspect of God that people encounter is good news. God is so good.

QUESTIONS

01 Sophie's experience is that there are a number of ways the good news is proclaimed. How many different ways can you see people experiencing God through this story?

02 Where are there spiritually open people in your life who you could offer to pray for?

03 How have you participated in proclaiming the good news? How could you grow in this?



CARE FOR CREATION

TO STRIVE TO SAFEGUARD THE INTEGRITY OF CREATION, AND SUSTAIN AND RENEW THE LIFE OF THE EARTH

Hannah Borer
(Shannon Urban Vision)

“If only my head were a pool of water and my eyes a fountain of tears, I would weep day and night...” **Jeremiah 9:1**

We live in a small, land-based community that explores alternatives in housing, sustainable food production and restoring biodiversity in Shannon, Horowhenua. As I reflect on this Mark of Mission in relation to our life here, I think about three gifts:

Moving here was a result of the first gift, what theologian Ellen

F. Davis describes as the pain of seeing. I began to increasingly experience moments of sorrow as we learnt more about the food industry in climate change, water and soil degradation, and its impact on the poor. I would find myself in the supermarket, suddenly overwhelmed and wanting to weep. Davis says “that it is a moment of grace ... when we are staggered”. To love God is to love his world, and as I write I am aware where I have grown numb and need the pain of seeing, of lamenting, again.

CARE FOR CREATION

The second is the gift of shared mahi. I have come to love soil and the effort it takes to work it. I have learnt to better appreciate life at work in the soil, to count worms, to not startle at a spider. As we work and feel tiredness, we also feel more alive, we take notice of small things, and find joy. We find joy when we discover a frog; when the first flower blossoms on a fruit tree; when we see kererū come.

The third is the gift of others. By living, working, growing food and eating it together, we form an alternative to the farming practices and models of land ownership around us.

We still have a long way to go as we explore what it means to be kaitiaki for a time. I find myself so grateful for the community as we seek to respond together and wait in hope.

QUESTIONS

- 01** What environmental place, space or issue weighs on your heart? Where have you experienced ‘the pain of seeing’?

- 02** Have you practiced lament? Have you ever thought of seeing and lament as a gift?

- 03** The second and third gift in this reflection point to a sharing of the load. The load of work and of having resources to live by. How could you share life with others in a way that safeguards the environment? What steps can you take to move towards this?



TEACH

TO TEACH, BAPTISE AND NURTURE NEW BELIEVERS

Chris Dodds
(Miramar/Seatoun Parish)

“You however, know all about my teaching, my way of life, my purpose, faith, patience, love, endurance, persecutions, sufferings - what kind of things happened to me in Antioch, Iconium and Lystra, the persecutions I endured. Yet the Lord rescued me from all of them.” 2 Timothy 3:10-11

The Apostle Paul gives us a great model of the call to teach, baptise and nurture believers. In a culture that loves basically anything except God (3:1-9), and in spite

of real persecution and suffering (3:12-13) Paul exhorts Timothy to be faithful to his calling to make disciples of Jesus. How will he do that? By remembering three aspects of his discipleship:

1. Paul’s teaching (v10a),
2. Paul’s way of life as an example: *“my purpose, faith, patience, love, endurance, persecutions and sufferings”* (vv10-11) and,
3. Paul’s testimony and encouragement - that God rescued him from all of these

TEACH

these persecutions and suffering (v11b).

All are important, but I want to give a special shout out to the first one. In verse 16 Paul writes that: *“All scripture is “God-breathed” and useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.”* (3:16-17)

He’s drawing on creation imagery from Genesis. The word of God, is breathed by the Spirit of God, into the servant of God, in order to bring about the good work of God. It should come as no surprise then, that the new creation breaks forth in our lives through the same ways - Word and Spirit. Amidst all of the voices, and messages I’m bombarded with each day

telling me how to find true life, I want to hear from God, and to encounter God’s power to bring new creation. I want the same for those I’m teaching and nurturing. Scripture plays the central role in that.

Note that in Genesis, the word of God is immediately countered by the adversary, who asks, “Did God really say that?” Paul picks this up when he tells Timothy that people will suit their own desires and turn their ears away from truth, and so he finishes with this exhortation:

“Finally, in the presence of God and Christ Jesus, who will judge the living and the dead, and in view of his appearing, *“Preach the word!”... “correct, rebuke and encourage with great patience and careful instruction.”* (4:1-2)

QUESTIONS

01 What is the role of scripture in your life?

02 What would it look like for scripture to be the basis for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training those you are nurturing?

03 How could you incorporate the reading of scripture in the groups you are currently serving alongside and eating with?

