

December 2022

SOUTHERN HEADLINES

Southern Presbyterians Newsletter

Meri Kirihimete and welcome to the final newsletter from Southern Presbyterians for 2022. This month we have an introduction from the new moderator of Southern Presbytery, James Watt, an update from SPRAG as well as some other notices.

Have a wonderful Christmas.
If you have any design related questions, don't hesitate to ask, or if you have a story, article, or advertisement you would like to share, please contact Gabe at office@southernpresbyterians.co.nz.

Reflections on Christmas

James Watt

The old man often forgot the names of his grandchildren and even his faithful dog. But he never forgot the night Jesus was born. When the sky lit up brighter than aurora Australis over the Hokonui, music soared higher than the spire of First Church, completely overwhelming him (even his tinnitus) and great awe filled the universe, his soul, and warmed his freezing feet (apologies Luke 2:8).

Can you remember when the Great Mystery of God broke through into your life? It was probably unexpected and you weren't quite sure if the Good News was really true. I believe that God speaks into all our lives. It is always a challenge to listen, and say "Yes Lord" to an unseen presence. That momentary clarity of understanding/purpose/peace, words and experience sharp and defining.

A mature woman and a teenage girl had such happen to them two thousand years ago, troubling and concerning choices, yet the Angel said "do not be afraid". Elizabeth said "yes", Mary said "yes" and the world has been changed ever since.

Jesus said "come to me and you will receive life in full abundance for I am the Way, the Truth and the Life."

God is good. May you find and share the real story of Christmas in your homes and churches, bringing blessings, hope and joy.

In 2023 I hope to visit the far flung parishes from the Hawkduns to the Takitimus, on our river plains of the Waitaki, Clutha/Mata Au, Taieri, Maitara, Oreti, Aparima, Waiau, to Rakiura and our cities encompassing our great Southern Presbytery.

May God bless you. Ma Ihowa koe e manaaki.
From the shepherd over the hill

James Watt
Bannockburn



Spiritual Renewal And Growth

We want to see the church alive and effective, and we believe we can help each other with that. There are people within our presbytery who have areas of interest and expertise that fall within the scope of spiritual renewal and growth. Many are willing to help other churches. If your church would like someone to lead an elders' retreat or a workshop or preach on a particular topic, there is probably someone willing to help.

On our [website](#), there is a page listing some [topics and leaders](#). This is just a beginning and we hope to expand it but at the moment we have our Presbytery/

Synod staff, some spiritual directors and some of the SPRAG team. You can scan through or use the filters at the top. For example, you can find who is offering a workshop (Event type filter) on prayer (Topics filter), or who can help you with youth ministry or children's ministry or help you discover your vision.

We are simply making this information available. If you are interested in what a person can offer, please contact that person.

There are all sorts of possibilities. Let's work together to grow God's Kingdom.

Photos from the Induction of James Watt

by Robert Robati-Mani



Upcoming Events

Pause.

This can be a hectic time.


We can get so busy we lose track of who we are, and what matters most to us.

Advent might be what you need.

How about 15 minutes a day when you don't have to do anything, or be anyone? That's what we're offering - so you can be at your best for those you love and the things you care about.



Nov 28 - Dec 23
Weekdays 12-12:15pm
Space, Poetry, Music,
Prayer, Mindfulness.
Led by Rev Malcolm Gordon

 First Church of Otago

Pause - First Church



**Spirituality
of Music night**



Silent Retreat

Vacancies and News

**Got questions
about life?**

#TryAlpha
alphaspz.nz

Eat, listen, discuss, a new journey awaits

Alpha



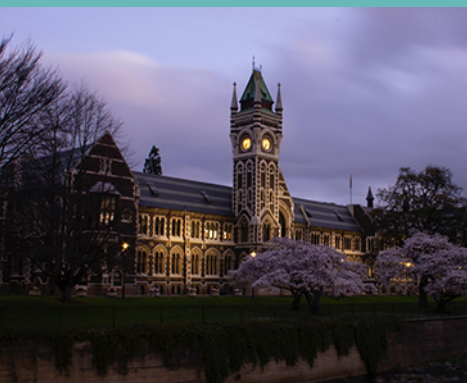
Vacancy - Alpha NZ



**Vacancy -
Calvin Youth Gore**



**Vacancy -
Cromwell and Districts**



**Vacancy - Otago
University**



**MODERATOR'S
CHRISTMAS APPEAL:
OHOPE MARAE**



Moderator's Christmas Appeal for Ōhope Marae



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