



Kaurihohore Historic Church

P O Box 4118, Kamo, Whangarei 0141



Kaurihohore / Kamo Co-operating Parish

Sunday 16 February – Epiphany 6

The service this morning is led by Eleanor Ashby, one of our Lay Preachers

Welcome to our service this morning.

In working together on our shared mission, we commit to seven core values:

Togetherness, Humility, Curiosity, Love, Inclusiveness, Justice, Sustainability.

Justice: we hope for a better world for all and work together to be part of making that happen.

Welcome

Call to Worship

Happy are we

when our treasures cannot be quantified.

Happy are we

when our knowledge is tempered by mystery.

Happy are we

when our pain is held in the balm of love.

Happy are we

when our delight comes from beyond ourselves.

Let us worship God.

Opening Prayer (inspired by Luke 6:17-26)

Compassionate God,

we recognize that our world is a broken place, hurt by poverty, famine and disease.

We admit that sometimes we make the world a broken place, tolerating prejudice, conflict and self-interest.

We confess that our hearts also suffer with anger, resentment and jealousy.

Renew us in Your love, O God,

and heal us with the comfort of Your abundant love.

Awaken us to the role we can play in healing Your creation.

Strengthen us through the power of the Holy Spirit

to hear Your word and move forward in faith. Amen.

[Hymn: All my hope on God is founded](#)

Psalm 1:

Happy is the person who does not follow the advice of the wicked

nor take the way of sinners,

nor sit amongst the scornful.

His or her delight is in the teaching of the LORD,

meditating on it day and night

Such a person is like a single tree,

planted in the midst of a vast irrigation system;

it bears fruit in its right time,

and its leaves never wither.

And their every endeavour is successful.

This is not how it is for the wicked;

rather, they are like chaff which the wind scatters.

And so, the wicked shall not stand in the judgement (place),

nor the sinners in the assembly of the godly;

for the LORD watches over the way of the godly person,

but the way of the wicked shall pass away.

Prayer of Centering and Renewal:

God of life and of truth,

Your Son invites us to see the world through your eyes and we find ourselves disoriented:

You bless the poor, You bless the meek, You bless the pure in heart.

You turn our world and its values upside down.

We have signed on to follow your Son but this is strange territory.

It doesn't look anything like the life we have been taught to yearn for, to work for, to believe will bring us happiness.

Yet, You know the despair that besets so many of our young people who fear that their future has been mortgaged by our greed and carelessness.

You hear the cries of those who have traded their souls for power and money and now have emptiness as a friend.

You see those who are caught in lives that lead only to weariness and anxiety.

Set us at Jesus' feet so we can learn to judge our lives differently.

Awaken in us that hunger and thirst for you which will lead us to your will and your peace.

Open our eyes to see your unexpected blessings.

Open our hearts to welcome you when you come to us in strange ways.

Then make us into a community of blessedness that beckons this neighbourhood into your joy.

We ask these things in the name of Jesus who blesses us with your living presence and fills our lives with your life-changing truth. **Amen.**

Reading: Luke 6: 17-26

Hymn: [Will you come and follow me](#)

Reflection: "Out of Order"

Now why might I be wearing an "Out of Order" sign around my neck?

Maybe my doctor wants me to wear it because I'm sick. Or a psychiatrist wants me to wear it because I'm crazy. Or maybe I just put it on this morning at breakfast to warn David I got up on the wrong side of the bed.

Or maybe I could put it on David when he's feeling grumpy.

Normally such a sign signals to us that something is broken... doesn't it. Like a coke machine... or an ATM...or a petrol pump...when you're almost out of fuel I could hang this sign on the door of our house to warn people who might drop by that our house is out of order. And hey...don't we hear people say 'put your own house in order, before you start giving me advice'?

Or how it would be if couples had to wear signs like this when their relationship was out of order? Or whole families were running around wearing these signs if they weren't getting along?

Or maybe there could be an international law that required countries to warn travellers as they entered customs at airports that their country was out of order because of civil unrest, or war...or a widening gap between rich and poor.

Or maybe when astronauts were viewing the whole earth from space...maybe there was a giant out of order flag that could be seen from the moon...because humanity's relationship with nature is out of order.

Biblically people always seem to put their house in order before they die....

Like in the book of Samuel when a character called Ahithophel discovers King David hasn't followed his advice...he saddles his donkey... sets out to put his house in order... and then hangs himself.

And in Kings as well as in Isaiah we read "This is what the LORD says: Put your house in order, because you are going to die; you will not recover."

It's not a good idea to quit this earth with your junk out of order...better get it back into some order before it's too late... to do anything about it.

Right through the season of Epiphany, we've been reminded how Israel's covenant relationship with God was out of order, how they ignored their calling from God to be a light for the world.

and we've been learning how Jesus understood his identity as taking Israel's mantle onto himself...to be a light for the world...and how he saw his followers taking on the mantle of Israel...calling them...calling us... to be salt and light... city and lamp...for the world... as people of a new covenant.

God had chosen Israel for her task because humanity's relationships were out of order with God, with each other and with nature. Read about it in Genesis, right through the poetry and wisdom books to the writings of the prophets...since the Garden of Eden our relationships were out of order

The flood was supposed to put things right...the law was supposed to put things right. But it didn't work.

People still worshipped idols. People still loved power and money more than God.

Marriages still broke down, families continued to disintegrate, senseless killing still occurred.

Nations still went to war... whole forests were destroyed to build battleships and palaces for the wealthy and powerful. Whole waterways were polluted with the waste of ritual and greed and over populated cities.

The Hebrew people, once freed from slavery in Egypt, were enslaved by their own king, to build his Temple.

Israel had been called to be God's instrument in putting all this right but Israel had got sucked in to the disorder, ignoring God's call. Sound familiar?

So there on that mountainside outside Jerusalem...after exile and destruction and occupation...at the time of the great Roman Empire, the cult of Caesar and the corruption of the second temple, Jesus calls his followers to take on Israel's task to be a new Israel, people of a new covenant.

And he teaches them...teaches the way...teaches us how to restore all these disordered relationships, how to put things right with God, with ourselves, with other people and with nature.

In his sermon on the mount Jesus teaches us step by step how to put things right ...how to bring reconciliation and healing to the world...how to be a light.

Step 1 we realise we aren't God after all and there are some things we can't control.

Step 2. we admit we messed up and can't make it right on our own.

Step 3 we accept we need forgiveness for the disorder we've caused in our relationships with God, with our self and others and with nature.

Taking these three steps puts our relationship with God back in order because God's grace has been available all the time.

We can now put our relationship with ourselves in order by forgiving ourselves.

As forgiven people we can forgive others and ask for their forgiveness... and love them even when they won't, remembering they're not God either.

We become willing to make restitution, to put things right, to reverse the disorder we've caused in our relationships. Or the disorder our community our nation or our race has caused, in the name of greed and growth and wealth and power.

Whether the disorder is in our relationship with God, with ourselves, with other people or with nature...the steps are the same...and each one is expressed eloquently in Each Jesus' Sermon on the Mount...in the blessings we call the beatitudes...

"Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Realise you're

not God.

Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted...trust that God can help you...Blessed are the meek for they will inherit the earth. Face the facts about the disorder you've caused

Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God. Confess what you've done...

Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for right relationships, for they will be filled. Work to put things right in all your relationships

Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy.

Forgive and seek forgiveness...

Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.

As the prophet said, It's not a good idea to quit this earth with your house out of order. Better to get it sorted before it's too late.

Over this next week why don't you look at your relationship with God, with yourself, with other people whether close by or far away, and your relationship with nature. In the days ahead, may you practice what you've learned from Jesus, and may we follow Jesus as a people of the new covenant in the years ahead... because the story isn't over and the family isn't complete.

[Hymn: Take my life and let it be](#)

Offertory Prayer:

Benevolent God,

**you see those who are hungry, poor and marginalized,
who too often we overlook.**

**You recognize their humanity and their suffering, and promise to overthrow
the rejection they encounter in our world.**

Help us be part of that transformation.

Take our gifts to feed the hungry and sustain the poor.

Multiply our gifts to erase the margins of our society, embracing us all in

Your inclusive love. Amen.

[Hymn: Rejoice the Lord is king](#)

Blessing: So now we leave this space of worship

And while so much of the road ahead is uncertain,

the path constantly changing, we know some things that are as solid and sure as
the ground beneath our feet, and the sky above our heads.

We know God is love.

We know Christ's light endures.
We know the Holy Spirit this there,
found in the space between all things, closer to us than our next breath,
binding us to each other, until we meet we again,
Go in peace.
Threefold Amen