

Care for God's Creation **in Action**

Chartwell Church's Annual Fair - Erica Harris

The annual Church Fair is a social service that provides tidy goods at very reasonable prices to the economically disadvantaged in our city. It is eagerly anticipated and provides a wonderful opportunity to connect with the wider community and to strengthen relationships within our faith community.



But have you ever thought that the Fair also has an environmental focus? It helps to lessen the load on our planet by extending the lifespan of goods that would often go to landfill. Many of the goods are not suitable for second

hand traders nor for op shops, but are just right for what is effectively a giant garage sale with extras. The locally-grown plants and vegetable seedlings on the Plant Stall mean that people are lessening the travel miles associated with their purchases.

I think it is wonderful that one event can contribute in so many different ways. The same goes for our annual Book Sale. It is great to see families buying children's books in great condition for such a small investment.

Chartwell Church's Mission Table – Carol Webb

Away back around the turn of the century, Margaret Clarke (who was then a member of our congregation) began the mission table simply so that members with a surplus of produce could share with other members of the congregation after the Sunday service.

Before long it was felt that we could share not only with fellow members, but also with others beyond us who had greater needs and so the idea of a Mission Table was developed. A voluntary koha from the members of the congregation who took the

produce, cut flowers and plants raised funds weekly.

The Parish provides financial support from its annual budget to the mission work of each of our three parent churches and the money received from the table is used to supplement these grants with special contributions made to particular projects.

Over the years gifts have been made to mission work in many locations, including an Anglican school in Tonga and another in Fiji, a school and hospital supported by Methodists in Solomon Islands and, of course, the work that we undertook to build a preschool for the Presbyterian Church of Vanuatu. More recently donations have been made to CWS for refugees and those suffering the effect of Covid.

Today, thanks to the contributions of produce, cut flowers and plants, (with the bulk of the seedlings provided by Trevor Bennett) and the purchases made by our people, we are able to widely share our excess produce as well as raise money for mission support. Unsold produce from our mission table each week is placed in the Paataka Kai for the benefit of the local community.

Kidz Korner Toy Library - Amie Matthews-Whenuaroa.

A Toy Library is a place where parents or carers can come to borrow a large variety of quality toys, puzzles and games on a regular basis. It's basically like having an (almost) free shop where you can just grab whatever toys you like, play with them and then bring them back and start over. It's like Christmas every two weeks!

Toys are the tools of play that help children develop their social awareness, imagination, visual motor capabilities and thinking processes. Play is a very serious activity for children and often represents a primary and valuable means of learning. Quality toys can be expensive; children quickly become bored with a toy once its play value has been exhausted. By providing new play materials every week or two, parents can save money and significantly contribute towards the development and education of their children. In an age of low waste intentions and limited budgets, it's a way to reduce landfill waste from discarded toys and packaging.

For less than \$8 a month families can access toys that they otherwise might not be able to afford or would purchase an inferior version that ends up in landfill due to their short life span.

When toys are no longer suitable for loaning, they are sold either at the yearly toy sale or used as spare parts for toy repairs and replacement. Packaging and storage containers are reused and recycled when not long-term fit for use. Nothing goes to waste at Kidz Korner Toy Library.



We are hoping to get funding for selection of sustainable toys in the next 12 months. These are toys made from recycled materials and sustainable products. Some these photos of two of the toys on our wish list.



Solar Panels—Warwick Silvester and Jack Brinkman

It was an exceptionally generous offer from Jack Brinkman that got us started. “We need to go solar”, he said, “we need to show we understand the need to be carbon neutral, and we need to be seen to be a responsive community”. But solar panels are just the start as many other ideas and options have emerged. But yes, a solar array on the north facing façade of the church would show a strong message. There are limitations to being off the grid entirely as we use 2-3000 kWh/month in the three winter months, but certainly we could cover much of the power usage for the rest of the year. We are investigating prices, subsidies and are even wondering if a joint advertising statement from a supplier might soften the capital cost. We could save \$5-6000 per year while also feeding current back into the grid. We’ll keep you informed.

Fair Trade at Chartwell Church – Heather Kikkert

This year, following direction from the Chartwell Church Strategic Plan (Strategic Focus 7) to be "serving and transforming", we have moved to purchasing Fair Trade tea, coffee (instant and plunger), and sugar for our church facility.

While this does cost more, it can be considered as supporting an overseas mission that enables people to support their families, plus we can follow Jesus' teaching to love our (international) neighbours as ourselves.

Queenwood Fellowship & the Plant Stall - Judy Holdsworth

A small group of women from Queenwood Fellowship meet regularly to prepare plants for the Fair. We sow seeds – some saved by us and some commercial – take cuttings, and divide plants all to make healthy plants ready for the Fair. We grow vegetables, annuals, perennials, succulents, small shrubs and some natives.

This year at the click and collect plant sale we made \$4,000-00. After a short break we have started again to get ready for the January Fair.

We enjoy our time together and it is rewarding to be able to utilise plants from seeds and small cuttings and seedlings to make a profit for Chartwell Church and to be able to help in the community.



Pātaka Kai – Anna Casey-Cox and Heather Kikkert.

The Chartwell Church Pātaka Kai (community food pantry) located on Bellmont Ave, was born following a discussion in our Insight Service. The pātaka is part of the many ways Chartwell Church reaches out and connects with the community. Church members contribute with kai, seedlings and Go Eco supports, when possible, with the provision of rescued food.

Te Puna Kai o Waikato (check them out on Facebook) is a network of community kai projects supported by Go Eco and Hamilton City Council. Pātaka kai are located all



over Kirikiriroa Hamilton and are part of the network. Ioana Manu supports the network as part of her work at City Council.

In September, a group of Rototuna High School students contacted Ioana with their hopes to start and/or support a Pātaka Kai as part of a school project. Ioana connected with Heather and after a number of discussions and approval by the Parish Council, the students will be adding an extension to the current Pātaka Kai (see photo) and 'adopting' it.

The students plan to paint the pantry so it will show the name they've chosen: Mix 'n' Meal. This name reflects their plan to share recipes as well as food and the bird image reflects the Rototuna High School emblem.

It is good to have others in our community pick up some of the responsibility for the pantry. Look out for these exciting changes now we're in COVID Level 2!

Pukemokemoke Bush Reserve - Warwick Silvester

Several parishioners have been involved in the Pukemokemoke development at Tauhei, a 100-acre patch of lowland bush donated by David Johnstone.

Over the past 23 years the run-down animal and weed infested remnant has been restored. Intensive weed and predator control has been followed by the planting of over 8000 native plants. A gazebo and picnic shelter have been erected and over 500m of raised wooden walkway established to protect the kauri remnant from die back disease.

Enjoying the return of so much bird life has been a major bonus of the work out there, which has been enjoyed by many from the parish, both on working bees and walks. Pukemokemoke now stands as an outstanding example of lowland native forest.

I can think of at least a dozen parishioners who have materially contributed to this development, not the least of whom would be Alan Leadley, who gave his all to the project for five years and stands as a monument to his enthusiasm and drive. Alan's seat is a resting place for all in the kauri grove.

Light Bulb Brigade and Repair Café—Jock Crawford

RECYCLE—REPAIR—REPURPOSE—REDIRECT—REFURBISH—RECOVER—REBUILD

For some years Chartwell Church members have been interested in fixing and repairing stuff and restoring its usefulness. The Light Bulb Brigade was formed and a collection of new hand tools was paid for by a local charity to develop the concept. The catalyst was a bill for around \$130 to change a light bulb, presented to one of our parishioners by a local tradesman. Since that time the LBB has visited quite a few parishioners' homes to change bulbs, fix leaking taps, replace door locks, fix sliding doors, shower heads and so on and have had their efforts appreciated.

We are fortunate to have several people who have some particular skills and experience but increasingly onerous Health & Safety regulations nowadays curtail work that we are quite able to perform but no longer lawfully. This is particularly so with regard to fixing electrical appliances and such.



Those of us who have been involved with the Light Bulb Brigade have been impressed with the growth and interest shown in the Repair Café movement which is gaining strength throughout Australia and New Zealand and also Europe. Many readers will have been watching the TV Repair Café programme and can understand its popularity. Although we cannot hope to match the skills shown on that programme nevertheless we can muster some useful abilities at our Chartwell Repair Café, open for business in the afternoon of the first Saturday of each month in the hall foyer.

In addition to sharpening tools, repairing toys and mechanical oddities, repairing a number of old and valued books from children's treasures to more significant 19th Century volumes in a terrible state, there are scones and general natter at the times we are open. It will be interesting what developing demand there may be for the skills on offer and who may become involved. And new blood is needed – the octogenarians are not going for ever!

Go Eco - Anna Casey-Cox

Kia ora e te whaanau - I'm excited to be part of the conversations we are having about how our church can support our environment.

I work part-time at Go Eco (the Waikato Environment Centre) as the Learning and Development lead. This means that I support our staff with their projects along with our organisation's development. We are a Tangata Te Tiriti organisation and support the aspirations of mana whenua for the wellbeing of our environment. We run a food rescue programme called Kaivolution. Sometimes the rescued kai makes its way to our church Paataka on Bellmont Ave.

Go Eco supports a network of gully groups in Kirikiriroa and kai projects throughout the region through Te Puna Kai o Waikato. Catching rats and possums is also part of our mission - this work helps our forests to flourish.

All of our work is climate action. Our newly created Climate Action Hub, led by my amazing colleague Hannah Huggan, is a place where young people can connect and share their climate action projects. We are stronger when we act together, so building relationships is a core part of our work at Go Eco. I am excited about our journey at Chartwell Church and how Go Eco can support us!



*Planting fruit trees at Te Whare of te Ata
(Aaron, Shepherd and Anna)*

Gully Youth Restoration Group – Emily Cox

Kia ora! At the beginning of the year, I started a volunteer youth restoration group down in the Mangaiti gully. My passion for nature and my fascination with wildlife led me to the local gullies.

I loved to be down amongst nature once every week and knew that rehabilitating natural areas around New Zealand, even in cities, would help the climate. I wasn't aware of any other local youth restoration groups so, with a couple of friends, I started my own .



My group meets at the gully every Sunday for 1.5-2 hours. We plant plenty of trees, free the existing ones from weeds like honeysuckle and jump back terrified whenever some huge bug lands on one of our shoulders. We always make sure to have a good time and welcome anyone who's interested in coming along.

Issy and Emily - resting after weeding in Mangaiti Gully.

At work in the gully - Brian Ensor

I imagine it was not so long ago that the Mangaiti gully was a piece of somebody's farm. The fence posts are still there though many are lying down with age, the fencing wire still joining them, running through the mud, tangling up the trees. The skulls and bones of sheep are still visible in places. More recently the gully has been somebody's (anybody's) dump. A lot of bricks and the garden waste and plastic bottles.

And over the top of all that has come the blackberry and the vines and the willows. Such enthusiastic plants. We can guess what it was like when Ngāti Wairere were in charge. The eels in the creek are still there, the kōkopu and others are still seen, not so much the koura. There will have been mature bush of course; there are no elderly native trees at all now. When I "discovered" the gully I spent some time uncovering the humps of weeds/vines/grass to find that under them there were kahikatea and ti trees and manuka, that were planted but covered and strangled. Our neighbour Jim, two over, had done a lot of planting and the bush below his place was looking quite good. Below ours, it was a mess and it needed somebody to be on the side of the young trees. I found the best way to do it, to keep it under some control, was to mow it. I do not know if this



June 2018 - BEFORE



Nov 2021 - NOW

is good or bad but it does allow the planted trees to come away and keeps the weeds down. There are a lot of kahikatea, totara and manuka, less miro, matai, kowhai, rewarewa, rimu and the rest. Where there is regenerating bush, where the adolescent trees and ferns are growing, the best game is 'Find the Vine Root', tracing vines back to their headquarters underground, digging them out and rescuing the tree.

The strategy for the creek is not so clear. Putting grasses along the edge to make it more sheltered and less vulnerable to eroding seems a good idea. Getting the blackberry out of it also stops it being choked and I imagine more accesible for creatures that do not like being spiked. It is extraordinary the size and number of eels that call it home and rather less fat kōkopu, with their nerves of steel, living in between the eels.

I have not done a lot of planting other than banging in trees that Jim has provided me with, often via the City Council. My primary strategy is that the bush wants to grow back and will grow back, so long as the smothering effects of blackberry and honey-suckle are mitigated.

The City Council are putting a track through this year, and will be doing more planting. I will continue to keep the bad plants at bay and let the plants that have always called it home, flourish.

Roadside Warrior — Becky O'Leary

When I was little, we were driving down the road near where we live, and mum saw a mother duck and her ducklings by the drain. She stopped in the next driveway and we walked back to see them. Mum had told me about not littering and how it was bad for the environment and the local wildlife. When we were walking to see the ducklings, I saw lots of rubbish and was worried about the ducklings, so mum got a bag from the car and we picked up all the rubbish near them. As well as ducks we often see pukeko, pheasants, hawks and turkeys on the side of the road near our house. Since then, every time we go for a walk, we take a big black rubbish bag. We walk until it's about half full and then turn around and walk back the other side so it's full when we get home. One time it got too heavy for mum, and she called dad to come get us and the rubbish bag! I can't believe how many people think it's okay to throw out rubbish on the side of the road! Please everyone, keep your rubbish in your car till you get home and recycle it if you can, so our wildlife can be safe.