

TODAY'S SERVICE

P I C T O N Baptist Church



(Photo credit: <https://www.google.co.nz/>)

"This mystery is that through the gospel the Gentiles are heirs together with Israel, members together of one body, and sharers together in the promise in Christ Jesus."
Ephesians 3:6

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Pastor: *Deo Vistar*, PhD

*Opening Songs All together
My Lighthouse
The Same Power

Welcome/Notices Bill Pettigrew

Offering All together

Offertory Music Ian Stewart

*Singing All together
Here is Love

Communion Led by Pene Sarjeant

*Singing All together
Your Grace is Enough
High Above

Message Deo
"The Great Mystery of the Gospel"
Ephesians 3:1–13

*Closing Song All together
Great and Mighty King

Prayer & Benediction Deo Vistar

*Praise Team: Garry Stanley (leading), Jonathan Duffy (guitar), Bronwyn Duffy (keyboard), Georgine & Mihi Raj (singers), Lynette Stanley (projector), Andy Baldwin (sound)

- ✳ If you have any questions or need help, please ask one of the welcomers who will be happy to help you.
- ✳ If you would like prayer after the service today, ask the people around you or come to the front and someone will pray for you.
- ✳ We invite you to stay for a cup of tea after the service.

PASTORAL NOTES

Kia ora! Welcome to our worship this morning. If you are a first-time guest, I encourage you to fill out a blue visitor card and hand it to the welcomers or drop it in one of the offering bags.

As we have come together to worship God, I am reminded of A. W. Tozer's statement, "I can safely say, on the authority of all that is revealed in the Word of God, that any man or woman on this earth who is bored and turned off by worship is not ready for heaven." The words of Psalm 84:10 also come to mind: "Better is one day in your courts than a thousand elsewhere." The greatest offering that we can give to

the Lord this morning is the offering of our lives. Let's give Him our ALL.

Pray for the Lord's comfort upon the Ohia family as Linda's mother-in-law went home to be with the Lord this week (in Tauranga).

Starting this coming May and in the interim Carol Tapp will be coordinating the Children's Ministry as Guan prepares to welcome her second baby (due to arrive on 14th May).

This morning we're reflecting on Ephesians 3:1–13 where Paul talks about the mystery of the gospel. Not that the gospel is impossible to understand. For after all the gospel is simple (although it is also very profound): sinners may now be reconciled to God through Christ. But the mystery that Paul is talking about in Ephesians 3 is the admission of Gentiles into the one people of God. This was a mystery because the Jews never thought that Gentiles would be accepted as God's people to be granted with same rights and privileges as them. The Jews thought that they were God's chosen people, and if Gentiles were to be blessed, that blessing nonetheless would not blur the distinction between Jews and Gentiles. The mystery is that, according to Paul, that distinction has been eliminated. He says in verse 6: "This mystery is that through the gospel the Gentiles are heirs together with Israel, members together of one body, and sharers together in the promise in Christ Jesus."

In Galatians 3:26–28 Paul writes: "You are all children of God through faith in Christ Jesus, for all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. *There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male or female, for you are all one in Christ.*"

So in Ephesians 3 we see who we are as God's people accepted in Christ, possessing all the privileges and blessings that God desires for His children. But we also see the dedication of Paul to the

gospel – at the time of writing he was languishing in a Roman prison because of his evangelistic ministry. We share in that ministry too. Let us be found faithful in that task.



PRAY FOR THE PERSECUTED CHURCH IN MYANMAR (BURMA)

From *The Barnabas Fund* 2018
barnabasfund.org

Ethnic Burman identity is closely linked to Buddhism in this 87% Buddhist nation. The connection can be traced back to colonial era, when a nationalist motto called on Burmans to protect their race, language and religion. Most of Myanmar's Christians come from non-Burman ethnic minorities, such as the Naga, Chin, Karen and Kachin. Christianity is portrayed as foreign religion, even though there have been Christians since the late 1700s.

Although Christians have secured key positions in Aung San Suu Kyi's government, the military – which retains considerable power – continues to brutally repress minority groups, including both Christians and Muslims. There is intimidation and violence against Christians, forced relocation and desecration of Christian cemeteries, and there are attacks on church buildings. Christians are forcibly converted to Buddhism, while Buddhists who choose to follow Christ are persecuted.

Children in ethnic minority Christian communities are offered free education at Na Ta La Buddhist schools. Students who accept are not allowed to attend church and must learn and practise Buddhism. Upon graduating, they are guaranteed a government job as long as they officially convert to Buddhism, including having their new religion recorded on their national ID cards.

The mainly Christian Kachin people have suffered greatly, including desecration of their churches and many grave human rights violations, including sexual violence. Over 120,000 have been displaced from their homes and most of them now live a miserable and vulnerable existence in camps.

Lift up in prayer the many displaced Kachin Christians, and others from ethnic minorities, who have experienced horrific treatment at the hands of the military. Pray that they will remain strong in the Lord as they face great hardship. Pray that progress of democracy in Myanmar, so fettered in the world's press, will lead to true religious freedom for all.

NOTICES

Combined Worship on the 29th

Mark the date 29th April 6pm in your calendar as we will be hosting and leading the combined service in Picton, the first for this year.

Stay Connected this Week!

See below for the home groups (Bible study groups) that are on this week. Stu's group (Tue 7pm) will be meeting at Kelvin and Carol's place this week, and Deo's group (Thu 7pm) will be meeting at church in the interim (starting this week).

This Week's Events at a Glance

Tuesday 10am	Home group (Bible study) at 90 Linden's Road	Contact Deo at 5736315
Tuesday 7pm	To be held at Kelvin & Carol's home	Contact them at 5735262
Tuesday 7pm	Home group at 90 Lindens Road	Contact Pene at 5737785
Wednesday 6pm	Youth group in the Church Hall	Contact Mary at 5735499
Thursday 7pm	Home group (Bible study) at church	Contact Deo at 5736315
Sunday 9:30am	Prayer meeting in the Children's Ministry Room	Contact Steve Lavers at 021 0235 5728
Sunday 10am	Church Service	Contact Deo at 5736315
Sunday 10:30am	<i>Sunday Friends</i> (Children's Ministry)*	Contact Guan at 022 1642 782

*Except on the last Sunday of each month

Prayer Chain

If you have any prayer item for the prayer chain please phone Judith Dodge at 5739245.

Hosting

1 Apr Bill & Mary Pettigrew
8 Apr D Le Heux & Pettigrews (Communion)
15 Apr Bill & Mary Pettigrew
22 Apr A Woolf & L Price (Communion)
29 Apr L Young & N Davis

Children's Church Teaching

1 Apr Guan Vistar
8 Apr Linda Price
15 Apr Carol Tapp
22 Apr Guan Vistar
29 Apr Family worship

Note: There will be no *Sunday Friends* session on the last Sunday of each month, as we would like to provide an opportunity for children to worship with their parents.

Music & Sound

1 Apr: Guan Vistar (leading), Judith Stretton (singer), Te Mara Riwaka (projector), Steve Lavers (sound)

8 Apr: Allison Le Heux (leading), Johannes Hacker (guitar), Graham Galbraith (keyboard), Gwenda Galbraith (singer), Judith Stretton (singer), Mihi Raj (projector)

15 Apr: Allison Le Heux (leading), Graham Galbraith, Kirsty Baldwin (singer), Pare Raj (singer), Gyllian Macdonald (projector), Steve Lavers (sound)

22 Apr: Garry Stanley (leading), Jonathan Duffy (guitar), Bronwyn Duffy (keyboard), Georgine & Mihi Raj (singers), Lynette Stanley (projector), Andy Baldwin (sound)

29 Apr: Guan Vistar, Ana Woolf (keyboard), Pare and Mihi Raj (singers), Lynette Stanley (projector), Andy Baldwin (sound)

*If the date doesn't suit please arrange a swap with others on the roster.

ROSTERS*