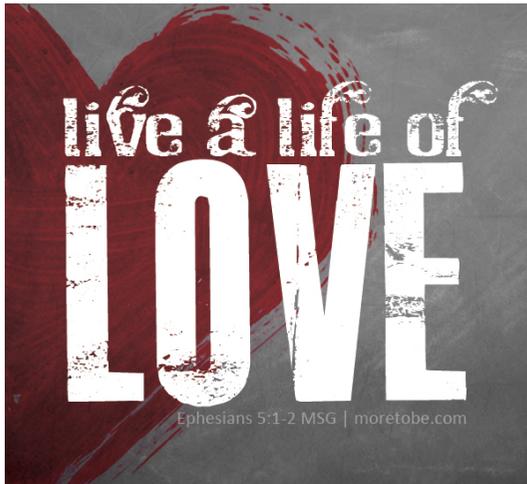




P I C T O N Baptist Church

“Be imitators of God, therefore, as dearly loved children, and live a life of love, just as Christ loved us and gave Himself up as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.”
Ephesians 5:1-2



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Pastor: *Deo Vistar*, PhD

TODAY'S SERVICE

*Opening Songs..... All together
I Worship You Almighty God
My Life Is In You Lord
Welcome & Notices..... Pene Sarjeant
Offering All together
*Singing..... All together
How Great Is Our God
How Great Thou Art
Communion..... Led by Steve Lavers
*Singing..... All together
How Great Thou Art
Message Deo Vistar
“Be Imitators of God”
Ephesians 5:1-2
*Closing Song All together
Lord I Give You My Heart
Prayer & Blessing Deo Vistar

*Led by the Praise Team: Deo Vistar (leading), Ana Woolf (keyboard), Kirsty Baldwin (singer), Judith Stretton (singer), Te Maramara Riwaka (projector), Steve Lavers (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.

The school terms ends this coming week, and the PBC youth group will have their meeting for the term this Wednesday (the 4th) at 6pm. Pray for Mary and the youth.

The LEAD Conference of the Baptist Union held in Lower Hutt this past week went well. I personally came away from it blessed, encouraged and inspired. No, it wasn't all feel-good encouragement. There was also much-needed rebuke and correction from the Lord, which (as always) is equally important. The Lord spoke

to me in my heart: “My son, I want you to be more prayerful.” “My son, don't be preoccupied with external appearances. I care more about your character.” “My son, don't worry about church growth. Fix your eyes on me and trust me.”

I made quite a number of new friends during the conference, fellow pastors from other Baptist churches, some of whom are – like me – migrant pastors. So in our denomination there's a strong sense not only of biculturalism but also multiculturalism, even at the level of church leadership.

The focus of the conference on Christian character dovetails with our ongoing series here at PBC on Ephesians. If you asked Paul (the writer of Ephesians), he would tell you that Christian character is not you trying to be good on your own. Christian character is rooted in your life-changing relationship with Christ where, as you yield yourself to Him, the Holy Spirit supernaturally works in you and through you, whereby your “new self” flows out and manifests itself through good works. Billy Sunday is right: “Your reputation is what people say about you. Your character is what God and your wife know about you.”

This morning we're reflecting upon Ephesians 5:1-2, which exhorts us to imitate God by living a life of love, which was the way Christ lived. I ask you to spend time this week reflecting upon the commands to imitate God and to live a “life of love.” How do you imitate God? What is a life of love, and how do we live it out? I trust that this morning's sermon will be of help to you.

I will take a weekend off on the 8th – my family (with Guan's parents) will be spending a few days in St Arnaud, where we hope to enjoy the majestic views of the snow-capped mountains surrounding Lake Rotoiti. We're leaving on Friday afternoon and returning on Monday afternoon. The Elders will be coordinating the service here at PBC on the 8th.

On the 15th (Sunday) Mrs Zhang (Guan's mum) will be sharing a testimonial message to us. She's a minister of a government-recognised church in China. Pray for her as she prepares herself to address us.

This coming week let's include in our prayers the team in charge of the arts and crafts gallery. Also pray for those needing the Lord's healing.

God bless us all!

PRAY FOR THE PERSECUTED CHURCH IN SAUDI ARABIA

From *The Barnabas Fund 2018*
barnabasfund.org

In Saudi Arabia it is a capital offence for a Muslim to convert to Christianity. The unknown number of believers from Muslim backgrounds in the country therefore follow Christ in almost total secrecy. In the past, Christians have been murdered by family members for converting. Christian migrant workers from other countries face potential abuse from employers. Even expatriate Christians, while theoretically allowed to gather in private to worship, also face harassment – meetings have been raided by religious police and participants have been arrested and/or deported. No non-Muslim public religious buildings are permitted in the country, nor is any public display of any non-Islamic religion allowed.

The kingdom's constitution is based on the Qur'an and the judicial system operates on a strict interpretation of sharia, which includes *hudud* punishments such as amputations and floggings. Religious police roam the streets ensuring adherence to Islamic dress codes and other "morality" laws. There is no separation between religion and state. "Blasphemy" charges are used to suppress free speech and debate, including on social media, and anti-terrorism laws introduced in 2014 defined terrorism as "calling into question the fundamentals of the Islamic religion on which this country is based." To date there are no known cases of the law being used against Christians, although journalists have been jailed.

Saudi Arabia promotes its own strict Wahhabi interpretation of Islam worldwide, funding religious schools and Islamic mission (*dawa*) in other countries. This includes school text books which, although some have been revised, have usually presented Christians and Jews as enemies and also encouraged jihad as a means of spreading Islam.

Pray for isolated, secret Saudi believers, known only to their Father in heaven; may they be encouraged and comforted by the Holy Spirit, and grow in their faith through revelation and the study of the Word. Pray that the system of sharia will be abolished and that Saudi Arabia's rulers will recognise the authority of Him who is truly on the throne.

NOTICES

Elders' Meeting

4th July (Wednesday) 1pm at church

Pastor Care Team Meeting

5th July (Thursday) 10am at church

Prayer Service

13th July (Friday) 7pm at Church

This Week's Regular Ministries at a Glance

Tuesday 10am	Home group (Bible study) at 90 Linden's Road	Contact Deo at 573 6315
Tuesday 7pm	Home group at 5 Amelia Cres	Contact Stu at 573 7769
Tuesday 7pm	Home group at 90 Lindens Road	Contact Pene at 573 7785
Wednesday 6pm	Youth group in the Church Hall	Contact Mary at 573 5499
Thursday 7pm	Home group at Steve & Sue Dawson's place (374 Waikawa Rd)	Contact Deo at 573 6315
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 573 6315
Sunday 10:30am	<i>Sunday Friends</i> (Children's Ministry)*	Contact Carol at 027 7735 263

*Except on the last Sunday of each month

Key Events in July

- Prayer Service on the 13th (Fri) 7pm at church
- Art & Crafts Gallery on the 21st (Sat) and 22nd (Sun) at church
- Combined Worship Service on the 29th (Sun) at 6pm – to be hosted by the Catholic Church.

Any Prayer Requests?

If you have any prayer request for the prayer chain, contact Judith Dodge at 573 9245.

ROSTERS*

Hosting

1st July..... S & R Henderson (Communion)
8th July..... L Stevenson & S Lavers
15th July..... P Sarjeant & G Macdonald (Communion)
22nd July..... D & A Le Heux
29th July..... L Young and N Davis (Communion)

Music & Sound

1st July: Deo Vistar (leading), Ana Woolf (keyboard), Kirsty Baldwin (singer), Jude Stretton (singer), Te Mara Riwaka (projector), Steve Lavers (sound)

8th July: Garry Stanley (leading), Jonathan Duffy (guitar), Bronwyn Duffy (keyboard), Kirsty Baldwin (singer), Lynette Stanley (projector), Andy Baldwin (sound)

15th July: Gwenda Galbraith (leading), Graham Galbraith (keyboard), Jude Stretton (singer), Te Mara Riwaka (projector), Steve Lavers (sound)

22nd July: Garry Stanley (leading), Jonathan Duffy (guitar), Bronwyn Duffy (keyboard), Kirsty Baldwin (singer), Lynette Stanley (projector), Andy Baldwin (sound)

29th July: (Deo Vistar) (leading), Graham Galbraith (keyboard), Jude Stretton (singer), Gyllian Macdonald (projector), Steve Lavers (sound)

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