

# ***The Messenger***

**Parish of St Thomas, Tāmaki**

**Autumn Edition 2024**



# Contents

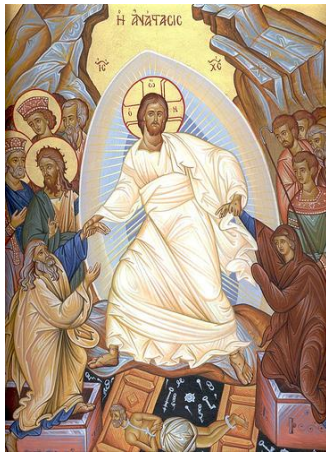
The Profound Significance of Easter in our faith, Noel Cox	2
A paraphrase of Matthew 20, Alan Blake	5
Latest organ concert – Chris Hainsworth	7
World Day of Prayer, Leith Hamilton	10
Radiant Reverence: Unveiling the Stained Glass Splendour of St Thomas Tāmaki Church, Noel Cox	12

## **The Profound Significance of Easter in our faith**

Noel Cox

Easter, one of the most celebrated events in the Christian calendar, holds profound significance for believers around the world. Beyond the colourful eggs, chocolate bunnies, and festive gatherings, Easter is a cornerstone of Christian faith, commemorating the resurrection of Jesus Christ. In this article, we delve into the spiritual and historical importance of Easter, exploring how it encapsulates the essence of Christian beliefs and offers a message of hope and renewal.

At the heart of Christian theology lies the belief in Jesus Christ as the Son of God, sent to Earth to redeem humanity from sin. The Easter narrative unfolds against the backdrop of the crucifixion, where Jesus willingly sacrificed himself on the cross to atone for the sins of mankind. This act of selflessness, central to Christian faith, symbolizes divine love and serves as the foundation for the resurrection, the pivotal event that Easter commemorates.



The resurrection of Jesus Christ on Easter Sunday is the triumphant moment that distinguishes Christianity from other religions. According to the Gospel accounts, Jesus rose from the dead three days after his crucifixion, validating his divinity and conquering the power of death. This event is not only a

historical occurrence but a spiritual revelation that signifies hope, renewal, and the promise of eternal life for believers.

Easter holds significant theological implications for Christians. The resurrection of Jesus is seen as the ultimate victory over sin and death, offering believers the assurance of salvation and reconciliation with God. It reaffirms the Christian belief in the afterlife and the promise of a new existence in the presence of God for those who embrace the teachings of Christ.

Easter is not only a religious observance but also a time for cultural and familial traditions. The custom of decorating eggs, a symbol of new life, and the Easter bunny, often associated with fertility and rebirth, have become integral parts of the celebration. While these customs may vary across cultures, they contribute to the festive atmosphere that surrounds Easter, fostering a sense of community and shared joy.



Easter also emphasizes the importance of community and fellowship within the Christian faith. Churches around the world come together to commemorate the resurrection through special services, prayers, and festivities. The

shared experience of celebrating Easter reinforces a sense of unity among believers, fostering a deeper connection to their faith and to one another.

While Easter is central to Christian faith, its message extends beyond the confines of religious boundaries. The themes of sacrifice, love, and hope resonate universally, offering a message of redemption and renewal to people of all backgrounds. The story of Easter encourages reflection on the universal human experience, reminding individuals of the

transformative power of love and the possibility of overcoming life's challenges.

Easter stands as a beacon of hope for Christians, symbolizing the triumph of light over darkness, life over death, and love over sin. The resurrection of Jesus Christ is not merely a historical event but a transformative spiritual truth that continues to inspire and guide millions of believers worldwide. As Easter approaches each year, Christians and non-Christians alike are invited to reflect on the profound significance of this event, embracing the message of renewal, redemption, and eternal hope that Easter embodies.

## **A paraphrase of Matthew 20**

Alan Blake

The kingdom of heaven is like a vineyard. Old Macgregor owns a vineyard in the Hawkes Bay. When it came to harvest the grapes, hopefully to product an award-winning Savignon, MacGregor had no workers because with the Covid they had all left town or were staying in their homes.

At seven am Macgregor went down to the Labor Exchange and saw some men lolling about. Look, he said, there's a days work on my vineyard. I pay you twenty two dollars an hour minus the seventeen percent tax which you may get back at the end of the financial year if you put in a return. We'll work an eight-hour day so that's one hundred and forty-five dollars you get at the end of the day.

He sent the workers straight to his vineyard up the road to start at eight a.m. About half past nine MacGregor drove down to the Exchange again and saw some more blokes standing around there. He told them the same spiel about paying twenty-two dollars an hour, and as a result sent some more men over to begin at ten an.

One or two workers now got on their cellphones and said to their mates, 'bro, there's work over at MacGregors, and as a result some guys and one or two girls too got in their cars and started work about eleven a.m.

They all stopped for lunch at twelve-thirty and began again an hour later. At five in the afternoon the job was done and all the workers gathered in the packing shed.

MacGregor had bundles of cash ready in envelopes. He called firstly those who began work at eleven o'clock and handed them envelopes. He then called those who began an hour earlier and did likewise. Finally he called those who started at the very beginning and gave them their fiscal envelopes.

The packages were opened up and all workers perceived they had been paid the same hundred and forty-six dollars. "What the hell's goin' on", especially from those who started at the beginning of the day. "Boss, these guys are getting the same as us who did the whole day".

But the employer said to them all: "you agreed to work for the day at this pay. Do not turn on me because in my generosity I gave those others the same who began later, and even later. For in the

kingdom of God the first shall become last, and the last first”.

## **Latest organ concert – Chris Hainsworth**

Chris Hainsworth, a Wellingtonian who has been free-lancing in Europe for 40 years and is now Organist of Beziers Cathedral, toured New Zealand in February-March 2024 with an “Organ Proms Concert”.

Commenting on this year’s programme, Chris said he was aiming at variety, and trying to provide

something for everyone: serious and less serious, entertaining but thought-provoking, while connecting music to the realities of life.



Described by a reviewer in Wellington as “One of New Zealand’s most entertaining classical

organists”, Christopher Hainsworth has established himself in the forefront of New Zealand’s concert organists with entertaining, informative and thought-provoking performances.

As a choirboy at St Marks, Wellington, Chris already dreamt of playing that mighty organ and as soon as his feet could reach the pedals he abandoned the piano and studied organ with Ernest Jamieson (St.

Mark's Church,  
Wellington),  
Maxwell Fernie  
(Westminster  
Cathedral and St.  
Mary of the  
Angel's,  
Wellington) and  
Jean Ferrard  
(Professor at the  
Conservatoire of  
Brussels). He



graduated in French and Music from Victoria University, Wellington and subsequently completed a Doctorate at the University of Toulouse. During this time and later, he extended his keyboard studies throughout Belgium and France, concentrating on French Classical organ and harpsichord music and the symphonic organ repertoire and also developing his interest in the fortepiano.

Christopher has held various church music positions in Europe and New Zealand including the Brussels Anglican Church and Hamilton's Anglican Cathedral (where he was Director of Music), and a year at St Thomas in the early 1970's. After teaching at the Conservatoires of Perpignan and Andorra, he was named Head of the Early Music Department of the Conservatorium of Beziers from 1986 to 1996 and inaugural Associate Professor of Music at the University of Waikato thereafter.



In 2004 he was Congress Recitalist at the NZ Organ Congress in Hamilton, followed by a very successful tour of the country, which he has repeated almost every year since.



Since 2005 he has been Organist "Titulaire" of the Cathedral of Beziers and has left the Conservatoire to devote himself entirely to music-making. In 2006 he recorded a CD of French art-song on fortepiano with soprano Agnes Roubert and has recently completed new CDs of French music for clarinet and organ, French music for

trumpet and organ, Lieder by Clara and Robert Schumann and "Christmas Maximus" recorded at St. Mary of the Angels, Wellington. Chris is also keen on popular music and accompanying silent movies. He has twice performed at the Saint Tropez Antipodean Film Festival and in 2008, following successful performances in London and Paris, he was invited to accompany a silent film at the Wroclaw International Film Festival.

On 15<sup>th</sup> February Chris gave a concert in St Thomas, the first time he had played here for 40 years. The programme included Bach, Buxtehude, Couperin and Kreisler, amongst others.

# **World Day of Prayer**

Leith Hamilton

While living in the Philippines we happily belonged to an Episcopalian church – The Holy Trinity – in Manila. The service is much the same as an Anglican one here. Our minister was a young Canadian married to a Filipina. Much of his work had been in the slums of Manila

During my time there the World day of Prayer came up. I loved the fact that the day was held on a world scale as the sun rose on the day in each country. Now here I am in New Zealand starting the world off on its World Day of Prayer

This year Friday March 1 was chosen some time ago and Palestine was the place to prepare the service. Every year a different country is to set up the service.

Perhaps this year was more poignant as the programme would have been started before the current state began, but we did feel more meaning was associated with the words.

A booklet is designed containing information on the country – people, art, food, plants, customs, music, geography, and stories.

The Baptist Church Orakei hosted our area consisting of The Presbyterian Church Kohimarama, St Thomas, St Andrew and St Joseph and people from each take part in the presentation reading from the script in the booklet. We were all given an olive branch to hold as we read. Hymns in Arabic and English were sung and a marvellous power point of photos from various regions in Palestine.



Closing prayer from the Baptist minister and then a splendid morning tea provided by the Baptist congregation as we enjoyed the marvellous views from their reception area.

I think that Palestine designing the service was amazing and left us all feeling how lucky we were

to be living in New Zealand.

# **Radiant Reverence: Unveiling the Stained Glass Splendour of St Thomas Tāmaki Church**

Noel Cox



Enter the hallowed doors of St Thomas Tāmaki church, and you will find yourself enveloped in a breathtaking display of stained glass windows. Beyond their aesthetic allure, these windows are an intrinsic part of the church's identity, telling a unique narrative that intertwines the local community with the broader tapestry of Christian faith. In this article, we delve into the historical, symbolic, and spiritual importance of the stained glass windows at St

Thomas Tāmaki, exploring their role as storytellers, spiritual illuminators, and cultural treasures.



St Thomas Tāmaki Church, a beacon of worship in Auckland, carries a rich history reflected in its 7stained glass windows. The church's commitment to architectural excellence is epitomized by windows such as these, each pane bearing witness to the passage of time

and the evolution of the local Christian community. From its earliest days to the present, these windows have stood as testaments to the enduring faith of the congregation.

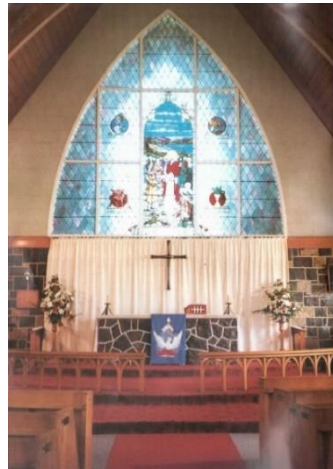
The stained glass windows of St Thomas Tāmaki Church are more than mere decorations; they are repositories of profound symbolism. Crafted with meticulous care, each window tells a story, weaving together biblical narratives, local history, and the core tenets of Christian faith. Scenes from the life of Christ, depictions of saints, and symbols of spiritual significance adorn the panes, creating a visual symphony that resonates with worshippers.

As a unique feature of St Thomas Tāmaki, these windows contribute to the distinct identity of the church, fostering a connection between the local congregation and the broader Christian tradition. The windows serve as a visual catechism, conveying not

only the universal teachings of Christianity but also the specific journey and experiences of the community at St Thomas Tāmaki.

The interplay of light and colour within St Thomas Tāmaki's stained glass windows is a metaphorical representation of spiritual illumination. As sunlight filters through the radiant hues, it mirrors the divine light of God shining upon the worshippers within. This ethereal glow enhances the spiritual atmosphere, providing a serene backdrop for prayer, reflection, and worship.

The transformative nature of light passing through stained glass aligns with the spiritual journey of those who gather within St Thomas Tāmaki. It symbolizes the transformative power of faith, casting a luminous reminder that even in the darkest moments, the light of belief can bring hope, renewal, and a sense of divine presence.



The architectural integration of stained glass windows at St Thomas Tāmaki is a testament to the careful planning and vision behind the church's design. Positioned strategically within the sanctuary, these windows contribute to the overall aesthetic and spiritual ambiance of the space. They are not mere embellishments but integral components that

enhance the architectural harmony of the church, creating an environment that invites believers into a transcendent experience.

Stained glass windows at St Thomas Tāmaki go beyond being artistic expressions; they are tangible representations of the shared faith, history, and identity of the local community. Many of these windows are dedicated to commemorate significant events, honour beloved community members, or express gratitude for blessings received. The collaborative effort involved in creating and maintaining these windows fosters a profound sense of community connection within the walls of St Thomas Tāmaki.

Commissioned by Sir William Stephenson in memory of his parents, the main east and west windows are personal tributes that resonate with the collective spirit of the church. Through this collaborative artistic process, the stained glass windows become not only a visual feast but also a living testimony to the shared journey of faith among the community members.

The stained glass windows at St Thomas Tāmaki are not only religious artifacts but also cultural treasures. These intricate works of art, surviving the passage of time, reflect the craftsmanship of generations of artisans. Efforts to preserve and restore these windows are vital in ensuring that future generations can appreciate the cultural and spiritual legacy they represent.

Preservation endeavours become even more crucial when considering the unique story encapsulated in St Thomas Tāmaki's stained glass. These windows serve as historical markers, documenting the growth, trials, and triumphs of the local Christian community,

making them irreplaceable elements of Auckland's cultural heritage.

The stained glass windows of St Thomas Tāmaki Church are a radiant tapestry of faith, history, and community. Beyond their captivating beauty, these windows stand as symbolic gateways, inviting worshippers into a visual journey through Christian narratives and local history. The interplay of light and colour, the architectural integration, and the community connection embedded in each pane make the stained glass windows at St Thomas Tāmaki more than decorative elements; they are sacred storytellers, sharing the unique and enduring journey of faith in Auckland.

As worshippers gather within the luminous embrace of these windows, they are not only bathed in the glow of coloured light but are also enveloped in the timeless narrative of St Thomas Tāmaki's spiritual legacy.

## **Parish of St Thomas Tāmaki**

PO Box 25-462, St Heliers, Auckland 1740  
Tel: 521-2697; Email: [stthomastamaki@gmail.com](mailto:stthomastamaki@gmail.com)  
Website: [www.stthomastamaki.org.nz](http://www.stthomastamaki.org.nz)

**Priest in Charge:** Rev'd Dr Noel Cox

Tel: 020-4079-4554; email  
[noel.cox34@gmail.com](mailto:noel.cox34@gmail.com)

**Priest's Warden:** John Miller

Tel: 528-4433/027-224-0693; email [jmiller@pl.net](mailto:jmiller@pl.net)

**Peoples' Warden:** Leith Hamilton

Tel" 021-170-7972; email [leithalix@xtra.co.nz](mailto:leithalix@xtra.co.nz)

Bank Account: Parish of St Thomas Tāmaki

Account No: **03-0259-0257104-00**