

better than we do, and it takes great strength to accept when we are wrong with grace. Righteousness needs to be held lightly, tempered by open-mindedness to others and prayerfulness to God."

Our deeply-held convictions can indeed make us blind to what others see. Our challenge is to be open to other perspectives while remaining true to ourselves. It is not always an easy balance between the two, but it is important to try.

Blessings, Shelley.



A huge thankyou to Brice and helpers for setting the scene for our Spring Flower celebration today!

**Congregational AGM** This is coming up on 4 October. Could all groups please get their Annual Report to Rev Shelley no later than 20 September so she can prepare the booklet accordingly.

**PRESBYTER:** Rev Shelley Walker Ph. 07 8714453

Cell 0276948779 Email revshelleynz@gmail.com

**PARISH STEWARDS**

Nynke Piebenga 07 871 9595

Colin Pinkerton 07 8713554

**CHURCH OFFICE** 07 871 5376

**Te Awamutu Methodist Church Website**

[http://www.methodist.org.nz/find\\_us/waikato/waiariki/te\\_awamutu](http://www.methodist.org.nz/find_us/waikato/waiariki/te_awamutu)

or just search 'Te Awamutu Methodist Church'

**Notices for next Sunday's bulletin to Judith please  
Phone 07 870 5512 or email briceandjudith@hotmail.com**

**Weekly Newsletter – 13th September 2020**

**METHODIST PARISH OF  
TE AWAMUTU, PIRONGIA, OTOROHANGA**

**Church address: 261 Bank Street, Te Awamutu**



**Season of Creation - Land - Spring Flower Sunday**

James Taylor has published a book Everyday Parables, Rediscovering God in the Common Things. I like this one for a Spring story -

**Onions**

An onion's dry scaly skin can be unattractive, just like some people - until you get to know them better.

The layers of an onion can be like the experiences we accumulate as we grow as Christians.

An onion is like yeast or salt - a little goes a long way in flavouring the whole stew.

Peeling onions can reduce you to tears - so can some Christians!

One woman going through a difficult time in her life decided she needed to spring clean her refrigerator. It was starting to smell a bit .....

At the back of the vegetable drawer, she found a gooey mess that had once been some onions. Holding on to her nose, she dumped the slimy stuff into the sink and ran the water on it to wash it down the drain. To her surprise, in the middle of the rot and decay, three small green shoots were growing.

She said: "God was telling me, in those onions, that spring was coming. New life was growing, even where all I could see was death and decay".

*Lynn*

## Lectionary Readings for this Sunday:

[Exodus 14.9-31](#) The Israelites escape from Egypt and the Lord opens up a path through the Red Sea for them to pass through. The water then closes in again on the army that is chasing them.

[Psalm 114](#) This is a song in praise of the Lord who worked wonders in bringing his people out of Egypt. "Earth, you will tremble, when the Lord God of Jacob comes near."

[Romans 14.1-12](#) Don't criticise other followers of the Lord whose beliefs are a bit different from yours.

[Matthew 18.21-35](#) Jesus tells his disciples that they should keep on forgiving. He then tells them a story of an official who was forgiven a debt by the king, but who then unmercifully demanded repayment from someone who owed him money.

**Focus Readings for today:** Genesis 1:1-5, 11-13 and  
Matthew 13:24-30

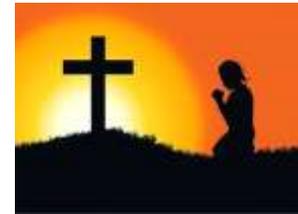
**Services coming up** (all subject to lockdown announcements)

- Sept 13** Rev Shelley – 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday in Creation - Land  
Spring Flower Service
- 20** Nan Russell - 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday in Creation - Wilderness
- 25 - Friday** - [wwwexplore](#) 6pm - (if on level 1)
- 27** Rev Shelley - 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Creation - River
- Oct 4** Rev Shelley – Communion – St Francis of Assisi Day
- 11** Elaine Diprose
- 18** Michael Templer
- 25** Rev Shelley

If we have moved to level 1 our **wwwexplore service** (we will worship and explore) will be held Friday September 25 at 6pm followed by a supplied meal.



**We will sing today - Yay!** - You can burst forth in song for the celebration of Spring if you are wearing a mask. Disposable masks are available for anyone who needs one.



## Pray for others -

- for honesty, integrity and compassion as our politicians campaign
- for the suppliers of food, essential items and support as more and more people lose their jobs.

## From Rev Shelley:

Dear friends,  
We haven't often heard readings from the First Testament during our worship services lately, but there are some wonderful stories and lessons to be gleaned from them. One of the readings originally set for this Sunday is Exodus 14:19-31.

The Israelites have escaped their enslavers and are on the way to the land God had promised to them. From the Egyptians' perspective, however, these Israelites are their rightful possessions that have been stolen away from them. On top of that, these Israelites are responsible for plagues that have laid waste to their land and have caused the deaths of many Egyptians. They probably found it quite reasonable to chase Israelites and bring them to justice.

Yet they are baffled when God steps in and serves as a shield for the escaping Israelites. They are caught by surprise when God jams their chariots and throws them into the sea. They cry out because God is siding with the Israelites even though they surely felt they were the wronged party.

One writer comments: "Wars are not fought by good guys and bad guys but rather by two sides that both think they are in the right. All of us are sure we are right sometimes, only to find out that we are mistaken. It is humbling to recognize that there is a greater power at work that knows

*continued over .....*