Ordinary 8 C 2022 **Isaiah 55:8-13** 1 Cor 15:51-58 Luke 6:39-49 **Scott MALCOLM**

When you looked out the window this morning as you were preparing to come to church, you could have been excused, if you thought everything was a bit of a shambles.

Omicron is everywhere. From no cases in a year to over 13000 a day. Hospitals, schools, businesses and people in disarray all over the place. And people dying.

Central Wellington has become a set for an end of the world movie, with all sorts of people clamouring to be heard.

The situation in Ukraine just gets worse. They are under full scale invasion from Russia and an all-out war … and the world watches on.

Yeah, you would have been forgiven for thinking things are a shambles as you came to church this morning.

I find it distressing. I find it unsettling; sometimes I get angry, and then sad and sometimes slightly depressed. I wonder about the world and the sanity of human beings. I fear for the future of democracy and the legacy that is left for our grandchildren and beyond.

I don’t know about you … but I fear for the future.

And that’s without facing the ***personal*** dilemmas we have of being human and living.

For some, that’s deadly sickness, others of us are lonely, some of us are losing our sight and our hearing. Some of us have family worries. Some problems with money. Some of us are afraid of death, some of living. Some of us are slowing fading away.

Some of us battle with the past and can’t escape the wounds. Some of us are fearful for the future.

As we gather for worship in St Barnabas Anglican church in Mt Eden, all these things are with us … and … we wonder … about God.

…

We come this morning and we hear the words of the Prophet Isaiah.

In all of the circumstances we and the world might be facing this morning … this is one of the words we hear …

First heard by the people of Israel, thousands of miles from home. Their place invaded and occupied. All of their God’s promises, lying burning and smouldering at their feet. Now slaves, trapped in a foreign land. Their families broken, they are overworked, sick and getting older.

Into the midst of this Isaiah shouts out … and he says … God’s ways are not our ways, and like rain falling on the earth, causing seeds to bud, God’s word goes forth, and it does what God said it would.

Then he speaks that word filled with rain and snow and water to this enslaved, disillusioned, and dispossessed people …. He calls forth this bud …and he tells them … that God will lead them home.

… And God did …

…

What has God to say to us?

What has God promised us as we face a pandemic, the unsettling signs of unrest in our land, war in Europe … and the raft of personal circumstances we sit with this morning?

What does God say?

That what we see out of the window in the morning, that all of our personal worries and fears, that these are not new experiences for the Lord of all, as we gather here.

And, that if we allow that water filled word to speak to us, and act on it, then we build our foundations firmly on rock, and that rock is Christ: Then, we will be able to see, we will be equal with one another, be without speck or log, our fruit will be good, our hearts full of treasure.

That at the finish of all of this, death will be overcome. We will be resurrected, “changed in the twinkling of an eye” … to live with God forever.

That in our Lord Jesus Christ, we have been given the victory, now and always, in everything.

…

What God has promised … is …

… That in Christ … God is with us, now and always, no matter what is happening.

No matter what we or the the world are facing.

And if that is not enough … that at our life’s close and the close of all things …

… we will be lead home …

…

So, when you looked out the window this morning as you were preparing to come to church, and thought everything was a bit of a shambles …

You were right … but this … by no means … is the end of the story.

Thanks be to God.

Amen.