



Moderator's 2022 Easter message

PASSIONATELY HOPEFUL!

I lived in Christchurch through the Christchurch earthquakes. There was a lot to be despondent about. People were looking for signs of hope. The signs came in lots of different ways. One that really lifted many people was the street art that sprung up on the sides of buildings. Another was the increasing numbers coming to church on a Sunday.

At Hope Presbyterian we decided on a mission statement which led with, 'Building Hope in a Broken World'. This seemed to strike a chord with people who were longing for meaning and hope in difficult times.

I was remembering this as I reflected on our most recent struggles. COVID weariness; an accelerating gap between rich and poor driven by out-of-control house prices; and now, our dismay at the brutal invasion of Ukraine! Where is the hope? How does it break in?

I like the glimpse of hope in the words of Leonard Cohen:

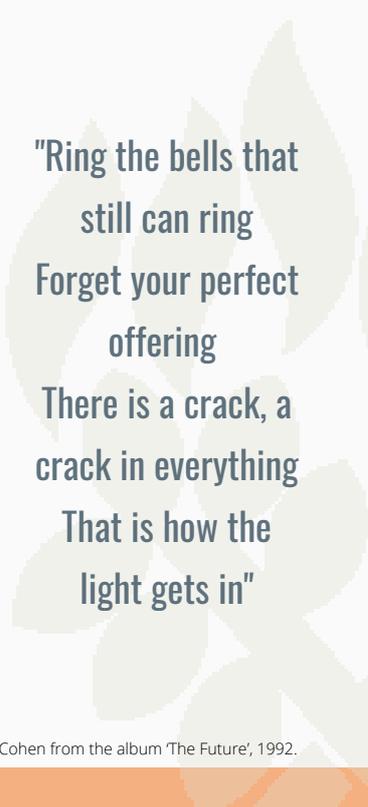
“Ring the bells that still can ring
Forget your perfect offering
There is a crack, a crack in everything
That is how the light gets in.”*

And so, easing of Covid restrictions, and peace talks in Ukraine that are edging towards cessation of war, these are signs of light shining through the cracks of despair.

To that, we Christians add a faithful voice drawing attention to the first cracks of dawning light at sunrise on the third day, which transformed the despair of the cross to something filled with hope.

This faith of ours - that the resurrection transforms the seeming despair of the cross into a world-changing victory of life over death, forgiveness over sin and good over evil - remains as powerful and relevant as ever!

As church bells ring out around our Church this Easter, may they toll a message of ultimate hope to a tired people in despairing times.



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*Lyrics from 'Anthem' by Leonard Cohen from the album 'The Future', 1992.