



WBC

*your local church*

VISION SUNDAY 2022



# OUR JOURNEY

## HIKOI

Whangaparaoa Baptist Church has always been a local church that has focused on both the present and the future. Over the last four years we've been intentionally leaning into the future, recognising the massive changes going on in Aotearoa New Zealand, which is now, to all intents and purposes, a post-Christian society. Christians are now a minority. In this context reaching the next upcoming generations requires prayer-soaked Spirit-led innovative thinking and wisdom.

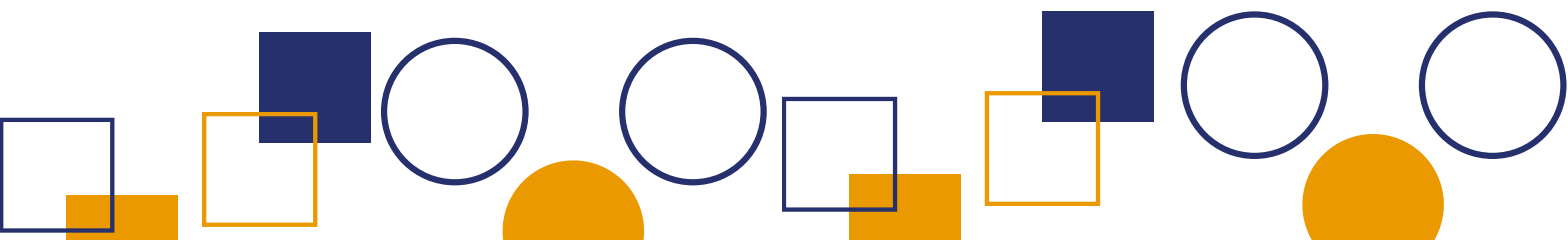
Over this journey, we have been guided by our heartbeat statement:  
*"Everyday People, Loving God,  
Living it Out - Together"*

(Matt 22:36-40 & Matt 28:18-20).



We are everyday people, a local church, and have been in this particular community, the Whangaparaoa Peninsula, together, for over 60 years.

We don't want our story to end here, we want to continue to impact this community for Christ over the next 60 years and beyond.





We are not sensing that we need a radical turn from the general direction of the last few years. We believe we need to build on what we have been doing and to emphasise even more belonging, togetherness and connection. The church is the people, the priesthood of all believers, and as a church from the Baptist tradition, we have a commitment to congregationalism, helping everyone grow in Christ and to be able to use and grow their gifts in the body.

This means that we will continue “Leaning into the Future” and our ‘NextGen’ posture/mindset/lens in 2023. This should not be misinterpreted as meaning that we don’t care about 50+ generations. Leaning to the next generation and caring for all generations, are not mutually exclusive ambitions, but they do require us all to have a mission heart. We want all generations to be part of this journey. We care about all our church community, but we unashamedly are looking to the future.

Having said all this, it would be disingenuous to say that the last few years have been easy! Change has caused discomfort for some, and COVID has exacerbated our challenges. However, as a congregation, you have strongly supported our direction each Vision Sunday and have been incredibly generous in the giving of resources, finances, and time – In spite of challenges, we have indeed been blessed.

We have had many prophetic words and Bible verses that have resonated and encouraged this journey over the last few years. More recently Isaiah 43:18-19 has seemed particularly relevant.

### **Isaiah 43:18-19**

18 “Forget the former things;  
do not dwell on the past.  
19 See, I am doing a new thing!  
Now it springs up; do you not perceive it?  
I am making a way in the wilderness  
and streams in the wasteland.

God is building His church, here in Whangaparaoa, the Spirit is opening doors, we need spiritual eyes and ears to perceive this, to join with God in His new thing here, now and in the future. We are excited about the possibilities in 2023. We want all of you to have a strong sense of belonging together in this exciting journey.

## **We have distilled our plans for 2023 into five priority areas;**

1. Worship & Prayer - Together
2. Discipleship & Growth - Together
3. Getting Connected - Together
4. Community Impact - Together
5. Leading & Serving - Together



# BELONGING - WORSHIP & PRAYER - *TOGETHER*

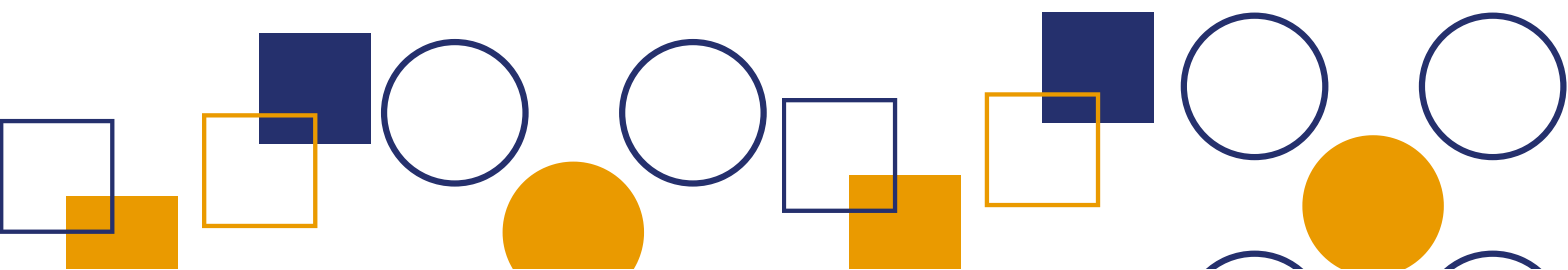
We want to continue developing our current worship rhythms, including introducing more creativity and continuing to provide accessible ways of engaging in prayer through everyday life.

We will continue to build our 8.00am Huia Mai, Morning 9.45am, Evening 5.30pm and mid-week Connect@10 Worship Spaces. We also want to establish a once per term church wide 'Worship, Prayer, & Ministry Night' which we successfully trialled in 2022. As a church we will also host the World Day of Prayer on March 3rd. We desire to increase Children and Youth Engagement in prayer and worship rhythms, and deepen our personal commitments to be a people who live out a lifestyle of Prayer and Worship.

The existing variety of prayer contexts will continue, as we try to ensure that everything we do is soaked in prayer, listening to God, so that we may perceive His will and direction. The Community Prayer initiative will continue, this was advertised on the church billboard, and offers those in our general Whangaparaoa community the opportunity for us to pray for them.

Prayer and Worship is not just an event that we attend, but values and mindsets that underpin our everyday lives, 24/7, wherever we are.

**Belonging - We all have a personal Worship & Prayer responsibility - Together.**



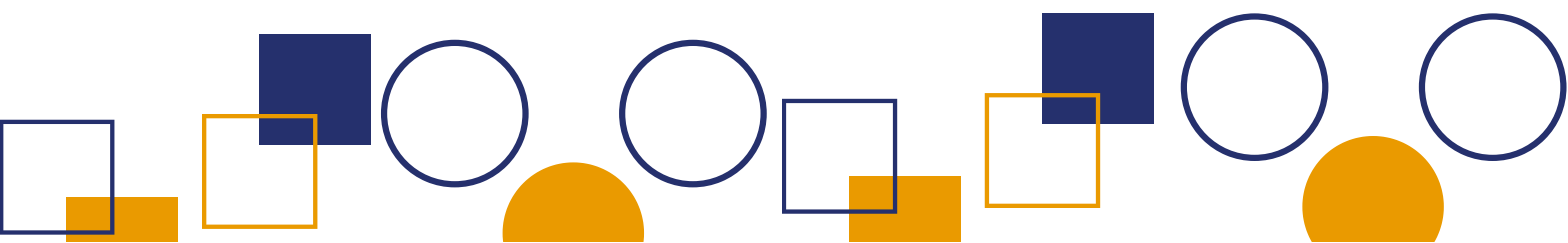
# BELONGING - DISCIPLESHIP & GROWTH - *TOGETHER*

In our Sunday teaching we will continue our team preaching approach. This brings a variety of teaching approaches, helping ensure connection with different learning styles – We are all different and made in the image of God. Framing this variety, we will however continue to have an overarching theme each term, which brings consistency and continuity.

Teaching and conversation contexts such as short mid-week courses and Cafe Chats will continue. We want to help ‘equip the saints’ so that you can both grow in your gifting and in areas you’ve not previously explored; spiritually, cognitively, emotionally, mentally, and relationally. Areas where we are being asked to provide teaching include; new Christian Alpha type courses, parenting and family focused resources, curating online resources, prayer and ‘School of Connection’ type spaces, Biblical teaching and guidance in how to read Scripture well, guidance on how to disagree well with those with different views, and conversational spaces where difficult questions can be wrestled with.

We are also challenged with how we can re-energise Life Groups in our church, looking at church-wide resources for Life Groups and potential groups that are more interest based. We need the help of the whole church here. Could you host a Life Group? Or an Interest Group? What do you think?

For our NextGen team, the significant Young Adults Camp and Youth Easter Camp will continue to be a focus. These events can be life changing and are a time when many commit their lives to Jesus.

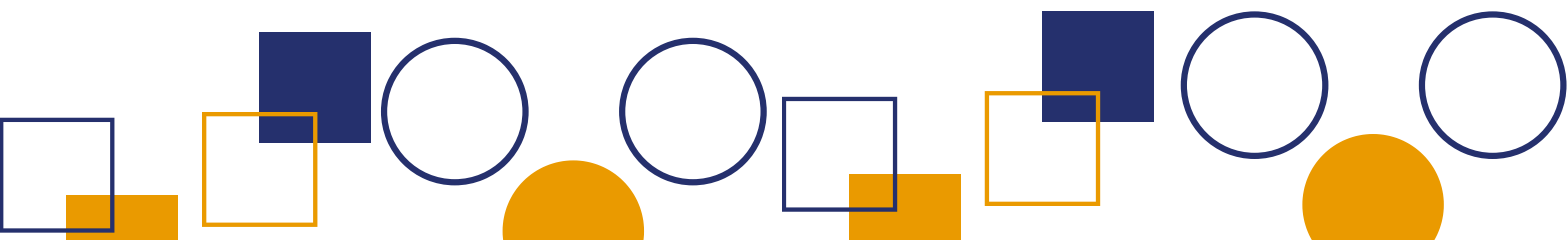




For Discipleship and Growth, we look for your presence and participation, we can only do it together. We also want you to ask yourself “How can I serve this space” and not just “How can this space serve me”. If you have a particular sense of God putting something on your heart, let us know. If you have particular experiences and giftings which could benefit others, we’d love to discuss it and see if a space can be made for you to step up. We want to encourage you, as Discipleship and Growth is something we can all contribute towards.

In addition to organised discipleship opportunities, we want to encourage all of us to take personal initiative to grow in our love, knowledge, and relationship with Jesus, so that we can live this out everyday 24/7.

**Belonging - We all have a personal Discipleship & Growth responsibility - Together.**





# BELONGING - GETTING CONNECTED - *TOGETHER*

Over the last year we have had many organised connection spaces, such as; women's events, men's events, pre-service morning croissants, Coffee Connect, midweek Connect@10, OWLS activities, shared food after services, welcome events, and much much more. We want to continue this in 2023.

One specific initiative we want to promote in 2023 is the establishment of 'WhatsApp interest groups' where people in our church can set up connection groups on WhatsApp around areas of common life-stages, activities, or interests, such as gardening, arts, crafts, business, rugby, and more. In these busy times we have to be intentional if we are to remain connected. Would you be interested in being part of a WhatsApp interest group? If so, please contact Olga ([olga@wbc.org.nz](mailto:olga@wbc.org.nz)).

We also want to encourage organic connection. Organic connection requires intentionality, it requires presence, it requires us saying "hello" to those we don't know, opening our homes for hospitality, especially for those who are new. As we discussed this area with ministry leaders, one person who is fairly new asked; "is WBC set to be able to integrate newer people" and "in what ways do we unintentionally exclude newer people at WBC". These are great and challenging questions. Are you stirred by this? If so let us know, we want to help facilitate and empower you to be active in this space.

**Belonging - We all have a personal connection responsibility - Together.**



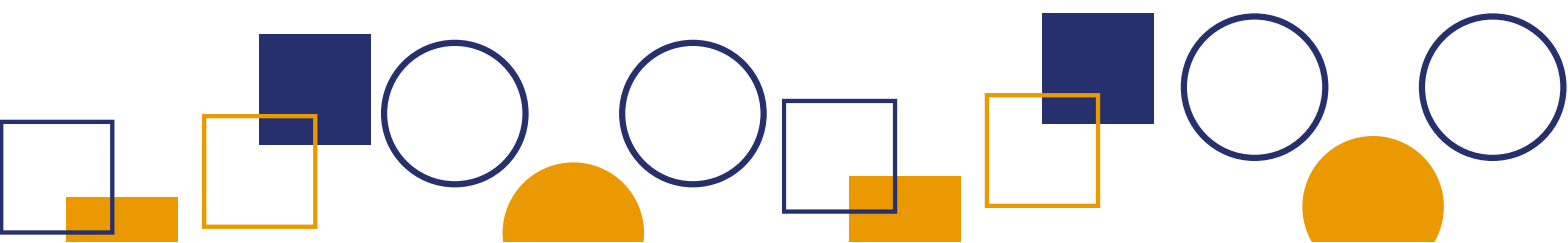
# BELONGING - COMMUNITY IMPACT - *TOGETHER*

We continue in our desire to be a people who ARE the faithful presence of Jesus in our community, across New Zealand, and globally – partnering with Christ in bringing his kingdom here on earth. We want to continue promoting and encouraging ORGANISED community presence and impact together, and our own individual ORGANIC community presence and impact, wherever we are, at work, in our neighbourhoods, with our friends and families, and at play.

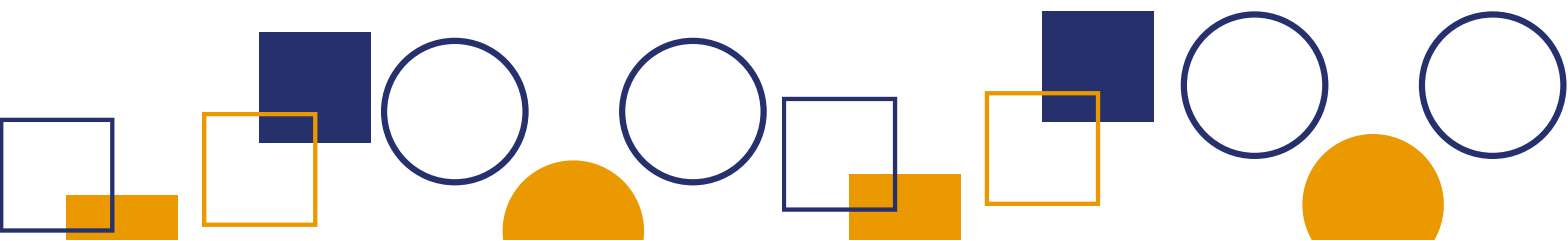
In 2023 we will seek to work even more closely with our Community Trusts i.e., Coast Kindy, Coast Families, and CYC to impact the Whangaparaoa Peninsula. We also want to connect these community trusts better with each other. For this purpose, an overarching trusts board was initiated in late 2022 and we want to continue and develop its work in 2023. Similarly, we want to continue to support and grow the impact of WBC Foodbank. All these organised community ministries plus our own annual ‘Community Service Day’ require our full support and participation. Each term we will seek to highlight the work of these trusts and we want to establish the WBC Foodbank ‘drive’ as a once per term rhythm.

We also want to encourage and equip you, through our teaching and prayers, to organically impact your community, be it neighbours, work, social or sports contexts, you can be a light in all these places. We want to encourage you to share testimonies from everyday life, of how you’ve had God given opportunities to impact your community.

**Belonging - We all have a personal Community Impact responsibility - Together.**



Our Global Impact strategy over the last few years has centred on an annual support for the Leprosy Mission, an organisation led worldwide by our own Brent Morgan. At the same time, we have continued to support the Higson's and Whitney Lake. Beyond this, we haven't pushed any major developments in this area, and we feel a sense of pause, while we await the outcomes of a major review by what was formerly known as the New Zealand Baptist Missionary Society (NZBMS). Global Mission is changing, old models are being reshaped and we look forward to hearing what God is saying in this space.






# BELONGING - LEADING & SERVING - *TOGETHER*

We are a congregational church. You, our congregation, prayerfully discern and endorse our strategic direction and associated budgets each year at Vision Sunday. You elect the elders and pastoral leaders to have a role in shaping and delivering that vision, but we are not a church that believes these leaders have all the answers or are our intermediaries with God. They are not your Priests and Kings! Our King is Jesus, and we are the priesthood of all believers. Our church is you, the people of God in this place at this time. Without you there is no church, there is no WBC. Our team based leadership approach recognises this very Baptist ecclesiology. It recognises that no one person can have all the gifting we need. We desire a five-fold expression of prophets, apostles, evangelists, pastors, and teachers (Eph.4:12) and a diverse team approach helps facilitate that.

Over the last year our team has evolved with Josh and Anna finishing. We are so thankful to them for their devotion and service to our church and this community, please be praying for them in this new season. In 2023 the ministry teams will continue to evolve. We have been searching for potential people God is calling to us here. In the meantime, Mark has stepped up as Interim Team Leader, facilitating the work of the Core Leadership Group (CLG). The Elders and CLG do not sense that God is telling us to rush, in fact we have a strong sense that he wants us to be patient. Please continue praying into this.

We have space in the proposed 2023 budget for additional staffing, so that we can accommodate the right person at the right time called by God. Shannon Groves was appointed as WBC Kids Ministry Leader during lock downs, so we now want to formally discern and confirm her position. We are also asking you to prayerfully discern and decide on the election of Ron Kyle to the Eldership team. The basis for the budget is set out separately, but more importantly the budget is there to support the vision and is completely dependent on your faithful giving. You have been so generous over the last year and we thank you and God for that.





Being Congregational means togetherness, belonging, commitment and connection, covenanting with each other and God in this place. This is formally expressed in church membership. If you are not a member, but feel that this is your church home, we would encourage you to consider membership. As a congregational priesthood of all believers, we are all leaders as we all influence, and we are all called to be servants, Christian leaders are servant leaders. If you feel called to serve in any area of the church, don't hesitate to step up. We want to be a church of contributors not consumers, and in blessing others you too will be blessed.

**Belonging - We all have a personal Leading & Serving responsibility - Together.**



### **Galatians 6: 9-10**

Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up. Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, especially to those who belong to the family of believers.



# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

**Q: Will there be any opportunities to discuss the Vision Proposals and ask questions?**

A: Yes, there will be a Vision Sunday Q+A space on December 4th, at 11.30am in the church lounge.

**Q: What is the Core Leadership Group (CLG)?**

A: (The Core Leadership Group or CLG) is the group of Associate Pastors that collectively fulfil the traditional role of a Senior Pastor. We adopted this leadership approach in 2006. This allows us to not be reliant on one single person, and to have a wider range of gifting and experiences available, guided by the five-fold expression of prophets, apostles, evangelists, pastors, and teachers (Eph.4:12).

The current CLG comprises Olga Oosthuizen, Adam Harris, Wendy Wakerley, and Mark Powell. All other ministry leaders in the church link with one of the CLG. Currently, the CLG's main responsibilities are divided as follows; Olga - Seniors, Pastoral Care, part of Preaching & Teaching Team, Welcoming & Connection, Home/Life Groups, WBC Foodbank; Adam - NextGen, part of Preaching & Teaching Team; Wendy - Administration Support, Communications; Mark - Interim Team Leader, Team Coordination, part of Preaching & Teaching Team, Finance, Community Trusts. This list is not exhaustive but gives a picture of where main responsibilities lie.

**Q: Who are the Elders of WBC?**

A: The current elders are Susan Williamson (Chair), Shaun C, Piet van der Harst and Joanne Hall.

**Q: Where can I find information about Ron Kyle and Shannon Groves?**

A: Their profiles are in a separate document, and they will be available to answer questions at the Vision Sunday Q+A space on December 4th at 11.30am.

**Q: Why are we only voting now on Shannon Groves as WBC Kids Ministry Leader?**

A: Shannon took on the role during a period of Covid lockdowns and so this process was delayed until now.

**Q: How do I become a church member?**

A: If you are interested, please speak with any of the CLG - Mark, Olga, Wendy, or Adam.

**Q: Where does the money come from to fund the church?**

A: We are an independent Church that is part of the Baptist Association of New Zealand. Most of our income is from the generous giving of our congregation. On top of this we have some income from commercial and residential property we own. But we are not part of a large institution which gets money from a national organisation. We are a local body of Christ, generously funded by that body to do His work in this place.

