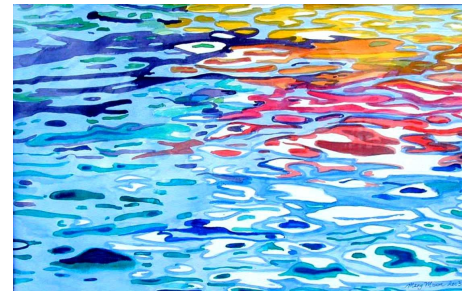




Galaxies Evening Service 26 May 2013

Service by Fergus Collinson
& Peter Cowley



Welcome:

Welcome to our service tonight

Tonight we celebrating turning 21 years old. We'll do what we do best - Share food and each other's company, be creative, and support one another.



Stevo Peoples Coffee - being thoroughly enjoyed.

Photo: Fergus

Call to togetherness and sharing:

Leader: God, we are all part of you, your creation, your life and your love.

As we gather together to look back on the last 15 years to see where we have been
and to look forward to where we might be in the future

All: **May the love of God lead is in surprising twists and turns, self discovery and help
us to care for all of creation**



Ah, Summer ... where hast thou gone?

Photo: Fergus

g A L A X I E S i s t W E N T Y o N E y E A R S

y O U N G t O N I T E

This is the scariest most exciting bus ride eva. I'm on a rattly old trolley bus hurtling to Saint Andrews for the very first *Galaxies* service. Theres my dear writer buddy Bill Edginton. Its his idea to start this. I can't think of anybody else I know fairly well who will be here

What if theres a furore... zillions of very angry Christians waiting... waiting to bash our brains out with placards nailed to sturdy wooden planks. Very likely to be people I know from the mix of churches I've been in.

The lights are on inside Saint Andrews. It's a welcoming warm white light. The one people who have had near death experiences comment on. There are no shouting angry people lurking. Packing the foot path.

I like this! Its supposed to be a one Off. But we all want another one. Surprisingly for me, and very lovely, theres heaps of families here. Families who are thrilled and delighted their queer kids and siblings have a welcoming venue. Where we can explore, grow, feel embraced in our journeys toward God.

The welcoming God of John and Shirley Murray. Brave pioneers in wellington churches in their unjudging acceptance of people of any creed, race, sexuality, whatever. In fact theres a wee sign saying this. Its screwed on beside the main entrance. I'd love there to be more of these. i've got Chronic Fatigue Syndrome and can't be arsed turning up at church unless I know they welcome people like me. Shirley summarises the scintillating uncertainties of God who is within us, who engages and delights us in our modern world, in her hymn writing.

Hows it worked out? As me, In Bouncing with Billie at bATS, Felix Preval says the crisp sentence "I wanted spirituality as well as spunk." He's got the lonely blockedness I experienced as a new gay man looking for a relationship. Not at all buying into the find them fuck them and lose them att. I met two of my first lover boyfriends that first year of Galaxies. Yes I utterly loved painting them, exploring closeness. The non-Kiwi rapturous relaxing healing there is in slow hugs with my mates of all genders ... I'm a naturally very tense anxious person.

I continued to cruise along to Elim on my free Sunday nites... until I had a visit from Abraham's bro Simon, and his wife Louise. They're angry and shocked. Pastor Mike Knott, who is still here, told them all homos should be shipped off to an island where they can't get away. A harshly judgemental sentence. With no possibility of redemption, but its a useful one... an instant way of finding where Christians are up to on human rights issues. Often I feel they're ripped the book of Acts out of their Bibles

Rabid hate - I don't know how Deb and Rosie, Bill, Margaret and Clare survive doing the Presbyterian General Assembly each year. A hate fest stalemate where people like me are not supposed to exist, meet, be the visible salt of the earth Jesus wants for us

Twenty one years together - what a rush of visual images. Galaxies choir's Christmas event... the searing beauty of a reading from The Christmas Noel. The Brit and German armies stop shelling each other when a guy starts singing Silent... The Season of Creation picnic in QE11 Park each spring on my birthday. Last time Petrus says " We'll do mandalas."

Dad's most favourite photo was of his ship, HMS Mandala. I got lost in an inner ritual of forgiveness. Petrus, thank you for setting up my www.fergus-art.com web page, for the loving lavish job you do enhancing me on each service sheet, People ask me what I'm doing now, and I grab one the newest one to show them. When I look over from my computer I feast on Sylvia's fond wee masterpiece, hear her breathless

"Oh Fergus! You look like the angel Gabriel" - I'm walking into Galaxies with my first bright red hair job. I'd decided I adore red heads. Its true! Red heads have .more... fun.

Its crazy taking my wake-up coffee, my Bible and smokes onto my deck in today's Arctic southerly. I'm reading 2 Corinthians, writing YES! Now Our lord is the Spirit, in You we have

freedom, and we are, we reflect our Lord's glory, constantly being changed, transformed. Gloriously!

Skaal sounds ferociously Celtic - to our next twenty one years together! A motor bike convoy with Ryan and Norman appeals to me

Franciscan Blessing (Departure)

May God bless you with discomfort ...
at easy answers, half truths, and superficial relationships
so that you may live deep within your heart

May God bless you with anger ...
at injustice, oppression and exploitation of people
so that you may work for justice, freedom and peace

May God bless you with tears ...
to shed for those who suffer pain, rejection, hunger and war
so that you may reach out your hand to comfort them and
to turn their pain into joy

May God bless you with enough foolishness ...
to believe that you can make a difference in the world
so that you can do what others claim cannot be done
to bring justice and kindness to all

AMEN



Notices