

**Travelling Light**  
**Ordinary Sunday 11 , 14 June 2026**  
**Rev Dr Helen Jacobi**

**Waiapu Cathedral**

**Exodus 19:2-8a**  
**Psalm 100**  
**Romans 5: 1-8**  
**Matthew 9:35-10:7**

Travelling light is not one of my skills. When travelling I always seem to have too much in my suitcase, always another layer or another outfit, just in case, if it's colder or warmer... I admire people who can travel light.

In our reading from Exodus this morning we hear about the people of Israel, after the exodus from slavery in Egypt. They were forced to travel light. They left in a hurry only carrying what they could. This is not the same as our travelling light. It is more like refugees we see today fleeing war or oppression.

But the people of Israel found it hard going and they were soon complaining to Moses – we would be better off back in Egypt, at least we had food to eat and shelter.

They make camp in the wilderness and God speaks to Moses promising that if they stick with the plan, if they stick with God, keep God's covenant, then God will stick with them.

You will be my people, I will be your God, becomes their mantra.

Of course they have trouble sticking to the plan, start worshipping other gods, build their golden calf and so on, but they get there eventually, after 40 years travelling in the wilderness, after 40 years of travelling light, they are ready to enter the land that was promised.

In our reading from Matthew, Jesus is preparing to send his disciples out on a mission.

He says "the harvest is plentiful but the labourers are few; therefore ask the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest"

So this happens while Jesus is still alive he puts the disciples to work, sending them out to "the lost sheep."

It is interesting to note that Jesus specifically says not to go to the Gentiles; in Matthew the instruction to preach to the Gentiles comes in the last verses of the gospel.

This tension of who belongs and the question of – do you have to be Jewish first in order to become Christian – was a live question for the first generations of the church.

We see this play out in the way the gospels are written and in the Book of Acts and the Letters.

In Matthew's version we see an initial restricted view, which would have seemed perfectly normal to his listeners, and then it gets expanded.

Also interesting is the list of the disciples we hear – at the bottom of the list – "Judas Iscariot, the one who betrayed him." Matthew is of course writing after the resurrection and the readers are fully aware of how the story ends, so it's not a spoiler.

Judas is included along with the 12 who are all far from perfect, just ordinary folk like you and me. And they are given the task of proclaiming the good news "the kingdom of heaven has come near."

If you read on in chapter 10 you will find they also had to travel light, with no gold or silver, no bag or extra clothes. They are sent just as they are.

And it turns out they are the labourers they were supposed to pray for.

There wasn't another whole group of trained specialists arriving over the hills of Jerusalem to do the work of Jesus. It was just them, they were the ones called to share what they had seen in Jesus and how they had experienced the kingdom of heaven coming near.

Writer and theologian Stanley Hauerwas says "the way the gospel is known is by one person being for another person the story of Christ .... The disciples are not impressive people, but then, neither are we. Their mission as well as our own, is not to call attention to ourselves but to Jesus and the kingdom."<sup>1</sup>

And the places we make the gospel known are outside these walls, in our homes, families, workplaces and communities.

We are called to live as people who know the kingdom of heaven is near.

How do we do that?

This year as the political conversations heat up heading for the election we are called to examine and assess political parties and their policies according to our faith.

Will a certain policy uplift those in need, will it help us welcome the stranger, build community?

We are called to consider our vote not by what is best for me as an individual but what will be best for those in most need of support.

In this way Jesus sends us out as labourers in the harvest in our communities.

As we get ready here at the Cathedral to welcome a new Dean and to enter another season of our cathedral life we are also called to focus inwards so we can better serve our wider community.

We will be reflecting on what we need and don't need as the essentials of our community life.

Can we travel light?

Stanley Hauerwas again "the church is not called to be significant or large. The church is called to be apostolic. Faithfulness, not numbers or status, should be the characteristic that shapes the witness of the church. Indeed it may well be the case in our time that God is unburdening the church so that we can again travel light."<sup>2</sup>

Being apostolic, following the apostles or the disciples, is our blueprint.

The big vision and dream Bishop Andrew shared with us a few weeks ago, about the possible redevelopment of our cathedral site, will take time to unfold.

In the meantime though we get on with the job, welcome our new Dean, enfold them in our lives, share with them our stories and our dreams.

Look to them to lead and guide us on this road.

And continue our cathedral role of service to our city and to each other.

The psalmist says

"Enter the gates of the temple with thanksgiving,

and go into its courts with praise:

give thanks, and bless God's holy name.

For the Lord is a gracious God,

whose mercy is everlasting:

and whose faithfulness endures

from generation to generation."

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<sup>1</sup> P106 Matthew Stanley Hauerwas 2006

<sup>2</sup> Ibid p 107

We are the next generation in this temple privileged to receive God's promise of faithfulness.  
Let's see how light we can travel as we again step on the road.