Sermon: **When the Israelites saw the great power with which the Lord had defeated the Egyptians, they feared the Lord; and they had faith in the Lord** (Exodus 14.31)

A mood for change in the political landscape? National government since 2008 seems to have done a reasonable job, though some disagree with their policies. Next Sunday we might know the makeup of the next government. Do we vote according to what we will get out of it? Do we want change? If so, is it because we have not got what we want, other nations get a better deal, or because we like change for its own sake?

Our attitude to politics may be similar to our attitude to God! The people of Israel illustrate this! TEXT.

Crossed Red Sea or was it the Reed Sea? Ultimately these are interesting but fruitless questions. What matters is the reaction of Israelites. TEXT.

Their attitude often changed – they rebelled when bitter water, no food, no water, giants in Promised Land.

Why all the changes? Because they did not get what they wanted, other nations got a better deal, or they wanted change for its own sake? Had God changed? Had God failed them (they thought so)?

How does our attitude to God change? Do we only want God when God does what we want, or when life is fine? Do we need the spiritual equivalent of a Red Sea Crossing to keep us faithful? What if God leads us into the wilderness? Do we then want to change our God? What if another faith/church gets a better deal?

Some will have seen modern ‘western’ Church life as entering a wilderness – how many Methodist Churches were there once in Southland? How big were congregations? Sunday Schools? And now?

Are these days not like the wilderness for us?

The recreation of Israel in the wilderness forged a new people leading to a new Promised Land.

The recreation of Methodism with Lindisfarne has forged a new people to a new building.

God will continue to guide us with pillars of cloud and fire and remain loyal to us.

And call me loyal I'll say you're loyal too.  I know you're loyal I feel your loyal truth.   
Call me loyal I'll hold you loyal too, and we are loyal, keep it that way… (Dave Dobbyn)

Will we remain loyal to God? So much more important and longer-lasting question than any NZ election.