



St Ronan's Presbyterian Church
Eastbourne

Record

AUGUST 2025

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|-------------|---|---------|
| 3 August | Shared service with the Anglicans (at St Ronan's) | 9:30am |
| 10 August | Informal worship (BYO ¹) | 9:30am |
| 17 August | Formal worship (John Howell) | 9:30am |
| 24 August | Informal worship (WTW ²) | 9:30am |
| 31 August | Fellowship lunch (Doug Rogers) | 12.00pm |
| 7 September | Shared service with the Anglicans (Reg Weeks, at San Antonio) | 9.30am |

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Power Hour – Sundays 9:30am

Mainly Music – Thursdays 9:15-11:15am

**For pastoral care needs, please contact one of the Local Shared Ministry Team
Reg Weeks 027 491 5947, Simon Shaw 562 8772, Colin Dalziel 562 7238, Sandy Lang 562 8753**

¹ Bring Your Own. We each bring to share a song, a reading, a poem, a prayer etc.
Or just come and discover what others may bring.

² What's The Word. We are given a bible passage to read, and we discover what this
has to say to us.

Season of Creation

While still a month away, I want to alert people to a season of celebration shared by many churches that begins before the next *Record* will be published.

The theme for this year is 'Peace with Creation' and the biblical text is Isaiah 32:14-18. The prophet Isaiah pictured a desolate creation without peace because of the lack of justice and the broken relationship between God and humankind.



The hope is that creation will find peace when justice is restored.

The symbol for this year depicts a dove carrying an olive branch bringing life to the Garden of Peace. In the biblical story of the flood, the dove becomes a messenger sent out by Noah, and returning to the ark with a fresh olive branch in its beak, signalling that the flood is receding.

As the flood story begins during a time when the Earth is filled with violence, the return of the dove with the olive branch came to be known as a sign of new peace.

In 1989, Ecumenical Patriarch Demetrios 1 proclaimed 1 September as a day of prayer for creation in the Orthodox Church. In fact, the Orthodox year starts on that day with the commemoration of how God created the World. The World Council of Churches was instrumental in making this special time a season, extending the celebration from 1 September to 4 October. The final date in the Roman Catholic Church is the feast day of Saint Francis of Assisi, patron saint of ecology.

Christians worldwide have embraced the season as part of their annual celebrations and, in 2015, Pope Francis established the World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation in the Roman Catholic Church. In recent years, statements from religious leaders around the world have also encouraged their faithful to take time to care for creation during the month-long celebration.

To celebrate the Season of Creation, the Order of Ecumenical Franciscans (OEF) to which I belong, includes among its resources this whimsical excerpt from *God's Trombones*, a collection of lyrical sermons and poems by the American writer James Weldon Johnson, published in 1927.



Garden of Peace

Isaiah 32:14-18

The Creation

*And God stepped out on space, and he looked around and said
I'm lonely - I'll make me a world.*

*And as far as the eye of God could see, darkness covered everything, blacker
than a hundred midnights down in a Cypress swamp.*

*Then God smiled, and the light broke,
and the darkness rolled up on one side, and the light stood shining on the
other and God said: That's good!*

*Then God himself stepped down - and the sun was on his right hand,
and the moon was on his left: the stars were clustered all about his head,
and the earth was under his feet.*

*And God walked, and where he trod his footsteps hollowed the valleys out
and bulged the mountains up.*

*Then he stopped and looked and saw that the earth was hot and barren
So God stepped over to the edge of the world and he spat out the seven seas.*

*He batted his eyes, and the lightnings flashed - he clapped his hands and the
thunders rolled - and the waters above the earth came down,
the cooling waters came down.*

*Then the green grass sprouted, and the little red flowers blossomed,
and the pine tree pointed his finger to the sky,
and the oak spread out his arms,*

*the lakes cuddled down in the hollows of the ground,
and the rivers ran down to the sea,
and God smiled again,*

and the rainbow appeared and curled itself around his shoulder.

*Then God raised his arm and he waved his hand over the sea
and over the land,*

and he said: Bring forth! Bring forth!

*And quicker than God could drop his hand,
fishes and fowls and birds and beasts swam the rivers and the seas,
roamed the forests in the woods,
and split the air with their wings
and God said: That's good!*

Then God walked around, and God looked around on all that he had made.

*He looked at his sun, and he looked at his moon,
and he looked at his little stars,*

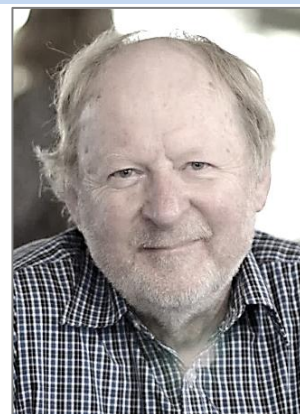
*he looked on his world with all its living things
and God said: I'm lonely still.*

*Then God sat down - on the side of a hill where he could think;
by a deep wide river he sat down;
with his head in his hands, God thought and thought,
till he thought: I'll make me a man...!*

Reg Weeks

Clerk's corner...

NZDRU: A couple of weeks ago the national administrator of the *New Zealand Deaf Rugby Union* moved into what was once our minister's office – now the hub of their national organisation (see www.nzdru.org.nz).



We look forward to interacting with them in serving their sector of the community. St Ronan's focus has mostly been our local (Eastbourne) community with a special focus on young families. The NZDRU's focus is very much wider (national) and their special focus very much narrower (people with hearing impairment and an interest in rugby).

I'm looking forward to engaging with them and, amongst other things, to learning a bit of NZ sign (NZSL). In NZ there are about 4500 deaf people who use NZSL as their primary form of communication. In total there over 23,000 users of NZSL in NZ. This larger number includes the families and friends of deaf people. What you see just below is the alphabet - very basic, easy to learn, but just a start. However, it's very slow having to spell out every word letter-by-letter, so NZSL includes a whole lot of 'shorthand' signs that employ the hands, the body and facial expression to convey meaning - much more rapidly. NZSL became an official language in NZ nearly 20 years ago with the *New Zealand Sign Language Act 2006*.



A little story - Years ago, at secondary school, I learned the above sign alphabet. I recall one time the whole school being 'put on silence' (we'd been making too much noise at mealtime). I started communicating openly with my friend who also knew this basic language. For my troubles I got the cane. Well, I guess it was a bit cheeky to do this right in front of the teacher...! 😊

Annual General Meeting: It's that time of year when we must again prepare for our AGM. The date will be **21 September** (3rd Sunday) – the AGM will be after the service, in the Fellowship room, starting at about 10:45am.

For the Annual Report (AR) I will require an individual activity report from each of those who've submitted them previously.

Timeline – To save a whole lot of time at the AGM, we will treat the AR 'as read'. This requires I get a copy of the AR to all attendees seven days ahead of the meeting (by **14 Sept**) and this requires I get all the individual activity reports that together make up the AR, at least seven days ahead of that (by **7 Sept**). It will only help me if I get these early, rather than all at the last minute (which is a real pain). So, I'm ready to receive these anytime from now on...! In due course (~15 August) I'll send out a reminder to those I'm expecting to hear from. I'll also send their last year's activity report as a template.

St Ronan's future: Parish Council is currently in process of identifying our various options for the future. This is complicated a bit because St Alban's is engaged in a similar (but different) process. As sister churches, we are inevitably somewhat bound up together – likewise with San Antonio. First, we are identifying all options. Then we will eliminate the impractical/impossible options, then sort the remaining practical/possible ones into some order of preference. We will present these to the church for further discussion and (eventually) a decision. I'd hope we will be able to complete the task during 2026. Actioning our decision will take some time but we will at least know what best we should do and how best to achieve it...

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Sandy Lang

Peace Sunday

About 10 years ago I sat in a hotel in Waimate having lunch with my mother who had worked in the town during the war years. She told me that this particular hotel had been at the centre of the street party celebrations when the end of WWII was announced. She described the day and how they could hardly believe it - the outpouring of relief and joy that came as that small town at the bottom of the world reacted to the thought of peace, after so many years of war and the devastation and grief that came with it. We can only try and imagine how the news reverberated the world over, especially in the lands in which war and horror were a daily experience.



Peace...

Of course, not long before that, on 6 August 1945, an atomic bomb was dropped on Hiroshima, with tens of thousands of people killed and then

thousands more dying later of radiation poisoning. Horrific. Devastating. Unprecedented. And this Peace Sunday date is intentionally chosen to coincide with this anniversary.

Peace... at what cost...

In essence, Peace Sunday serves as a powerful reminder of the devastating consequences of war and violence, and a call to action for individuals and communities to work towards a more peaceful and just world. We also acknowledge the inter-generational trauma that comes for those who have experienced such horror, and how the effects of it continue to impact families and our societies. At this time in the life of our world, when we look at the carnage, inhumanity and violence all around, how desperately we need peace... a just peace.

We run with longing to embrace peace - yet maintaining a true and just peace is no soft option.

Today, we are no longer reliant on radio and newspapers as my mother was. Our many devices and social media bring war zones and sites of conflict before us wherever we are switched on and at any time of the day - we hear and see terrible accounts of death and suffering. It can be overwhelming, yet we do not want to turn our backs on those enduring horrors in the Israel-Hamas war; Russia Ukraine war; Thailand Cambodia conflict; civil wars in Myanmar; Sudan; Ethiopia; Syria; Yemen and many other places across the globe. It is confronting, but we can and do find ways to seek out the truth, to be informed and aware, and help in whatever small way we can to promote peace.

I am reminded of the words of the American Trappist monk Thomas Merton:

*Peace demands the most heroic labour
and the most difficult sacrifice
It demands greater heroism than war
It demands greater fidelity to the truth and
a much more perfect purity of conscience*

[From *The Nonviolent Alternative*]

We speak of Jesus as the 'prince of peace' and also recall his words John 14:27 "Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled, and do not let them be afraid."

As followers of Jesus, we're called to walk in the ways of peace. To be bearers of that peace Jesus gives. This is necessary, demanding, challenging and ongoing.

Let's take up the challenge to work towards peace, not just on Peace Sunday but always.

Grace and peace

Right Rev Rose Luxford
Moderator Presbyterian Church of Aotearoa New Zealand

Rood Screen – One red paperclip

14 July 2025 marked twenty years since the Canadian blogger Kyle Macdonald started playing his adult version of 'Bigger, better'. The object of the game is to 'trade up'; to turn what you have into something more suited to your needs and wants. He set himself the goal of trading up from one red paperclip to a house.

Impossible? Almost exactly one year later, on 5 July 2006 he was handed the keys to a two-storey house in Kipling, Saskatchewan.

Now, the cynic in me says that his being a blogger with a wide readership probably helped him, and Kipling (population 1140) is not the sort of place where everyone would want to live BUT the fact remains that in just fourteen trades, he achieved his objective. He went from a paperclip to a house with no money changing hands.



As the object of the exercise was merely to prove that it could be done, he and his family did not live in that house very long before they handed the house back to the community.



It currently houses a café that feeds a constant flow of 'pilgrims' who come to see where it all came to fruition.

Here's a list of Macdonald's fourteen 'trades'.

1. Paperclip for a fish-shaped pen.
2. Pen for a hand-sculpted doorknob.
3. Doorknob for a Coleman camp stove (with fuel).
4. Camp stove for a Honda generator.

5. Generator for an 'instant party': (An empty keg, an IOU for filling the keg with the beer of the bearer's choice, and a neon Budweiser sign.)
6. The 'instant party' for a Ski-Doo snowmobile.
7. The snowmobile for a two-person trip to Yahk, British Columbia.
8. The second spot on the Yahk trip for a box truck.
9. The box truck for a recording contract with Metalworks in Mississauga, Ontario.
10. The recording contract for a year's rent in Phoenix, Arizona.
11. The year's rent for one afternoon with Alice Cooper.
12. The afternoon with Cooper for a KISS motorized snow globe.
13. The snow globe for a role in the film Donna on Demand.
14. The movie role for a two-story farmhouse in Kipling, Saskatchewan.

There are now plans for a big celebration in Kipling in July 2026 and it's hoped they will be able to bring all fourteen traders together for the event.

It strikes me that each of the above transactions was financially palatable for the people involved and both parties walked away satisfied. And yet the cumulative effect was incredible.

It's so easy for us as Christians to cop out by saying the value of our contribution won't make a difference – so why bother? I'm sure none of those fourteen people thought their trade was all THAT significant. But fourteen people together in an unbroken chain made the difference between a paperclip and a house.

To paraphrase John Fitzgerald Kennedy, *Ask not what Jesus can do for you; ask what you can do for Jesus*. What you do, together with what those around you do, can change the world.

John Harris

Children's Power Hour – Fruit!

One of the adventures Power Hour (PH) is exploring this term is FRUIT. Yes, fruit! That is, *Fruits of the Spirit*. The term 'fruit', in the bible, means 'result'.

The nine *Fruits of the Spirit* are defined as: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithful, gentleness and self-control Galatians 5:22-23.

The key users of the term fruit were Jesus and Paul. Jesus used the term in a more general way while Paul described what the fruits actually were in a letter he wrote to the Galatians (in modern central Turkey). They resulted, he said, from living by the Spirit and following the Good News of Jesus Galatians 5:16.

Jesus, when teaching, often used everyday agricultural pictures which everyone could understand. In one example he described himself as the vine, with people likened to branches. Grapes could only be produced if the branches stayed connected to the vine.

In another example, he discusses the relationship between himself and God. He said: *'My Father is the gardener... he trims and cleans every branch that produces fruit so it will produce even more fruit.'* John 15:1-4.

This school term, the PH children are exploring a different *Fruit of the Spirit* each week, coming to understand its meaning and finding examples from the Bible and in our own lives.

A session on 20 July, led by our capable PH parents, started with the fruit of 'love'. They discussed the example given in church that morning of the Good Samaritan who showed much love and care towards the injured traveller (Luke 10:25-37). Samaritans faced a great deal of prejudice from the Jews and were shunned by society in general.

Then everyone in PH expressed their own love and care by crafting beautiful cards of 'cheer' and 'get well' for their regular PH teacher, who is recovering from an operation.

*Thinking of you with love
and blessings
Get well soon
I hope you get better soon
We hope you get well
soon - lots of love from
the Power Hour Team
I heard you were feeling under the weather*



This was an engaging and meaningful exercise, as the children shared and expressed their understanding of love.

Term 3 2025 - 22 July -14 September

Susan Connell

Praying for the children of Gaza

In her newsletter for 28 July, St Alban's vicar Rev Sue Brown included these words: 'I sat down to watch the news, and I was moved beyond words to hear reports of children dying daily from starvation in Gaza and of the sight of a young mother clutching the swaddled body of her tiny baby as she took her for burial. Would you take a moment of quietness now to reflect and to pray for peace and for God's love to prevail. You might find inspiration in this poem/prayer by the Rev Maren Tirabassi:

Prayer that there be no famine in Gaza

*Christ, you have said that
we should never be among those
who put stumbling blocks
in the paths of children –*

*help us to be heart-changers
in this time when there could be
fourteen thousand more children
dying in Palestine,
because they have nothing to eat.*

*You have said, Let the children come,
and we are now your voice.
Let children come to the table,
Let children come to a home
that is not rubble.*

*Let the infants receive formula
when their hungry mothers
can give them no milk.
Let the infants have fathers
who hold a spoon for them,
sisters who grow and carry them,
brothers who play with them.*

*We pray that hands be opened,
hearts be opened, roads be opened.*

*Let the food come unto the children,
and do not stop it,
for to these your love belongs.
Amen.*

[Ed. Rev Maren Tirabassi was a local church pastor in America's United Church of Christ. Retired from parish ministry, she now focuses on encouraging other writers and uses writing to support justice action]

Anzac biscuits par excellence...

Last month, Sheryl Selwyn baked us some really delicious Anzac biscuits for morning tea. The recipe came to her via Gill Burke. I wanted a copy and thought other *Record* readers might like a copy too.

Allyson Gofton - Cranberry Anzac Biscuits

Studded with crimson-hued, cranberries, these Anzac biscuits are simply delicious.



Ingredients

- 1 cup flour
- 1 cup soft brown sugar
- 1 cup coconut (desiccated or thread)
- 1 cup rolled oats
- ½ cup almonds, slivered, flaked or finely chopped
- ½ cup dried cranberries
- 125 grams butter
- 2 tablespoons golden syrup
- ½ teaspoon baking soda
- 2 tablespoons water

Method

1. Preheat the oven to 180°C (160°C fan bake). Grease two baking trays.
2. Into a large bowl stir together the flour, sugar, coconut, oats, almonds and cranberries, and make a well in the centre.
3. Heat the butter and golden syrup together. Dissolve the baking soda in the water and stir into the butter mixture. Pour into the dry ingredients and mix well. Roll large tablespoonfuls of mixture into balls - about the size of a small apricot - and place on the prepared tray, leaving enough room for the biscuits to spread. Using the palm of your hand, flatten the biscuits a little.
4. Bake in the preheated oven for 15-18 min, or until biscuits are golden and have spread and risen a little. Cool on a cake rack. Stored in an airtight container, they will keep for 2-3 weeks.

Anne Manchester

Phil's photo...



Warming body and soul - fish & chips on a cold winter's evening, Eastbourne Village



Our God calls us to worship and grow together and to show the love of Christ through serving our community.

Directory

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234 Muritai Road, Eastbourne, Lower Hutt, 5013

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Contributions to The Record are welcome, send to the Editor

Monthly delivery of The Record to your mailbox is available on request

Note: *The views expressed in the Record are those of the authors
They don't necessarily represent those of St Ronan's Church*

The deadline for the September Record is Sunday 24 August 2025