



St Ronan's Presbyterian Church
Eastbourne

Record

AUGUST 2026

2 August	Shared service with the Anglicans (at St Ronan's)	9:30am
9 August	Informal worship (WTW ¹)	9:30am
16 August	Formal service led by Rev Ross Scott	9:30am
23 August	Informal worship (BYO ²)	9:30am
30 August	Formal service led by Rev Doug Rogers	9:30am
6 September	Shared service with the Anglicans (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 029 278 9947

Colin Dalziel 0210 262 2059, Sandy Lang 021 222 0383

¹ What's The Word. We are given a bible passage to read, and we discover what this has to say to us.

² 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.

Church as repair shop...

A Facebook friend, the Rev Glynn Cardy, began ministry as an Anglican priest. After serving for more than thirty years as vicar, archdeacon and city-church leader, he found he was increasingly aligned with progressive theology, open spirituality and community-based ministry. His billboards at St Matthew's had made him nationally known.



In 2013, he resigned his connection with the Anglican Church to accept a call to the Presbyterian church of St Luke's, Remuera. His arrival has helped define St Luke's as one of New Zealand's leading progressive congregations. He regularly posts extended comments on topical issues on Facebook. I thought this one 'Church as repair shop' was well worth sharing³.

The Christian religion, whatever the franchise, puts great store on the word 'love'. The divine essence and motivation are said to be love. Jesus is said to have preached, told stories, and practised love. And the Christian Scriptures have embedded within examples of the same.

Yet, the Church over the centuries, whatever the franchise, has frequently and spectacularly failed when it comes to love. Whether it be condoning wars or patriarchal abuse, or supporting systems of economic, racial, and gender injustice. It's not hard to come up with a list!

Let us, as ministers sometimes do, imagine Church starting again. From scratch, so to speak. And imagine pausing a lot of the doctrines, traditions, and practices we've inherited. Even the good ones. Putting them aside, or in storage. To declutter if you like.

Then go on to imagine, to get at the heart, what is the one thing, the most important thing, around which all other things find their place and rhythm. And I would suggest that one thing is learning to love.

Which is not as simple as it sounds.

When we are babies, we learn love by receiving it. An attuned caregiver positively, responsively, interacts with us – cuddling, smiling at us, talking kindly to us. The caregiver prioritises the child over many other things, for these positive actions (for example, returning a smile with a smile) take time and lots of repetition. Of course, such caregivers do much more besides – including feeding, warming and changing us.

³ Another Glynn Cardy reflection 'The value of pausing' was published in the May Record [Ed]

All these actions are part of the matrix of love and evolve as the child grows. It is this positive loving attunement that helps grow the brain architecture – physical and psychological – for trusting human relationships.

Sometimes the growth of that architecture gets disturbed. Sometimes by unforeseen circumstances. Sometimes by trauma. Sometimes by loss. Unrepaired, the child may not learn to trust but to fear.

And maybe that's the starting point for a reimagined Church: we are here to repair. A repair shop. A repairing community. Repairing our ability to trust, our ability to love.

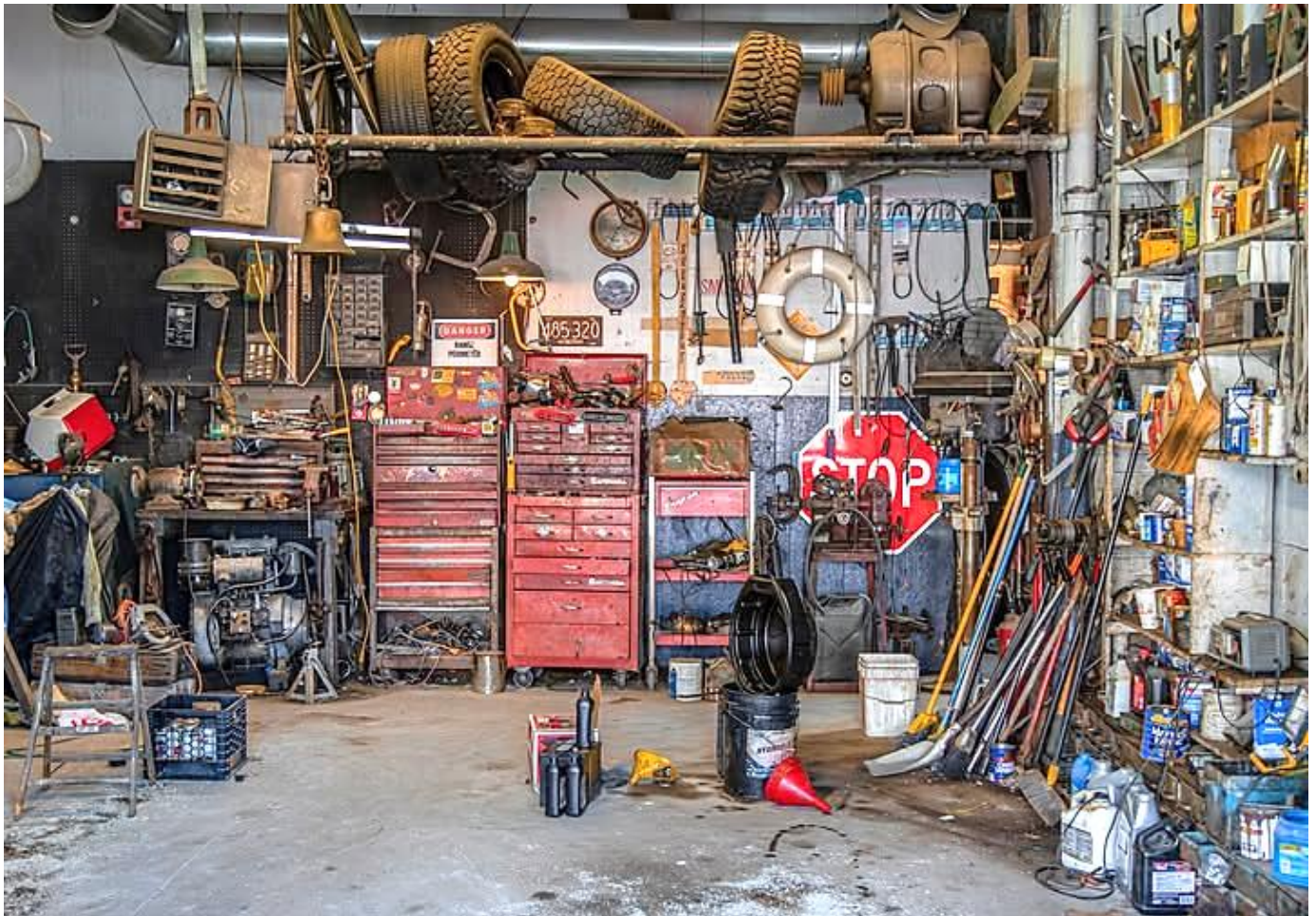


Photo: Todd Kent, Unsplash

For as we grow from child to adult, and then age with the decades, we can carry with us the weakened or fractured architecture of the mind and soul caused by criticism, violence, bullying, and being deprived of unconditional love. We learn to live with some of the damage that has been done to us, and we try not to visit such damaging behaviours on to others.

I once belonged to a little church where everyone was unfailingly good to each other. This little church was in the middle of one of New Zealand's most economically impoverished areas. Life was hard, very hard. And each Sunday, people would walk to this little oasis to get away from the hardness. There in that tired but beloved building, people would help each other, be kind, smile,

and never express criticism or anger towards each other. They came to church for a lifting of their spirit.

I think that little church was a repair shop. Repairing the ability to trust, the ability to love."

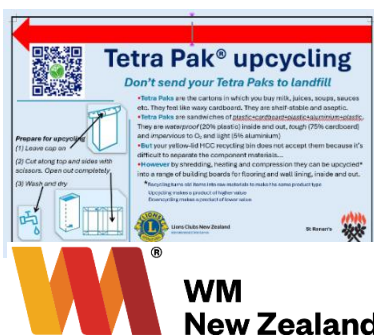
It seems to me that is a worthwhile aim for any small church.

Reg Weeks

Clerk's corner...

Church meeting: On the front cover you will see on 30 August we break with our habit of a 5th Sunday Fellowship Lunch. This is a once off change. We plan instead for a regular formal worship service in the church, at 9:30am. This will be followed by a church meeting. We've not had one of these for quite a while. I encourage you to give this priority.

Recycling: We've very recently added *Tetra Pak* upcycling⁴ to what we do at St Ronan's. This, with a little help from the Eastbourne Lions.



Conveniently, St R's is on the main road, and has space out front, making it easy for us to give a well-lit home to a 24x7 access bin for cut-open, washed, dried, *Tetra Paks*.

Our *Tetra Pak* bin is a re-purposed Waste Management bin - left over from the days before HCC started its own kerbside wheelie bins in 2021.

With a little help from the HCC, the bin contents (disembowelled, clean *Tetra Paks*) will find their way to *Earthlink* in Taita, where they will be compressed into bales and trucked off to saveBOARD NZ in Hamilton.



Here they'll be shredded, heated and compressed to form an upcycled range of building products.

Maintenance: In recent weeks we've had a couple radiant heaters fail – one in the Hall, one in the Blue room. These have been replaced.

The spindly, dying/dead, kōwhai trees previously on the south side of the church have been removed and have been replaced by a couple of camellias - one red, one white.

⁴ See page 11.

The little bit of trellis that created a visual barrier to this area fell to bits (old age plus maybe a bit of mischievous help) and has been replaced by a new bit. This area looks tidier now. It's also the area where our battery recycling bin is located. The more frequent visitations put this area in need of a makeover.

slang@outlook.co.nz **t:** (04) 562 8752 **m:** 021 222 0383 **Sandy Lang**

Rood Screen – Satoru Takaba...

Living in Nagoya (Japan) Satoru Takaba was happily married to wife Namiko, and they had a two-year-old son Kohei. On 13 November 1999, Namiko was brutally murdered in their apartment. Strangely, little Kohei, who was there, was unharmed.

Despite extensive investigations that included interviewing 5,000 people, the police were unable to find the murderer. The only clues investigators unearthed were that the suspect was female, had type-B blood, and was about 1.6 m tall. She had been wearing shoes 24 cm in length.



Satoru was grief-stricken and, understandably, he and Kohei quickly moved out of their 'crime-scene' apartment. BUT, because Satoru believed that, one day, forensic science would advance to the point where the killer could be identified, he locked the door and kept paying the rent on their empty apartment. Satoru never remarried and he brought up their son on his own.

The science eventually caught up, the breakthrough was made, and the killer was identified and brought to justice. But it had taken 26 years and 22 million yen (about NZ\$240,000) in rent.

I found some amazing parallels to our Christian faith in this story. Satoru never stopped loving Namiko and his faith in the final, just outcome never wavered. God loves us so much and never, ever gives up on us. And when we are ready to come home to Him, He is ready to welcome us.

22 million yen sounds like a huge number all by itself, and it is. But I think we must bear in mind that rents are usually linked indirectly to wages. The idea of paying double rent for 26 years is eye-watering! But Satoru was prepared to do it. And as we know, God was prepared to pay the eye-watering price of Jesus' crucifixion, just so that you and I could be welcomed 'home'.



Greater love hath no man

John Harris

A prayer for rain...

At our service on July 19, one of the prayers I delivered on behalf of Diane Gilliam-Weeks (who was unwell) is worth reproducing here.

Its focus is a plea for rain in drought-stricken Somalia. The drought, officially declared in November 2025, continues to devastate Somalia, with nearly 5 to 6.5 million people affected by water scarcity, crop failure and food insecurity. At least 2 million people are facing acute hunger, and over 1.8 million children under five are at risk of malnutrition.

What made Diane's prayer particularly poignant was the fact North Canterbury, both south and north of Kaikoura, had been devastated by swollen rivers and flooding, with parts of SH1 closed and communities cut off. In Diane's words:

'Humanity has changed the landscape and for many the weather is harsh. May [our leaders'] hearts be tuned to your will and may they not sidestep their climate care responsibilities.'

A prayer from Somalia

You who give sustenance to your creatures, O God
You who are merciful and compassionate,
Milk rain from the sky for those in need!

You who poured water into oceans, O God,
Make this land of ours fertile again!

Acceptor of penance, who are wealthy, O God,
Gather water in rivers whose beds have run dry!

You who are glorious, truly bounteous, O God,
Our cries have undone us, grant a shower of rain!

You who are gentle, truly worshipped, O God,
Milk water.... for animals stricken with thirst!

We have done much remembrance, O God who remembers,
Loosen upon us rain from the clouds!

You who are truthful, Creator, O God,
We accept in submission whatever you say!

You who are bounteous, the protector, O God,
We cannot survive drought, send us rain from your store!

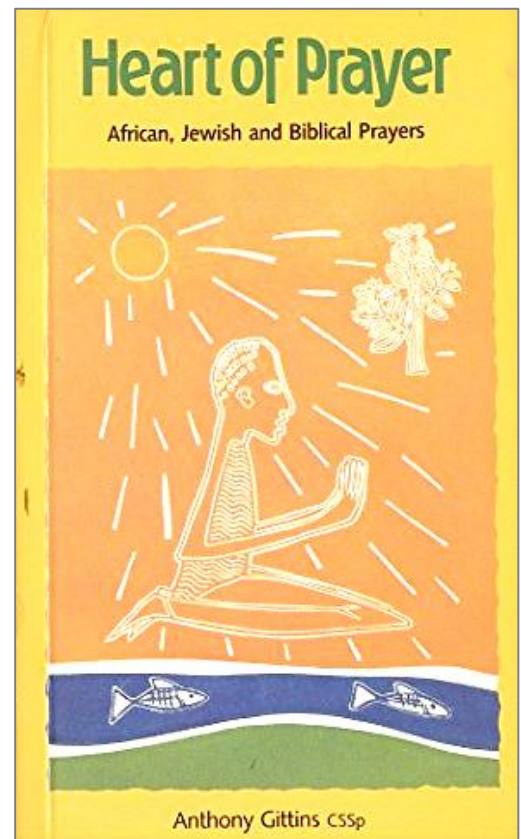
You who drive the air which sways the trees, O God,
It is you whom we praised, grant us the goodness of rain!

You who are worshipped and answer prayers, O God,
Make the rain spread over the whole of the land!

Bestower of victories, benefactor, O God,
Bring us faultless rain which makes us dwell where it falls!

You who are one and are trusted, O God,
Provider of all, give water to your people!

(Somali, Somalia. Heart of Prayer, comp. Anthony Gittins, CSSp, Collins, 1985.
Used with permission.)



Anne Manchester

Power Hour – Heroes of the early church...

When it came to spreading the Good News, Jesus had first said to his followers to start in Jerusalem but to wait for the Holy Spirit to come. Thus, spreading the Good News started at the Pentecost harvest festival which was 50 days after Passover (our Easter). Power Hour has been learning about some of these disciples who went out into the world and were known as the first Christians.

We discovered how loyal and passionate Saul/Paul, Philip, the Ethiopian royal officer, Ananias, Stephen, Lydia, Tychicus, John Mark, Silas, Barnabas and Thomas were. They were heroic, brave, competent and strong!

Interestingly, both the Pentecost festival and spreading the Good News to the world involve harvesting and sharing yields with others... a joyful transition.

POWER HOUR PSALM

Loving God you are

Caring

Rejoice and sing

Ever lasting love

Always with me

Teaching me about kindness

Inspiring

Open to listen and accept

Never ending and knowing

These disciples are considered 'heroic' because, as a new Christian group of believers faithful to Jesus' teachings of a living God, they faced many hurdles and challenges. They were regarded as rocking the boat and destabilising the conservative Jewish and ruling Roman societies in Isreal. Persecution and elimination via prison or death were constant threats. So, spreading the Good News forced these brave souls and teachers, underground (eg small group meetings in homes), relocating to other cities (eg Damascus, Antioch, Philippi) and other countries (eg Turkey, Syria, India, Greece, Italy, Cyprus, Crete). Travelling meant coping with sea storms and walking

long distances through unknown cities and countries, and being the new strangers in town, facing sceptic people who believed in Roman gods and idols. (eg in Ephesus). As part of exploring Acts and the various letters that follow this book, we have learnt about some amazing travels and new geography. We have challenged ourselves to learn a part of Paul's letter to the Colossians (chapter 3:12-15). Remembering that the sign of a fish was a secret Christian code, we have drawn a fish with our toes in sand and shared a chocolate fish.



However, Power Hour had a question. What kept these heroes going in spite of the challenges they faced? A plausible answer was that besides the heroes being competent teachers with good networking skills, it was their utter passion for the love of the living God that encouraged them. They believed that the Good News they brought with them was the way to live a full and good life. They were progressive. Their humble passion and faith drove them onwards. We saw how they endured their travel conditions and faced imprisonment, yet continued to sing songs of praise to God (eg Paul and Silas in Philippi). In addition, the appreciative responses from growing church groups encouraged them to keep going.

Like these Good News heroes, Power Hour expressed their beliefs and praises to God by making an acrostic Psalm of Praise (see previous page). This is a special aid to grow our faith and help us live good lives.

Susan Connell

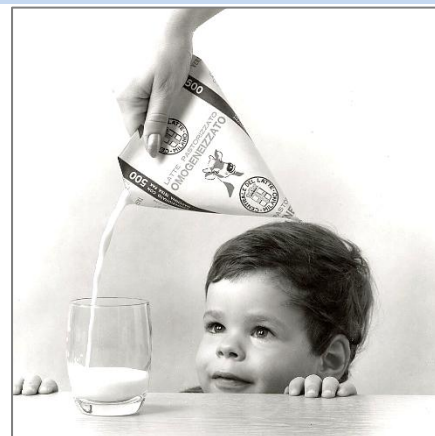
Term 3 2026: 2 August to 20 September

Upcycling Tetra Paks...

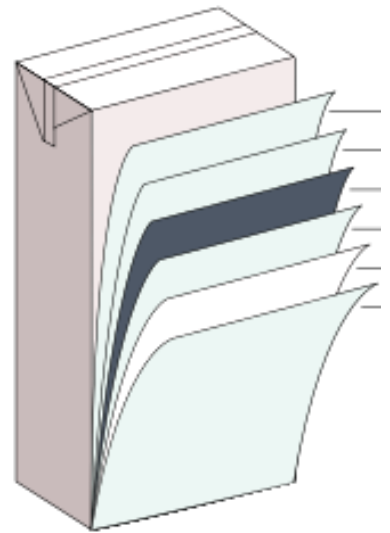
Tetra Pak is a Swedish multinational food packaging company headquartered in Switzerland. The company was formed in the 1950s and named for its first product - *Tetra Pak* - a tetrahedron-shaped (a triangular pyramid), plastic-coated-cardboard milk carton. Some of you may remember these...?



Tetra Pak now operates in 160 countries and employs over 25,000 people. The early tetrahedral packs were very stable but not so easy to hold securely, and they didn't sit well on the supermarket shelf or in the fridge. Since the 1960s the *Tetra Brik* (a cuboid package) has become the standard for milk, juices, soups, sauces etc. Although no longer tetrahedral, they are still called *Tetra Paks* (not *Cubi Paks*...!) and the company is still called *Tetra Pak*.



The Carton: A *Tetra Pak* carton looks and feels like waxy cardboard. Actually, they are multi-layer 'sandwiches' (from outside to inside) of *polythene - cardboard - polythene - aluminium - polythene*. The outer polythene layer renders them *waterproof* from the outside and the inner one from inside; the cardboard renders them structurally *tough*; and the aluminium renders them *impervious* to O₂ and light⁵. The inner polythene layer serves to 'glue' the cardboard to the aluminium. They are also shelf-stable⁶ and aseptic⁷. The aseptic packaging makes supply possible without cold chain⁸. *Tetra Paks* are also light, cheap and tough. They stack tightly in cartons for ease of distribution (bulk storage, transport) and on supermarket shelves. Also, in the home (cupboard storage) and, after opening⁹, they are a good shape for your fridge. These are all very desirable properties that substantially cheapen and facilitate food product distribution and storage.



Some, not all, of these properties *Tetra Paks* share with steel and aluminium cans, plastic bottles and glass bottles and jars. A manufacturer's choice of package is influenced by factors including suitability, cost and sustainability. Coke used to be in glass, now in plastic bottles and aluminium cans, baked beans always have been in steel cans, beer mostly now in aluminium cans and glass bottles etc...

But: The 'sandwich' structure of *Tetra Paks* is composed of a bonded mix of 75% cardboard, 20% polythene and 5% aluminium. Your yellow-lid HCC recycling bin does accept steel and aluminium cans and plastic bottles, and your lidless blue HCC recycling bin accepts glass bottles and jars. But because of *Tetra Pak's* difficult-to-separate materials, HCC does not accept them. So, they must be put in your red-lid HCC bin and are sent off to landfill. Here, they present a significant environmental problem because under a tip's anaerobic (buried) conditions, cardboard degrades to methane – a bad greenhouse gas.



⁵ Food products degrade if exposed to O₂ and light (especially the UV of sunlight).

⁶ Don't require refrigeration.

⁷ Sterile.

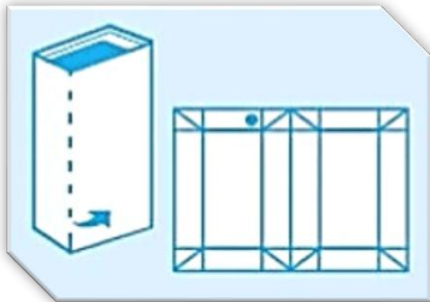
⁸ Continuous temperature control from factory to supermarket refrigerator.

⁹ No longer sterile.

However: There is a Hamilton company 'saveBOARD NZ' that shreds, heats and compresses *Tetra Paks*, upcycling then to a range of building boards useful for flooring and wall lining, inside and out. Google **saveboard**



So: With help from Bruce Spedding and partnering with the Eastbourne Lions, St Ronan's now has a 240 L bin available 24x7 for your used *Tetra Paks*. Please, (1) Leave the cap on, (2) Cut them open so they lie flat, and (3) Wash and dry them.



Lions Clubs New Zealand
Kia Manaaki | We Serve

In a couple of weeks I hope to have saveBOARD samples available by our *Tetra Pak* bin, so you can see and touch the end product.

Sandy Lang

PS – Some definitions: You will have noticed the word 'upcycling' just above. There're three terms used to describe ways of reducing waste by reusing materials. These are based on the quality or value or usefulness of the final product, relative to that of the initial product.



Downcycling turns a waste material into something of lower-value than the original: e.g., mixed wastepaper to low-grade packaging; plastic bottles /bags to plastic fence posts; old textiles to rags or insulation.

Recycling turns old items into raw materials used to re-make products of the same type: e.g., old glass bottles to new glass bottles; old aluminium cans to new aluminium cans; old paper, pulped and made into new paper products.

Upcycling turns low-value waste into higher-value products: e.g., old pallets to furniture; old glass jars to storage containers; old bottles to candle holders; old *Tetra Paks* to a high-value construction product - building boards.

Lastly - Any of these three processes beats sending your waste to landfill.

Whakataukī o te marama – Hereturikōkā...

*Kua hinga te tōtara o
Te Waonui a Tāne*

*The tōtara has fallen in
the great forest of Tāne*

The tōtara tree is significant, not only for its physical appearance, but for what it provides for humanity's use. Its wood is strong, durable and rot resistant, making it suitable for carvings and constructing waka. Its berries are sweet and edible, with the tree and fruit having many medicinal uses.

When this whakataukī is used, you know immediately that the person who has died is someone of very high standing in the community.

Some notable tōtara who have fallen so far this year include Māori academic and Ngāti Porou leader Sir Tamiti Reedy; entertainer and comedy icon Dame Lynda Topp; and, most recently, actor and national New Zealand treasure Sir Sam Neill. I was lucky enough to know and work with Sam when he was a director at the National Film Unit in Miramar in the early 1970s and I was a trainee film editor. Sam has an Eastbourne connection too, as he lived opposite Bishop Park for a couple of years in the late 1970s/early 80s.



But it seems to me that whenever we lose a loved one, a tōtara tree falls in our forest too. When someone of great standing in our own world dies, we are left the poorer. So, every time we hear or read this whakataukī, let us remember the departed ones from our own whānau, as well as from the wider society of Aotearoa New Zealand.

Anne Manchester

Living justly in Aotearoa...

THRIVING IN THIS LAND

COMMON
GRACE

A three-part series on Treaty, economic and climate justice

A workshop series exploring how we can live faithfully, justly and hope-filled in Aotearoa.

Join Eastbourne Christians as we korero across three collaborative sessions. How can we address poverty and the cost of living, respond to our unstable climate, and honour Te Tiriti?

The Cost of Living

Sunday 5 July | 11:30-1:30

San Antonio Church, Oroua Street

The Climate

Sunday 2 August | 11:30-1:30

St Ronan's Church, Muritai Road

Te Tiriti

Sunday 6 September | 11:30-1:30

San Antonio Church, Oroua Street

Bring a small plate to share for lunch

Come as you are - there's a place for your voice!

Thriving in this land: Part two of this series will run after our shared service with the St Alban's congregation at St Ronan's Church on Sunday, 2 August. The series is created by Common Grace Aotearoa to help congregations look beyond the daily news headlines and explore how our values call us to respond to some pressing societal issue. The 90-minute sessions include video, guided discussion and printed resources. They aim to help congregations prepare for this year's General Election.

The first session on 5 July looked at poverty and the cost-of-living crisis through the lens of compassion and practical hope. The session on 2 August will focus on climate change, while the final session on 6 September will discuss ways to honour Te Tiriti o Waitangi.

Those attending are asked to bring a small plate of food to share.

Presbyterian Support Central launches Winter Appeal...

Presbyterian Support Central has launched its Winter Appeal. All money raised will help support vulnerable children, families and older people across our communities.

Presbyterian Support Central has been serving local communities for more than 100 years. In 1909, Rev Dr James Gibb saw families and children struggling without support and rallied the Presbyterian community to help. Part of his vision became Presbyterian Support Central, a practical expression of faith in action that continues to change lives today. James Gibb was minister at St John's Church in Wellington for 23 years.



In the 2024/25 financial year, 2482 children and whānau were supported through Support Central's Family Works programme and 2329 elders were cared for through its Enliven Services.

Donations can be made online through psc.org.nz/winter-appeal, or there are donation forms in the church foyer for people to take home.

Phil's photo – farewelling the Lai family...



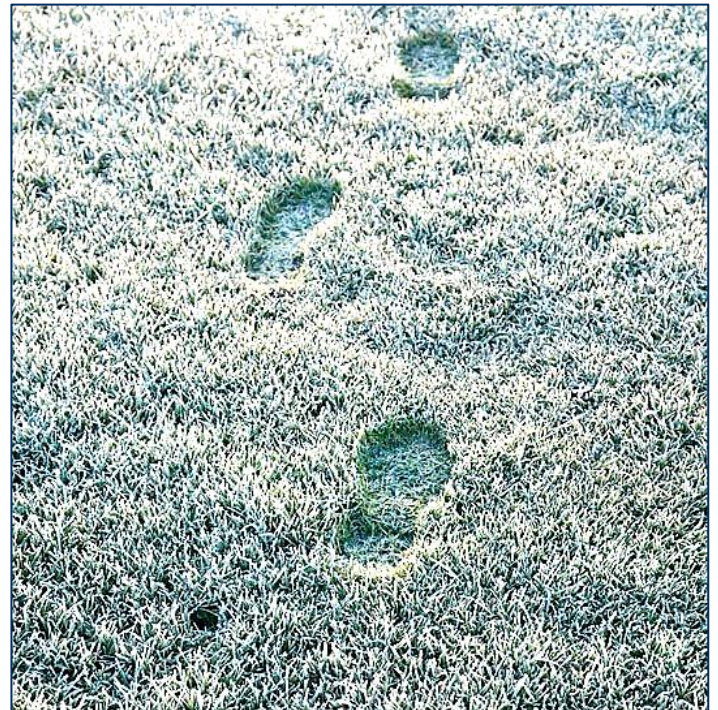
Hundreds of locals turned out to bid farewell to the Lai family at a function in the Eastbourne Library/Neighbourhood Hub on June 27. It was a poignant occasion, with all those there wanting to honour and thank the siblings Sandra (pictured above), Richard and Tom for continuing their parents' fruit shop legacy for so long.

Jack and Jenny Lai established their shop 73 years ago, with three of their six children taking over the business, at various stages, from the 1980s.

The event included speeches, an historical account, some poems, laughter and presentation of gifts by the President of the Republic of Eastbourne, Murray Gibbons. Murray brought the event to a close by presenting Richard Lai with a whistle. After a few moments' confusion, Richard duly blew the whistle, thus calling time on this much-loved community business.

Frosty reception...

It was a frosty morning at my place on Saturday. As I headed out to feed some animals the grass cracked under my feet and I left a trail of footmarks across the white carpet of frost. The wind was biting and I regretted not putting on a jacket. It was definitely winter, and I headed in to warm up by the fire.



On occasions I have been a 'mystery shopper' at churches on a Sunday morning. On some of those visits I felt a frosty reception — a lack of engagement with me, pointed fingers and whispered conversations, and the notable lack of interpersonal warmth.

Thankfully it doesn't happen often, but regrettably it does. I am not alone. Research has indicated that many newcomers reach out to a church congregation and receive a frosty reception. It is not the intention of the people to blow a cold front on visitors, but it happens and the visitor never returns.

Our challenge as churches is to be consciously aware of the social temperature. There is no device to measure it, but an effort to 'read the room' and gauge the warmth. How do we make sure that newcomers feel the warmth of our welcome? How do we counteract the icy chills that come from some of our members? How do we make sure that it is not too hot and uncomfortable for the newcomer. I have no concrete answers but know we have to be aware of

Pray this week that people in our congregations may be aware of the temperature and moderate their frostiness. Pray that we might show the warmth of Christ's love to all who come across the church door and that they may feel at home.

Peter MacKenzie
Executive Secretary, Presbytery Central
From Central Roundup 15 July 2026



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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- Your contribution to the Record is welcome
- Request monthly delivery of the Record to your mailbox
- Note: *The views expressed in the Record are those of the authors they don't necessarily represent those of St Ronan's Church*

Deadline for the September Record is Sunday 23 August 2026