



St Ronan's Presbyterian Church
Eastbourne

Record

JUNE 2026

7 June	Shared service with the Anglicans (at St Ronan's)	9:30am
14 June	Informal worship (WTW ¹)	9:30am
21 June	Formal service John Howell	9:30am
28 June	Informal worship (BYO ²)	9:30am
5 July	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 562 8772, Colin Dalziel 562 7238, Sandy Lang 562 8753

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.

Living out the Way

Thomas said to him: 'Lord, we don't know where you are going so how can we know the way?'

Followers of Jesus often find themselves asking this question, and the response of Jesus is always the same: 'I am the way'. At first glance it doesn't seem to be very helpful in resolving our questions.

I discovered just recently that Eddie Askew, well-known English author, artist, and one-time general director of The International Leprosy Mission, had written a reflection on this well-known interchange in his book of meditations and prayers called simply *Encounters*.



The following is taken from Part Five: The courage to be honest, p 120:

'I am the way,' said Jesus. He wouldn't give them a detailed route map; he was offering them a presence. They were to live as he lived, to take on his spirit, to live in his freedom.

Though they wouldn't be able to see him, he would still be with them on the journey. He would expect them to make their own decisions, and to witness through their lives to the truth that they had received from him. Their lifestyle would be distinctive and relevant wherever they were, whenever they lived.

Early Christians were sometimes called 'followers of the Way'; again, not as a marked out and predictable path but as a living out of the presence of his spirit within them.

They wouldn't be following Jesus into the truth, nor would he be taking them on towards new life at some future rendezvous. He was, is, the way, the truth, the life. They would be living it. The wonder of it, its breathtaking audacity may have been hard for Thomas and his friends to take in but it was something they would grow into.

We are not told how Thomas and the others reacted to his words. I reckon we're only seeing the edge of a longer conversation with questions and answers; perhaps with more questions than answers. Some of the parameters of our life's path are set by circumstances we can't control, but we have freedom to choose the way we live them.

'I am the way,' says Jesus. And when, like Thomas, we don't understand? Just go straight on doing what we are doing. The confirmation often comes later. The Danish philosopher, Soren Kierkegaard, wrote: 'Life can only be

understood backwards, but it must be lived forwards.' There are many occasions when our minds are unsure and questioning, but our hearts know.

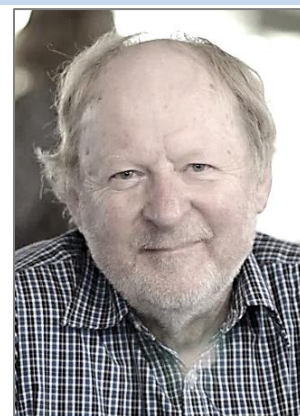
Christians don't have clear answers to every question - only the dangerous cults claim that - and it's foolish to pretend we have. Someone once said: 'Always seek the truth, but carefully avoid anyone who claims to have all of it!' Far better to admit to questions than to use a smokescreen of pious platitudes to mask our ignorance. People will see through the platitudes anyway, and so does God.

If we are living out the Way, our lifestyle will be a far better witness to his presence than our words alone. Indeed, if our lifestyle doesn't authenticate our words then there's little point in talking. As Saint Francis of Assisi is reputed to have told his followers, 'Always preach the gospel; if necessary, use words.'

Reg Weeks

Clerk's corner...

The Hall is the oldest of our buildings. It predates both the Church and the Education block (Blue room + Sunday School room + Fellowship room). The Hall is also the space most used by ourselves, and also by the community – about 40 hours a week, term-times. The Hall's great virtue is its size and also its uncarpeted, 'suspended' floor. A suspended floor is much better suited to dance and movement than a concrete floor because it has a softer feel, it absorbs shock, reduces injury.



But our Hall's also a bit 'utility' looking - a lot of brown ply wall panelling and a brown particle board floor. Recently we improved the lighting by upgrading to new, much brighter LED lights. These replaced the old fluorescent tubes.

Another matter of which we've been especially aware recently has been the 'echoey' nature of the space – the hard, flat walls, floor and ceiling reflect sound back and forth between opposing surfaces (in acoustics speak, a canyon effect). This can be a bit of an ordeal for those present. I can think of a few local cafés (I won't name...!) that suffer the same problem, making conversation difficult, especially if there's also background music and they're full of happy people...!

We recently acquired some coloured acoustic tiles (about 10 mm thick). These are of a porous, fibrous material that traps sound energy and greatly reduces how much of it is reflected back from a flat surface. The brown floor and walls somewhat limit our colour choice. I selected



three greenish 'forest' colours that mimic a pōhutukawa tree's foliage with a dash of bright red here and there - its flowers.

I hope they will improve the acoustic environment. An early response from a dance coach was 'It definitely works. It's great.' I also hope they will help

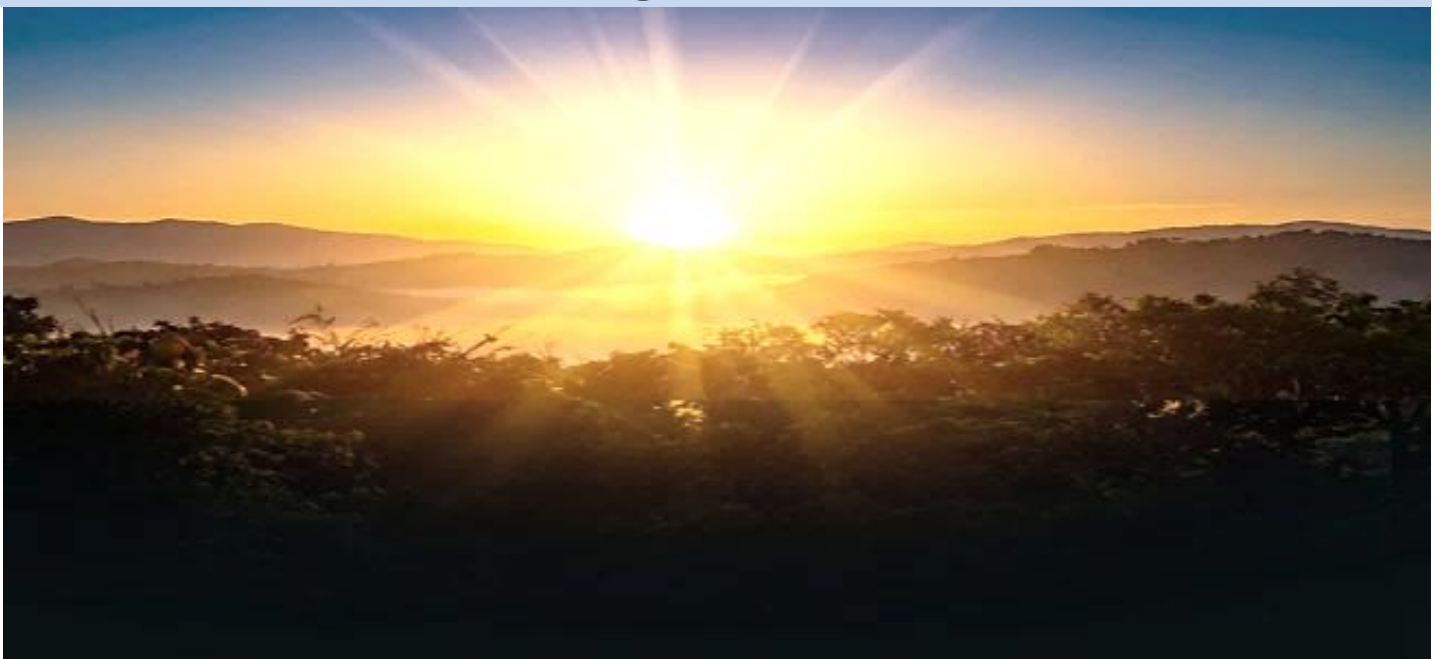
brighten up the space a bit. Thanks go to Simon who installed the tiles. Tiling is not as quick or as easy as you might imagine...!

slang@outlook.co.nz **t:** 562 8752 **m:** 021 222 0383

Sandy Lang



Moderator's Pentecost message...



When I was growing up, our church didn't observe Pentecost Sunday. It was considered too inconvenient to break into the current preaching series. In my early 20s, I followed the crowd and attended a local Pentecostal Church, where attempts were made to replicate at least some of the Acts 2 Pentecost event. In one service, the pastor had a great idea, kind of like a new revelation, that

the mark of a true Christian was speaking in tongues. Within moments, we were lined up at the front as dear pastor came down the row, one by one, doing his magic, and my contemporaries were slain in the Spirit. I wasn't.

The pastor returned to try again, and after the third attempt, with me still standing, I was told in no uncertain terms that I had a rebellious spirit, wasn't a Christian, and not to come again. I didn't even stay for the end of the service. It took me a long time to recover emotionally with all the mixed feelings of being rejected by God. Eventually, I returned to a Presbyterian Church to find healing from the spiritual abuse I had received.

The teaching and example in that Church was that some people may be blessed with a Pentecost experience with all the bells and whistles, but for most, the Holy Spirit comes gently with the laying of hands and prayer to begin the journey of transformation into the likeness of Christ.

I am still on that journey. I have glimpsed its end in the physical sense, and all is well with my soul, because the Holy Spirit is my Comforter.

Here is what I have learned. The Holy Spirit is the tangible, present third person of the Trinity, one we can speak to and receive from. Sometimes I'm concerned in church services, on Pentecost and other days, when the liturgy in its rhythm recites, 'Come, Holy Spirit, come,' and then carries on with the rhythm without a pause or second thought. The Holy Spirit has come. The Spirit is here and is the heat and power accompanying the light of the Son.

At times, I sense a 'fuel shortage', and there is a sorrow in my heart. Jesus makes a telling comment in his conversation with the Samaritan women when they are discussing what form of worship is correct, Samaritan or Jewish.

'But the time is coming—indeed it's here now—when true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and in truth. The Father is looking for those who will worship him that way. For God is Spirit, so those who worship him must worship in spirit and in truth.' (John 4:23-24)

Watch out. The Holy Spirit has come.

Right Rev Peter Dunn

Moderator Presbyterian Church of Aotearoa New Zealand

moderator@presbyterian.org.nz

(Contributed Rev Diane Gilliam-Weeks)(Abridged – Ed)

The work of God's fingers...



I took this photo at 5:45pm on Tuesday, 19 May from my carport. It captures Venus and the Moon so perfectly together. The overwhelming beauty of what I saw brought to my mind Psalm 8, particularly verses 1-5.

*¹O Lord, our Sovereign,
how majestic is your name in all the earth!
You have set your glory above the heavens.
²Out of the mouths of babes and infants
you have founded a bulwark because of your foes,
to silence the enemy and the avenger.
³When I look at your heavens, the work of your fingers,
the moon and the stars that you have established;
⁴what are human beings that you are mindful of them,
mortals that you care for them?
⁵Yet you have made them a little lower than God,
and crowned them with glory and honour.*

I have often been overwhelmed by the majesty of the night sky on my frequent walks along the beach. These walks have even inspired a hymn or two. I wrote *Along a Moonlit Shore* in 2000, sitting at the piano and working out the tune as the words slowly developed. I have probably written about 100 hymns over the years.

*Along a moonlit shore
That I have walked before
The sparkling sea
Resounds a melody
The shadows dance and play
It's almost light as day
Yet stars above
Shine out the Father's love*

Chorus

*All I can stand in wonder
At our saviour's majesty
Thankful to our Lord who
died And rose to set us free.*

*Along a moonlit shore
I'm thinking what it's for
This life this place
That needs the Father's grace*

*We have our lives to share
People to love and care
To live and pray
And show the Jesus way*

Chorus

*All I can stand in wonder
At our saviour's majesty
Thankful to our Lord who
died And rose to set us free.*

*Along a moonlit shore
That I have walked before
The sparkling sea
Resounds a melody
The shadows dance and play
It's almost light as day
Yet stars above
Shine out the Father's love*

Colin Dalziel

Power Hour – Going forth with the Good News of Jesus...

With the beginning of Pentecost, Power Hour has launched into sharing the Good News of Jesus through the adventures of various heroes and heroines who made it all happen, eg Paul, Philip, Lydia, Thomas. This has involved lots of referring to the book of Acts and dramatising with mime.

A challenge has been set to learn the meritorious lifelong guideline as set out in the letter to the Colossians in chapter 3:12-17. And of course there is a prize at the end for that achievement!

Underpinning the Good News of Jesus for us is how that news translates to our everyday life. Having Jesus walk beside us is often shown through our actions. 'Actions speak louder than words', as we all know. Hence, on Mother's Day we potted up some colourful pansy plants for our mothers, grans and great grans. We also crafted cards to express our thankfulness to them. We then carried this surprise to them at morning teatime. The photos (see next page - Emma left, Blake right) show them ready to connect to these special people with joy, honour and peace: something we can uphold every day.

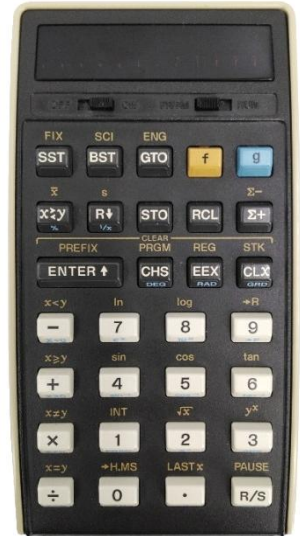
Rood Screen – Moon Maths...

I expect you, like me, watched April's Artemis mission to the moon with awe. And likely you, like me, didn't spare a thought for the mathematics that made it all possible. We no longer marvel at the power of computers to calculate things. After all, that's what they do all of the time.

Some of you may remember the Hewlett-Packard HP25 (1975). It had a built-in game called the 'Moon Landing Simulator'.³ Most who tried it failed dismally.

And that's just a small part of the mathematics involved. Apart from spinning on its own axis, Earth is travelling at 30 km/s (that's the equivalent of London to New York in 3 min) – and the moon's not standing still either.

And when Apollo went to the moon in 1969, we didn't have 'real' computers!



The Apollo programme was guided by the *Apollo Guidance Computer* (AGC) that was the equivalent of the old Apple II (1977). Do you remember those? The smartphone you have in your pocket (even a basic model) has many thousand times more computing power than the AGC. So, the AGC needed a bit of AI. In this case 'Academic Intelligence'.

Margaret Hamilton was the American computer scientist who directed the Software Engineering Division at the MIT (Massachusetts Institute of Technology) Instrumentation Laboratory. Under contract with NASA, her team developed the on-board flight software for the Apollo space programme, including the AGC used on all of the Apollo lunar missions. And they did it the old-fashioned way. By hand.

There were 17 Apollo missions and for each one, the moon was in a different position. Every mission reached the moon safely and everyone came home safely. Thanks to Margaret and her team.

³ Because these early calculators didn't have graphic screens, the game was text-based. You were typically dropped at an altitude of 500 ft falling at 50 ft/sec. The calculator displayed your altitude and velocity, and you had to type in exactly how much fuel to burn each second to achieve a soft, zero-velocity touchdown. Too much and you flew off into space - too little and you crashed.

The picture shows Margaret, standing next to a stack of line-printer, fan-fold, print-out of the code she handwrote to get Apollo to the moon and back.

Twelve men set foot on the moon. I wonder how many you remember? There's a list below - in the order in which they stepped onto the moon.

BUT – Had you ever heard of Margaret Hamilton before now? I can hear the chorus of '-isms', but over 400,000 people worked on the Apollo programme. And each performed some vital role in the success of the programme. And yet we don't know the names of at least 399,900 of them!



As I write this, we've just celebrated Pentecost. We read in 1 Corinthians 2 that there are many kinds of gifts given to different people – but there is no mention of who received what gift, or how they used it.

I couldn't help noticing that the only name on the Order of Service this morning was that of the preacher. And yet there was a small army of people who contributed their time and skills to making the worship service happen – not least the congregants. Worship would be awfully dull if nobody showed up! [This month's whakataukī is relevant here – Ed.]

What talents has God given to you? Making music? Preaching? Making a decent cup of tea? Visting the sick?

Just being able to be part Jesus' team here on Earth, is a reward in itself. And He is the one who will welcome us one day with the words "Well done, thou good and faithful servant."

John Harris

1. Neil Armstrong (Apollo 11)
2. Buzz Aldrin (Apollo 11).
3. Pete Conrad (Apollo 12)
4. Alan Bean (Apollo 12)
5. Alan Shepard (Apollo 14)
6. Edgar Mitchell (Apollo 14)

7. David Scott (Apollo 15)
8. James Irwin (Apollo 15)
9. John Young (Apollo 16)
10. Charles Duke (Apollo 16)
11. Eugene Cernan (Apollo 17)
12. Harrison Schmitt (Apollo 17)

Whakataukī o te marama – Pipiri...

Mā mua ka kite a muri,
mā muri ka ora a mua

Those who lead give sight to
those who follow, those who
follow give life to those who lead

Whakataukī (traditional Māori proverbs) are powerful because of how they turn larger social truths into small, shareable lines.

This month's whakataukī speaks to the importance of working together to achieve goals. It acknowledges and values the importance of both the leader and the followers. Both are essential and co-dependent. This whakataukī is used by Hato Hone, St John, as well as a number of other health organisations.

Anne Manchester

A covenant for today...

Humanity will need to live by a new covenant if we are to survive and manage the threats of climate change and global warming.

This was the message brought by the Rev John Howell to the St Alban's and St Ronan's congregations in a presentation that followed our shared service on May 3. The presentation was drawn from the *Open Science conference on climate and the cryosphere* that John attended in February this year.



The cryosphere refers to all regions on Earth where water exists in solid form, including sea ice, glaciers, ice sheets, snow and permafrost.

It covers roughly 10% of the Earth's surface, acting as a critical climate regulator by reflecting sunlight, storing carbon, and holding nearly 70% of the world's freshwater.

Sea ice, ie frozen sea water, surrounds Antarctica, shrinking and expanding over the year. When the sea ice is at its maximum extent in winter, it doubles the area of the continent.

Antarctic sea ice extent has dramatically declined in recent years. Ice melt, including from ice sheets and glaciers, leads to sea level rise and global consequences for coastal populations. The continent's ice is now slipping away six times faster than it was even 40 years ago.

Some glaciers in Antarctica are also at risk, particularly in West Antarctica. Ice shelves help hold glaciers from sliding into the sea. Some ice shelves are also collapsing.

The question is how much warmth will it take to cause catastrophic melt, resulting in billions of people living in cities and communities at sea level needing to relocate?

Glaciers worldwide, particularly in New Zealand, are losing mass at accelerating rates, contributing more than 20% to global mean sea-level rise in recent decades, second only to thermal expansion. Scientists predict that 2°C warming will lead to approximately 50% ice loss.

To avoid this requires a global mean temperature that is cooler than at present and which is hypothesised to be closer to +1°C above pre-industrial levels, possibly even less.

Humanity has faced catastrophe before, said John. Is there a narrative in our religious history that might have relevance to our dilemma?

The Old Testament prophets Jeremiah and Ezekiel talk of the new covenant consisting of spirit and heart.

Ezekiel 36:26-28: *A new heart I will give you, and a new spirit I will put within you; and I will remove from your body the heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh. I will put my spirit within you, and make you follow my statutes and be careful to observe my ordinances. Then you shall live in the land that I gave to your ancestors; and you shall be my people, and I will be your God.*

At Ngaio Union Church, the congregation has developed **A Climate Covenant**. This states that:

As followers of Jesus, we will aim to live simply and sustainably following the commands to love God, love our neighbour, and be good kaitiaki of God's creation.

We will respond to God's faithfulness to us by:

- *consuming only what we need by living a simple lifestyle, reducing our burden on ecosystems that sustain us*
- *seeking happiness and prosperity found in relationships of kindness, caring for others, and promoting health in our human communities.*
- *sharing resources, so none has to live in poverty.*

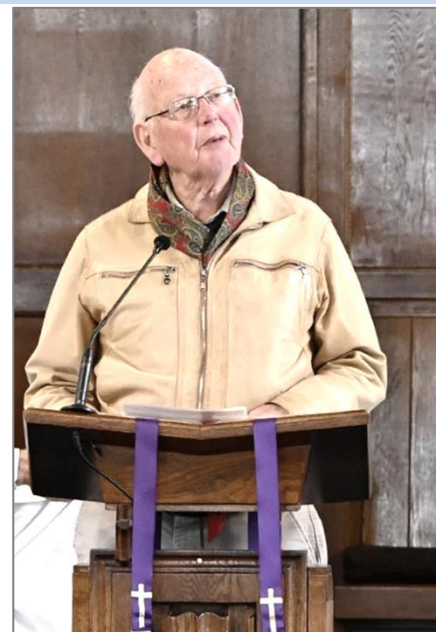
- *transitioning to renewable energies and minimising our reliance on non-renewables (such as fossil fuels).*
- *avoiding products and chemicals which are toxic to our health and environment.*
- *minimising waste by reducing, reusing, repairing, and recycling.*
- *honouring Te Tiriti o Waitangi/The Treaty of Waitangi as a guide to living well on this whenua.*
- *speaking truth to people in power and working towards a just society.*

Anne Manchester

Prayer, protest and poetic vision...

I have recently discovered the poetry of the Rev Dr Peter Matheson - academic, preacher, writer, peace and environmental activist.

Born in Scotland, Peter and his family moved to Dunedin in the early 1950s when Peter's father James was appointed minister at Knox Church. Peter (pictured right in Knox Church, Dunedin, in recent years) initially rejected his father's faith, regarding himself as an existentialist. But a mystical experience as a student in a Roxburgh orchard, where he felt an overwhelming sense of peace and oneness with creation, changed his life forever. He trained for the ministry and was eventually appointed professor of church history at Knox Theological Hall.



Two islands were very important to Peter. Firstly Iona, off Scotland's west coast, where he spent a summer at the abbey learning the rhythms of worship and community life. This experience saw him become even more committed to pacifism and socialism.



The second was St Martin Island (now officially named Quarantine Island/Kamau Taurau) in the Otago Harbour (pictured left). Peter became a leader to the interdenominational community once based there.

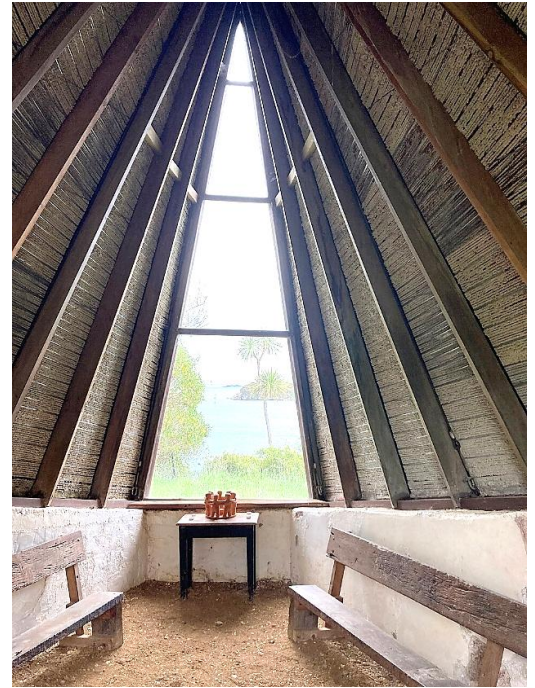
A man of many talents, he was also a gifted poet, often turning to poetry to pull himself through difficult times. He believed that words had the power to reimagine reality, create new possibilities and help stand up against injustice.

The poem 'Here I Belong' is the titular work in a posthumously published collection. In each poem, the sacred seeps into the everyday, combined with an underlying sense of commitment to justice, peace and the care of creation.

If I dared to change the last line in the second verse from 'Of Aramoana's surf' to 'Of Te Whanganui-a-Tara's surf', it becomes a poem describing my own sense of deep spiritual belonging to this special community of Eastbourne, its hills, bush and coastline. Phil's photo this month illustrates perfectly the sense of belonging and spiritual connection that I feel as I walk along the beach.

Here I Belong features 41 poems. Editor the Rev Graham Redding describes them as 'weaving together prayer, protest and poetic vision'.

The book can be ordered from Graham via his email graham.redding@otago.ac.nz. The cost is \$25 plus \$8.70 postage, a total of \$33.70. Pay to the bank account of Graham Redding: 12-3030-0508300-02.



The chapel on St Martin

Here I Belong

*On this soft-shining radiant day
Grey-silver seas and massive sky,
Light elbows out the gloom.
A flirting sun caresses distant hills
And teases awkward trees.
Precisely fashioned drops of rain
Are measured one by one
On tarmac road.*

*Here I belong;
I swim this land
And walk this sea,
I breathe these hills
As they breathe me;
My weightless feet
Touch covenanted soil,
On this soft-shining, radiant winter's day.*

*I walk - it's second nature now -
The rim of land and sea;
Left to my hand the rippling waves.
A curious seal ups periscope
Then dives again;
Click-clacking starlings sigh,
Acknowledging the crunching surge
Of Aramoana's surf.*

Anne Manchester

Phil's photo – on the rim of land and sea...



This photo, taken in March 2026, captures the tempestuous sea and driftwood-strewn beach alongside the 'Rec', and the start of the sea wall near Karamu Street.



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

Directory

St Ronan's Presbyterian Church,
234 Muritai Road, Eastbourne, Lower Hutt, 5013

Local Ministry Team

Reg Weeks	027 491 5947	third.age@outlook.co.nz
Sandy Lang	021 222 0383	slang@xtra.co.nz
Simon Shaw	562 8772	simonjshaw@xtra.co.nz
Colin Dalziel	562 7238	colinjdalziel@gmail.com

Parish Clerk

Sandy Lang 021 222 0383 slang@outlook.co.nz

For...

- Hall bookings
- Information & general correspondence
- The Record
 - Contributions to the Record are 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 July Record is Sunday 21 June 2026