



St Ronan's Presbyterian Church
Eastbourne

Record

OCTOBER 2025

5 October	Shared service with the Anglicans (at St Ronan's)	9:30am
12 October	Informal worship (BYO ¹)	9:30am
19 October	Formal worship (Rev Ross Scott)	9:30am
26 October	Informal worship (WTW ²)	9:30am
2 November	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 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.

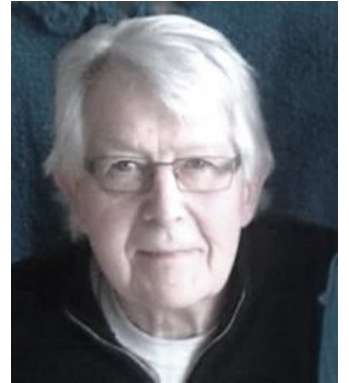
² What's The Word. We are given a bible passage to read, and we discover what this
has to say to us.

A chance reminder...



**Hamlet, Edwin Booth
c. 1870**

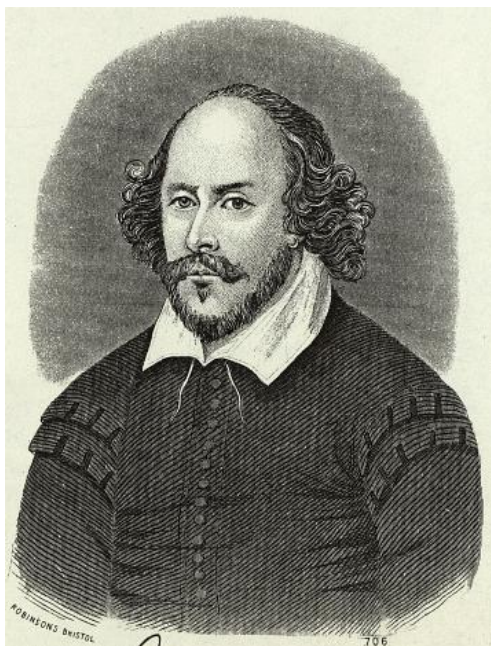
I walked into the vestry after church last Sunday and found lying on the desk an old (August 2023) copy of the *Record*. It had half the front cover torn off, revealing a picture of an actor dressed as Hamlet.



It sparked my curiosity. It turns out the last line of text referenced a quote from Hamlet, Act 3 scene 1, and I found another when I read the whole article. It was my earlier reflection on the familiar words of Paul *All things work together for good to them that love God...* I thought it worth asking Sandy to reprint it here in this October 2025 *Record*.

"Well-meaning people often say, when things go terribly wrong, that everything happens for a reason. And from a strictly analytical perspective that is true – it is just to say that for every 'effect' there will be a 'cause' But that's not what they mean.

It sometimes feels easier to accept the loss of a job, the end of a relationship, or even the death of a loved-one, if there might be a purpose behind what has happened even though we cannot, at that moment, perceive what that purpose could possibly be.



In "Hamlet" Shakespeare said it this way: "There is a Divinity that shapes our ends, rough-hew them how we will." (Act 5, scene 2).

It seems that this idea finds its basis in a verse from the letter of Paul to the Christians in Rome where according to the King James translation (often referred to as the Authorised Version) he writes "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God," You will find it in Romans 8:26-30.

A commentator on the passage remarked that saying all things work together for good is quite different from saying that God engineers tragic events in human lives to achieve a greater purpose. Such an understanding is manifestly unacceptable for so many reasons, not least because it leads to wondering whether such personal

disasters are divine punishment for knowingly or ignorantly breaching some religious law.

When Jesus' disciples asked whether a blind man's affliction was because either he or his parents had sinned, his response was an emphatic - "Neither". On another occasion he used a tragic accident resulting in the death of eighteen workers at the Siloam tower construction site to pour scorn on the idea that this and other such disasters happened because of sin.

The bible message, exemplified in Jesus' life and teaching, is that God is love. And from a theological perspective as well as personal experience we can affirm that God "can work through terrible situations to bring good out of them, without assuming that God makes awful things happen just to teach us a lesson."

In this brief passage from Paul, we also hear the good news that God is with us in our suffering.

LK Fuller, a professor of Pastoral Care, goes on to say, "even in circumstances that feel completely hopeless, God is doing more than we know to sustain us. God's spirit intercedes for us when we find it hard to pray, pleads for us, helps us in our weakness, and finds ways to bring good out of the most difficult situations."

Paul's claim that everything works together for good is troubling, even for those who love God because, obviously, they also experience pain, loss and disaster. However, in 1969, "Good News for Modern Man" was published. This is sub-titled 'The New Testament in Today's English'. Along with Annie Vallotton's beautiful line drawings, it contains several instances where familiar passages are rendered in significantly different ways.

There, the passage in question reads "For we know that in all things God works for good with those who love him..." What a world of difference...! Rather than all things working together for good, we find that within all that may happen, God is working for good. Not only that, but God is working with those who love him. So, instead of the inscrutable will of a distant puppet-master, we have a close and supporting companion inviting us to join in comforting and consoling those who 'suffer the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune' (Hamlet Act 3)"

Surely, these words of comfort are worth repeating...?

Reg Weeks

Clerk's corner...

Mainly Music: Our Mainly Music 'Team Leader', Cathy Louden-Sim (red arrow in group photo below), resigned recently. Her last day at MM was Thursday 18 September (the last day of Term 3). Cathy had been with us for just over ten years. Cathy is now focussing her energies on her 0.7 position at East Harbour Kindergarten. Thanks, Cathy, for your key contributions to the life of St Ronan's for our young families.



Twenty families turned up to farewell Cathy as she cut into a magnificent cake – with a surprise inside – and all seven rainbow colours in the right order – my science background makes me fussy about such things...!

Lauren Taylor (blue arrow below) was there for Cathy's farewell. Lauren takes over from Cathy as Mainly Music's 'Team Leader' starting on 9 October (the first day of Term 4). Lauren has been a Mainly Music mum (three children) and has been running St Alban's Pop-in-and-Play (based at St R's) for several months now.



Consumables & bins: I've been sharing out some of the jobs that previously fell to nobody and therefore to me...! For many years now, one of our St R's

families has made it their business to maintain our stocks of tea, coffee, sugar and chocolate treats (for birthdays). Thank you that family...!

Less attractive but more essential is maintaining our stock of toilet paper and paper towels. Tereska and Sheryl now look after these for us. I order the paper towels on account but it's useful to be told we need more of them sooner, than that "we've run out" later...!

Tereska and Sheryl now also take responsibility for putting out St Ronan's HCC bins. A kind neighbour brings them back in again. I'm grateful to Tereska and Sheryl for taking responsibility for these tasks that help keep St Ronan's running smoothly.

Gill Burke: You will mostly have now heard that Gill Burke died recently - on 26 September. Gill's funeral was at St Ronan's on 6 October. The church was packed. A fitting tribute.

In case you were unable to attend you may watch Gill's service at:
<https://geeandhickton.co.nz/upcoming-funerals/burke-74180/#streaming-row>
This audio-visual will be available on Gee and Hickton's website till the end of the year.

There will be an obituary for Gill in the November *Record*.

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Sandy Lang

A bit of fun with words...

Sandy asked me to write a piece on *words* – and I am somehow reminded of Eliza Dolittle's song...

*Words! Words! Words!
I'm so sick of words!
I get words all day through;
First from him, now from you!
Is that all you blighters can do?*

Those of us who use English as our mother tongue seldom pause to consider the pitfalls awaiting those who learn it as a second language. And for those of us who speak it but are unaffected by the actual words themselves, we often fail to see the cleverness – and sometimes sadism – in their origins. What sadist decided a certain speech impediment should be called a *lisp*? Or that a fear of palindromes should be called *aibophobia*?

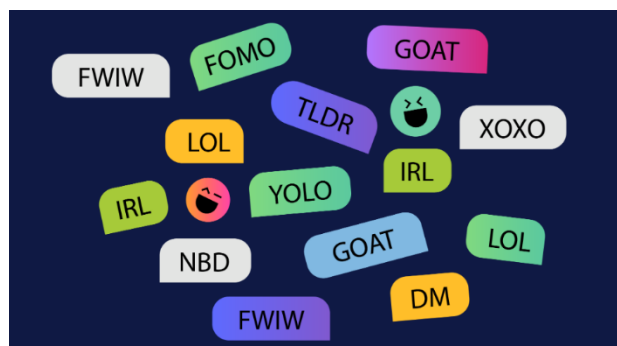
Some of our pronunciations are weird. If *tomb* is pronounced 'toom' and *womb* is pronounced 'woom', then surely it would be logical to pronounce *bomb* as 'boom'?

Then there is the wonderful world of contranymy. These are single words that have two contradictory meanings. Here are a few...

- **Annual** = recurring every year or (in the plant world) lasting only a year.
- **Apology** = an admission of error and a plea for forgiveness or a formal defence or justification.
- **Awful** = originally used to mean full of awe (a synonym of awesome) but now something exceptionally bad.
- **Back up** = to retreat or to give support.
- **Bolt** = to fasten into a fixed position or to leave rapidly.
- **Cleave** = this one is rather fun. It's actually a homophone³. The first meaning to adhere firmly (from Old English *clifian*), the second to split, as with a cleaver (from Old English *cleofan*).

You will notice I've only made it to C on that list (my own list has 75 of them), but I just got sidetracked into homophones. Examples of these that are pronounced alike but spelled differently include [ate/eight](#), [be/bee](#), [buy/by/bye](#), [hear/here/hare/hair](#), [know/no](#), [their/there/they're](#), [to/too/two](#) and [your/you're](#).

How about a few acronyms? These are nonsensical words that have been created out of the first letters of the words of which they are the abbreviations. When we use them often enough, we forget where they come from. One of my favourites is ASB Bank. Has everybody forgotten that the B in ASB already stands for Bank? So, 'Auckland Savings Bank Bank' – I ask you!



- ABBA comes from the first letters of Agnetha, Benny, Björn, Anni-Frid
- Radar comes from Radio Detection and Ranging – I suspect that would stump many contestants on The Chase.

Apart from the contronyms and homophones that snuck in, I have tried to be alphabetical, so I will close this piece with the last of my As – aptonyms. An aptonym is a name that is fitting or appropriate for the

person who bears it, often because it relates to their profession or a defining characteristic. For example, a baker named Mr Loaf, or a dentist named Dr Tooth. I'm sure you can think of many. My personal favourite was the funeral home in Cape Town my family used when necessary. Back in 1870 Messer's Pitt and Human got together to start an undertaker's business. Their company name Human and Pitt brought many a smile on otherwise sad occasions.

Synonyms for Acronym

abbreviation

initialism

shortening

contraction

initials

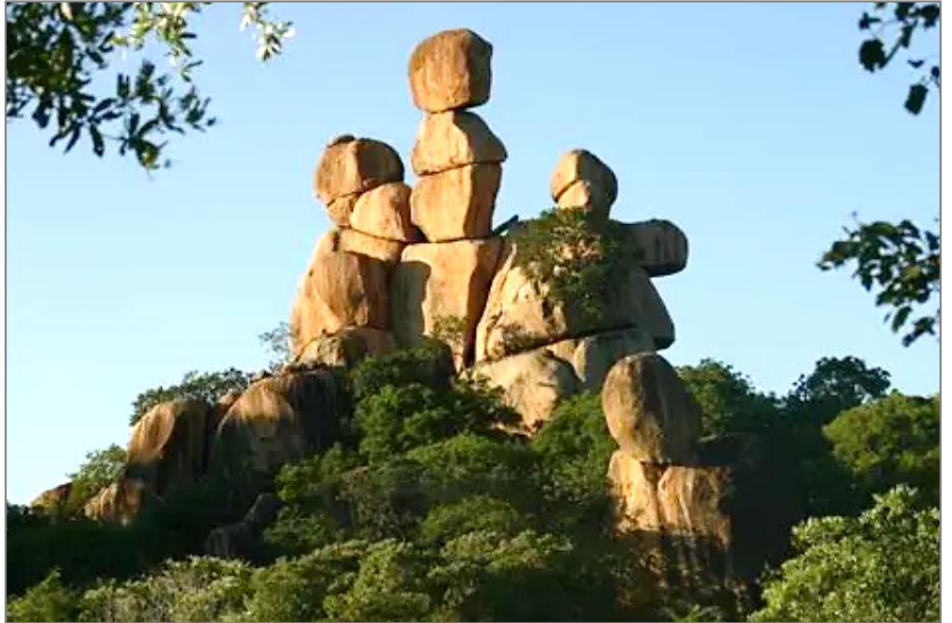
³Two words, pronounced and often spelled alike that have different origins.

I have sometimes encouraged a congregation to pray The Lord's Prayer out loud, in whatever language they know – preferably other than English. The cacophony is delightful. It is humbling to remind ourselves that our God hears and understands us all. Even the English version...!

John Harris

Rood screen - Anhydrobiosis and Cryptobiosis...

When I was growing up, a place I loved to visit was the Matopos Hills near Bulawayo in Zimbabwe. Matopos is Ndebele for "bald heads", and that is precisely what the huge granite boulders look like from a distance. The bald heads had a surprise though. They were covered in a plant called *Craterostigma plantagineum*, commonly known as 'resurrection weed'.



Anhydrobiosis: Resurrection weed uses a clever process known as 'anhydrobiosis' to dry out and go into a state of suspended animation for months or even years, rather like brewer's yeast. It appears quite dry and dead. When the rains do come however (and in that part of Africa that can be infrequent), within an hour they have absorbed enough moisture to turn the bald heads magnificently green. You have to experience it to believe it.



Cryptobiosis: The other most common way of achieving suspended animation is by 'cryptobiosis' or freezing. Scientists have thawed nematodes and other microscopic invertebrates after as long as 30-40 years. Single cells can survive even longer and in 2000, researchers found and revived bacterial spores that had spent 250 million years in salt crystals. Scientists from the *Pushchino Scientific Centre* in Russia even managed to grow a plant from viable cells found in seeds that had lain more than 30,000 years in the permafrost.

But then in 2017 the *Institute of Physical, Chemical and Biological Problems in Soil Science* under the Russian Academy of Sciences received two separate samples from completely separate locations in the permafrost. When they

thawed them, each sample contained an ancient worm. One was found in samples 32,000 years old and is a *Panagrolaimus* sp. [right]

The second is a *Plectus* sp [right and down a bit] from a sample that was 42,000 years old. Both nematodes were identified as female.

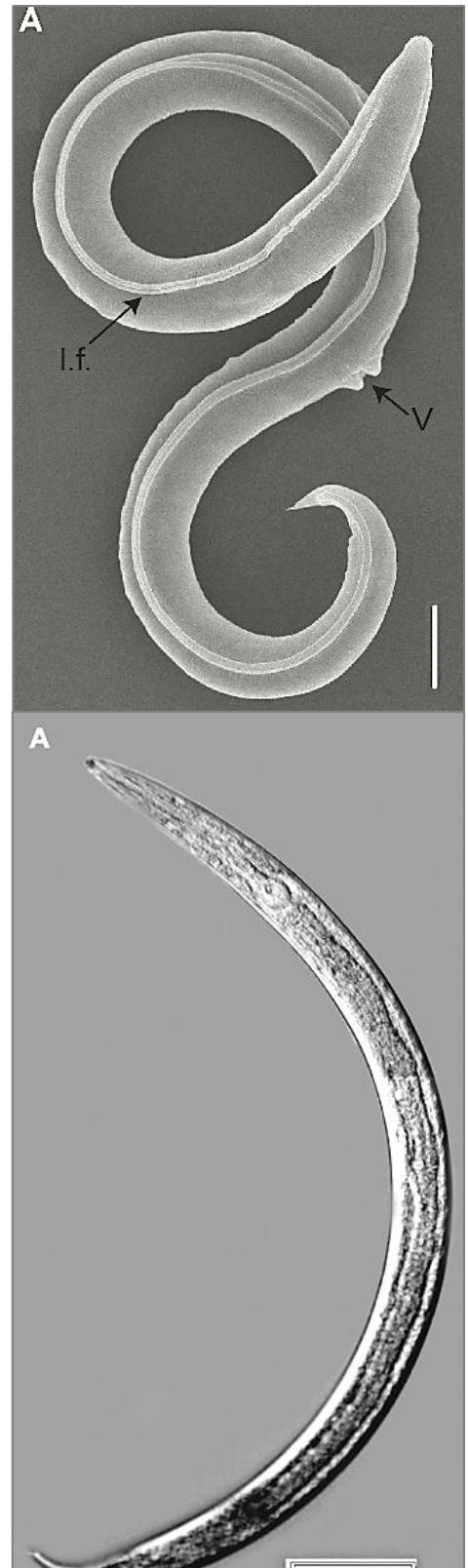
Naturally, the scientists are beside themselves with excitement being able to study such ancient creatures and decode their genome sequences.

Forty-two thousand years ago, the Earth would have been unrecognisable. The planet was in the throes of an Ice Age, now-extinct beasts roamed freely, and Neanderthals may have been living alongside modern humans.

Now if our God can create a creature that can be brought back to life after 32,000 years, can we doubt those Biblical stories of people who had only been dead for a few days being resurrected?

- The widow of Zarephath's son (1 Kings 17:17–24)
- The Shunammite woman's son (2 Kings 4:18–37).
- The man raised out of Elisha's grave (2 Kings 13:20–21).
- The widow of Nain's son (Luke 7:11–17).
- Jairus' daughter (Luke 8:40–56)
- Lazarus of Bethany (John 11).
- Various saints in Jerusalem (Matthew 27:50–53).
- Tabitha (Acts 9:36–43).
- Eutychus (Acts 20:7–12)

And of course, Jesus Himself (Mark 16:1–8).



I remember singing as a child: *My God can do anything, anything, anything. He healed the sick, He raised the dead, He caused the blinded eye to see; My God can do anything.*

John Harris

A garden tour...

St Alban's asks us to promote their garden tour in aid of the earthquake strengthening of their Church and Hall. One of the gardens included in this tour hasn't been open to the public before and another has appeared in *House and Garden*.

For registration and more information please see
<https://events.humanitix.com/eastbourne-garden-show>



Eastbourne Garden show 29 Nov 2025



Operation Christmas Child – Samaritan's Purse...



REMINDER---REMINDER---REMINDER---REMINDER OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD SAMARITAN'S PURSE SHOEBOX APPEAL OCTOBER 2025

Shoobox Appeal Over the years St Ronan's people have donated many shoeboxes filled with gifts, to children in and around the Pacific region.

Choose Shoeboxes are available now at St Ronan's. Choose for a boy or a girl and choose an age group 2-4 yrs, or 5-9 yrs, or 10-14 yrs.

Gifts Suggestions are something to wear, to love, for school, to play with, for personal hygiene and something special.

Contact For more information call 0800 726 274 OR go to www.operationchristmaschild.org.nz OR call Colin Dalziel on (04) 562 7238 for information leaflets and shoe boxes. The leaflet offers suggestions for gifts to suit children of different genders and ages (along with some prohibited items).

Freight With each shoebox, an envelope with a \$12.50 donation is required to cover freight.

Money If you would prefer to make a financial donation to the Shoobox Appeal, you can make this through the Samaritan's purse website (link above) where you can also download coded labels to follow your shoebox to its destination.

When Filled boxes should be brought to St Ronan's by Sunday 19 October. After a blessing during the service, your shoebox will be delivered to the local drop-off point to start its journey to Auckland and then to overseas.

Many thanks

Colin Dalziel

Four remarkable women...

Ann Wigmore (1909-1994) was born in Lithuania but moved to the US at an early age. When driving a bread delivery truck on one occasion, she fell off and broke her two legs. After a few days gangrene set in and family and doctors wanted to amputate both legs. She refused. Instead, she followed the customs of her Lithuanian grandmother: she ate the grass, flowers and plants around her as she lay on a couch. The black gangrenous skin turned pink and in due time her legs were completely healed. She went on to a career promoting the health benefits of grasses and plants, establishing training centres and writing books.



Nicole Apelian (b.1969) born in the US to Armenian parents, this lady has led a very full and active life. In 2000 she was diagnosed with multiple sclerosis, became bedridden, and moved around in a wheelchair. She used her knowledge of plants to treat her disability and in time was healed and thriving. She has written three books on herbal remedies and established an online store of herbal tinctures.



Julia Sich (1956-2023) was brought up on farms in the Wairarapa and Manawatu but spent most of her later years in the Bay of Plenty. In 2004-2008 she suffered a series of serious medical events which left her considerably weakened. She treated herself with 'green smoothies' and in time became very fit and active, holding workshops on growing herbs. Her one unpretentious publication is called *Julia's Guide to Edible Weeds and Wild Green Smoothies - Learn How To Identify Edible Weeds In Your Garden And Turn Them Into Nutritious Green Smoothies*. This book is an encyclopaedia for NZ home gardeners.



Megan May lives in Auckland, where she leads a group of cafés called *The Little Bird Unbakery* and produces a line of macaroons, cereals and other items which are sold through retail outlets throughout NZ. The *Unbakeries* serve vegetarian food which is raw, and which is evidently very popular in Auckland. In her book *Little Bird Goodness* she writes that she "was really sick for a



few years and unable to work.” She attributes the raw organic foods she ate at that time with giving her back her health and enabling her to be a good parent. They have also supplied the inspiration and energy for her business enterprise.

I have been impressed by the accomplishments of these four women. Although smitten with physical ailments they have risen above them, choosing to heal themselves, not with the conventional wisdom of the medical profession and pharmacologists but with the common everyday plants, grasses and weeds that are everywhere around us.

Geoff Mann

(Ed. Three comments: (1) It's a good idea to eat wild plants but not a good idea to abandon the medicines prescribed by your doctor. They have been extensively tested for efficacy and side effects. In many cases these medicines are derived from plant-based remedies anyway. And (2) Compared with our distant ancestors we 'moderns' eat only a very few plant species – a much greater diversity would likely be beneficial. But (3) While most garden and wild plants are not poisonous, a good number of them are. Our distant ancestors knew their plants - make sure you know yours (correct plant identification) and look online first to see if a particular plant can safely be used as a food, food supplement or flavouring.

Power Hour – Do the right thing...

Recently, I read a biography about Charlie, a 109-yr-old medical doctor who lived a very good life⁴. Charlie praised the wisdom of his mother who, as a child, gifted him freedom, independence, responsibility and loving trust. How did his mother do this? She guided him with her attentive encouragement of, 'Do the right thing'. I love this encompassing and simple message by which to live...!

It has given me thought to the critical supports a child needs for that kind of life-compass to thrive, to flourish and to find meaning, happiness and, not least, faith - something to believe in and to commit to in a world which seems complex⁵.

Further, from where does a child (or parent) come to know what is 'right' in our changeable world?

Eichler et al⁶ suggest these rock-solid foundation supports, from which a child learns the 'right thing', come from: Faith in God; His big picture; Our family; and Others around us.

Said in other ways, the child needs these four foundational rock supports, upon which to build his house. Remember the song, *A wise man built his house upon*

⁴ Von Drehle D *The Book of Charlie*, 2023.

⁵ Rolheiser R *Wrestling with God*, 2018, p15.

⁶ Eichler L et al, *SUNZ Adventure*, Jan 23, pp4-6, 14, 29.

the rock? Or, like a chair needs four legs upon which to stand. Similarly, Māori wisdom speaks of having four foundational taha (walls) to one's whare (house) of health and wellbeing: mental wellbeing; physical wellbeing; spiritual wellbeing; man (family, community, social wellbeing)⁷.

Thus, Power Hour and church community can contribute to these foundational rock supports (but not exclusively). Power Hour helps find a place and a young people's group to belong to, create opportunities to engage with scripture and believe in a God who wants a relationship, and facilitate the thriving of lifelong disciples.

In comparison, to the contemporary simple message, 'Do the right thing', the Old Testament has given much the same wise message - but in a more round-about way. It emphasises strongly the importance of parents (another foundational rock support) teaching our children the right things.

*Listen, Isreal! The LORD our God is the only true God!
So, love the LORD your God with all your heart, soul, and strength.
Memorise his laws and tell them to your children over and over again.
Talk about them all the time, whether you're at home or walking along the road or going to bed at night or getting up in the morning. Deut 6:4-7*

Similarly, King Solomon emphasised the importance of guiding the child to do the right thing,

Train up a child in the way he should go; even when he is old he will not depart from it. (Prov 22:6)

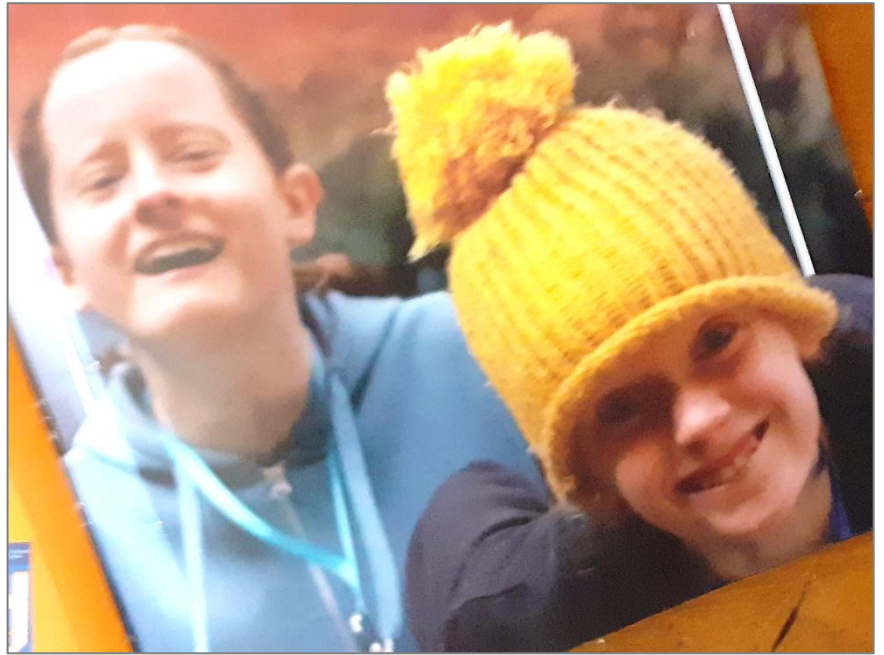
Hence, both the biblical and today's message to guide our children positively are the same.



However, to be valuable to living a good meaningful life, the approaches require that the guidance must be done over time, repeatedly, through various means, (love, fun, words, stories, tribes /others).

⁷ Banks A Wellbeing, *SUNZ Adventure*, Issue 4 2023, pp10-11.

For example, for the child's faith to thrive, there has to be a connection with God in ordinary life. To catch those moments is to stop and notice with children. It doesn't have to be adult-driven but it does need to be adult supported. This is complemented with the age-old biblical wisdoms learnt from stories and God's supportive connection and His big picture of the Good News of Jesus.



Even more broadly, in the community and from others, we learn that our national laws are embedded in the 'right thing'!

To continue more definitively, the 'right thing' is found in the Bible's time-honoured Ten Commandments (Deut 5:1-22) and Jesus' Golden Rule – *Do to others what you want them to do to you* (Matt7: 12; Luke 6:31). These 'right things' are time-tested over a few thousand years and by billions of people! They come from the deep wells of religious tradition.⁵

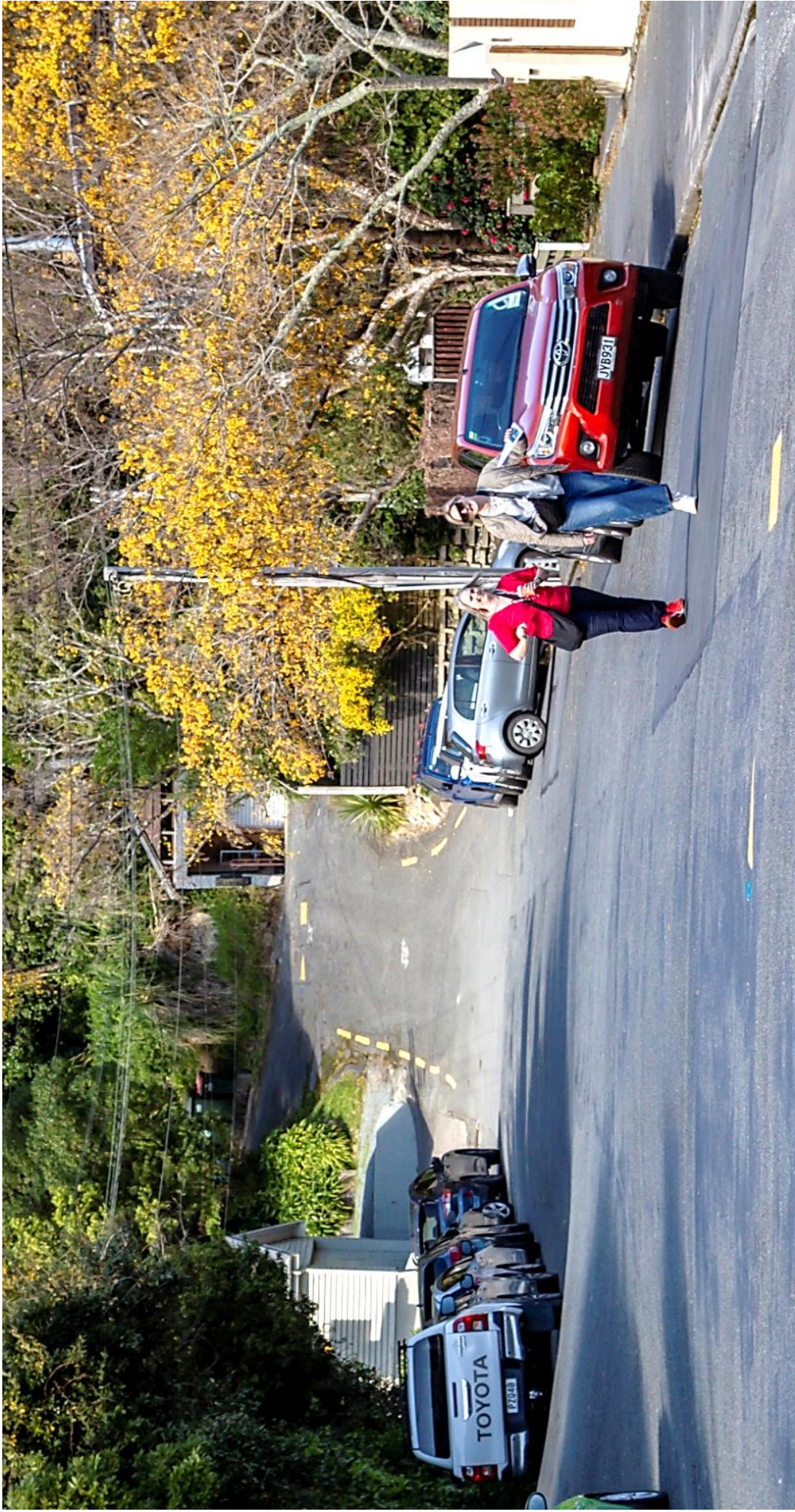
The corollary is: It is only through the child's exploration and learning to do these 'right things' that these 'right things' become absorbed into their lifelong beliefs and moral compasses for life.

And the key to that happening is that the child needs to be wrapped in support from family and others to reinforce and teach doing the 'right thing'.

Thus, with God's input (God's Spirit) the ordinary can become extraordinary in the child's journey to do clearly the 'right thing'. And provide a lifelong stable compass.

Susan Connell

POWER HOUR - TERM 4 - 12 October to 14 December



A huge abundance of kowhai flowers creates a wonderful spring beauty around Eastbourne this time of year

Phil Benge



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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For...

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- The Record
 - Contributions to the Record are welcome
 - Request monthly delivery of the Record to your mailbox
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The deadline for the November Record is Sunday 26 October 2025