



St Ronan's Presbyterian Church
Eastbourne

Record

August 2022

7 August	Informal worship service.....	9.30am
14 August	Graeme Munro (<i>Communion</i>).....	9.30am
21 August	Informal worship service.....	9.30am
28 August	Ross Scott.....	9.30am
4 September	Informal worship service.....	9.30am

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Power Hour – Sundays 9.30am

Breakfast Prayer – Tuesdays 7.45am

Mainly Music – Thursdays 9.15-11.15am

For pastoral care needs, please contact one of the Local Ministry Team

Rev Reg Weeks 027 491 5947, Simon Shaw 562 8772, Colin Dalziel 562 7238, Sandy Lang 562 8753

Peace Sunday...

Here In New Zealand, Christian World Service encourages churches to celebrate *Peace Sunday* on the Sunday closest to Hiroshima Day, August 6.

In their material for 2022, I found the story of a young Japanese girl called Sadako. She was only two years old on that day in 1945 when the atomic bomb was dropped on Hiroshima, where she and her family lived. She was blown out of the window. Her fear-filled mother rushed outside and was delighted to find her apparently unhurt.



However, in 1955 she was taken to the Red Cross hospital for treatment. As a result of the nuclear radiation, she had developed leukaemia. To encourage the children to take their medicines, it is said that the nurses at the hospital showed them how to fold origami figures out of the medicine wrappers.



Sadako's favourite was the crane. She had heard an old Japanese legend that said, anyone who folded 1,000 cranes would have their wish fulfilled.

So Sadako began to fold paper cranes. With every crane she folded, she whispered, 'I will write peace on your wings and you will fly all over the world.' When she died in the hospital at age twelve, she had exceeded her target.

In 1958, a statue of Sadako holding a golden crane was unveiled in the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Park. At the foot of the statue is a plaque that reads: "This is our cry. This is our prayer. Peace in the world."

Today, the practice of folding peace cranes still continues in her memory. On

Hiroshima Day each year, you can see thousands of paper cranes suspended from the tower where her statue stands in the Peace Park.

While Christians usually associate the dove with peace, I think a paper crane is a worthy alternative. If you would like to try your hand at folding one, here is a link to the guide sheet:

<https://peacecraneproject.org/downloads/folding-guides>

Reg Weeks

Clerk's corner...

Fellowship lunch: We enjoyed another Fellowship Lunch together last Sunday 31 July. These are happy and relaxed occasions, with Rev Doug Rogers presenting a brief but useful reflection (see p6 this issue). The next 5th Sunday Fellowship Lunch will be on 30 October.

Health: It looks like COVID will be a feature of our lives for many months to come. Your primary protections are •mask wearing, •social distancing and •good ventilation.

Meanwhile, stay away if you have a cold - you will keep others safer. Also, stay away if you have been a close COVID contact within the last 5 to 7 days.

There are also a good number of non-COVID respiratory viruses around. These can make you quite ill...

- Get a flu jab if you haven't already had one.
- Get a COVID booster jab if your last one was over six months ago.
- The Eastbourne Pharmacy will give you a free COVID booster jab (ring first).
- The Muritai Health Centre will give you a free pack of RAT test kits (ring first).

Annual General Meeting: It's that time of year again... Parish Council has fixed the date for the 2021/22 AGM as 25 September. It will be in the church, after the service, coffee and biccie in hand...

As usual the meeting will deal only with matters associated with the *Annual Report* document. Any other matter must be dealt with at one of our periodic 'Church Chats.' The AGM will be short and focused...

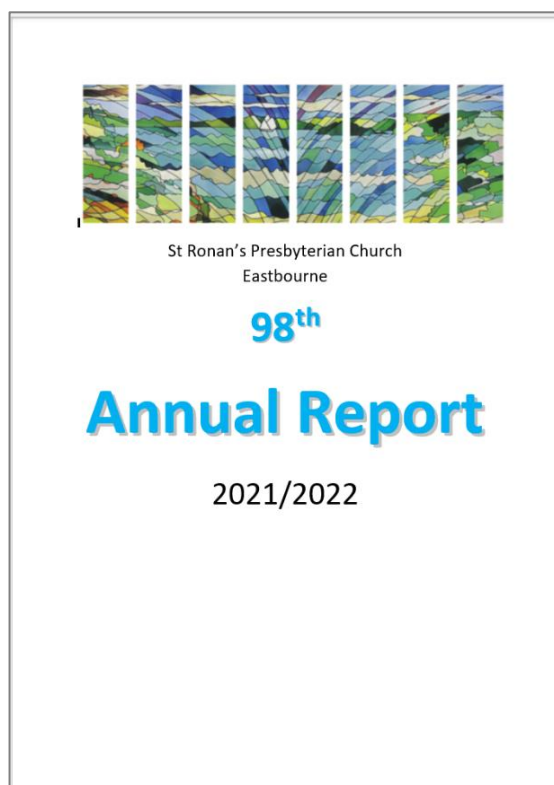
The 98th *Annual Report* will be emailed to all members as a .pdf the previous Sunday, and will also be available in printed form.

To achieve this schedule please note the following:

- If you've written an 'activity report' before, I'd like one from you again.
- Please have your 'activity report' to me before Sunday 11 September.
- I will have the *Annual Report* to you by Sunday 18 September. One full week before the AGM on Sunday 25 September.

This schedule allows us to take the Annual Report 'as read', and so greatly speeds our AGM deliberations.

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Sandy Lang

Prayer: Things that help... And some questions...

Recently, I led a service at St Ronan's and the text for the day was Luke 11:1-13, where one of the disciples asked Jesus to teach them to pray "as John taught his disciples." This led to what we call "the Lord's Prayer", which Christ's followers have used in group worship for almost 2000 years.

Our weekly lectionary readings also include a Psalm, most of which were designed to be sung. These have been used in worship for over 3000 years. Half were ascribed to King David as author and the other half to at least seven other writers.



I have found the Lectio 365 app (illustrated) to be an enjoyable way of reading and/or listening on my phone a Psalm and a short bible reading, and then be lead in prayer and reflection. They have different readings for the morning and for the evening. Some of you may already use a prayer app - I know there are others available. I am just a late adopter to technology!

And while we are on the subject of prayer, I discovered online a little about the phylacteries that orthodox and conservative Jewish men still wear every day except the Sabbath. These are worn on their forehead and their left arm, together with their prayer shawls and Yamacha (cap), especially for morning prayers. The prayer book also guides them in their prayers.

You may recall Jesus denouncing those who had extra-large phylacteries and extra-long fringes on their prayer shawls, and their engaging in other behaviours so as to appear pious in public (Matthew 23:5).

A few quiz questions for us:

- which portions of scripture are in the phylacteries, and why are they worn?
- which named disciple of John the Baptist also became one of Jesus's disciples? (John 1:41), and
- can you name any other psalms that we sing in worship services, apart from the most popular and well-known of the psalms?

Gill Burke

[Gill will supply the answers in our September Record: Ed.]

Bread of heaven...

When we met for the first *Fellowship Lunch* back in May, the talk over the meal inevitably turned to food. What we liked to cook and even sharing recipes. Afterwards, I started thinking about how much time we spend on food.

First, we plan what we want to cook, and we make the list to go shopping. Then, it's off to the supermarket to buy provisions. Then, if you're like us, you have to make a second trip for the things you couldn't get the first time or that you forgot. Now you are ready to cook which, depending on the complexity of the dish, may take you some time. Finally, the plates are on the table and in a short time the clean-up begins, and then it's all over until the next meal.



Despite all that, I love cooking. I find it therapeutic to methodically put the ingredients together and, magically, it all comes together with a wonderful smell and, hopefully, it tastes good too.

Once, after being tempted, Jesus said, *One does not live by bread alone but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.* Now, that may be true but we do need bread and much more to live healthily. Indeed, without our daily bread we would die.



So, what is there as well as bread that we need? Jesus said, *every word that comes from the mouth of God.* We need to hear the word of God from scripture and from meeting together in our Church. But it goes much further as we also need to be aware of God's word throughout our lives. We need to know the presence of God each moment of each day.

Back in the 1600s, Brother Lawrence wrote the classic text *The Practice of the Presence of God*. He was a friar, and his duties were in the kitchen. He came to understand that washing up was just as holy a task as praying in the church. He learned to practise the presence of God wherever he was, whatever he was doing. It is in the ordinary things of life that we can hear the word of God - even while cooking.

When Jesus talked of what was most important, he said, *We must love God, our neighbour and ourselves.* Even here, food can be important. To love ourselves we need to eat to be healthy. To love our neighbour, is there any



better sign of love than the gift of food, a pot of soup, a box of biscuits, some little treat just for them? And, in loving God, we need to give thanks for God's goodness, which includes for our daily bread. *Bon appetite...!*

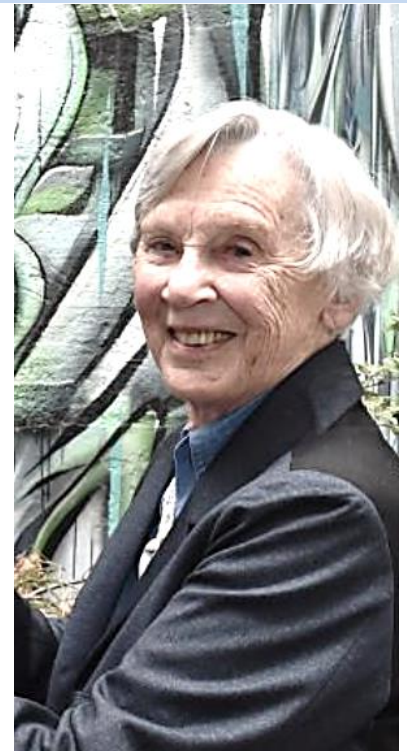
*May the Lord bless us as we share food with one another.
May that food strengthen our bodies, and
May our fellowship together strengthen our spirits.
May we have the love and energy for all our tasks in your service.
Amen*

Doug Rogers
Reflection from St Ronan's Fellowship Lunch July 31, 2022

More on ecumenism efforts in New Zealand

Ecumenism works best when it's functional and outward-focused, if the New Zealand experience is anything to go by. This seems to be the conclusion when you review the last century of sometimes valiant efforts to bring Kiwi churches together, to fulfil Jesus' prayer that his followers "*may all be one, so that the world may believe*".

Leaving behind the denominational polarisation of the 19th century imported by pakeha settlers from different parts of Europe, New Zealand churches tried to make a new start in the 20th century. Beginning with the National Council of Churches in 1941, Protestant ecumenism (led by the Presbyterian Church) peaked twenty years later in the Plan for Union, in which five denominations tried to create a single church. Five years of negotiations failed when the Anglicans refused to join, but out of this grew the Co-operating Ventures – local interdenominational churches, now Uniting Congregations of Aotearoa-NZ. Their numbers peaked in the 1970s but have now settled into a significant



clump of just over 100 parishes, particularly strong in Waikato and North Canterbury.

A brave attempt to draw the Catholic Church into a national organisation resulted in the Conference of Churches of Aotearoa-New Zealand (CCANZ) in 1987, but the Catholics withdrew after just over 10 years and the CCANZ was dissolved in 2005. Since then, there have been various inter-church initiatives such as the evangelical New Zealand Christian Network, but nothing structural or broad-based.

Despite this apparent desert, the New Zealand ecumenical scene has several refreshing oases. The NZ Council of Christian Social Services (welfare organisations), Churches' Education Commission (faith in schools), Spiritual Growth Ministries (spiritual direction), comparative newcomer Eco-Church (sustainability) and Christian World Service (relief and aid) are well-established, thriving, and well-supported in their focus on their particular fields.

One such group I have personally found rewarding is ARPA – the Australasian Religious Press Association, which promotes excellence in religious publishing. This draws together Christian publications and journalists right across the theological spectrum and has the added advantage of being international. Collegial and encouraging in its local meetings and annual conferences, it holds an annual competition which reveals the high standard of much Christian journalism.

Eastbourne winners include Anne Manchester, who was on the staff of the inter-church newspaper *CrossLink* when it won the ARPA supreme award, the Gutenberg, back in 1992; Anne was also commended for her photograph of the Dalai Lama's 2007 New Zealand visit.

Fast forward to recent times, *Refresh* (the New Zealand spiritual directors' journal), edited by Diane Gilliam-Weeks, scored an ARPA award for an article published in 2017.



Those wishing to dig deeper into this topic might like to get hold of *Inter Church Unity: Churches Working Together*, a three-part study series available from:

<https://www.presbyterian.org.nz/publications/social-issues-booklets>

Julia Stuart

Old joke, new cartoon...



Several novice nuns were about to take their vows.

Dressed in their white gowns, they came into the chapel with the Mother Superior to undergo the ceremony to marry them to Jesus.

Just as the ceremony was about to begin, four Hasidic Jews with yarmulkes, curled sideburns and long beards came in and sat in the front row.

The Mother Superior said, "I am honoured that you would want to share this experience with us, but do you mind if I ask you why you came?"

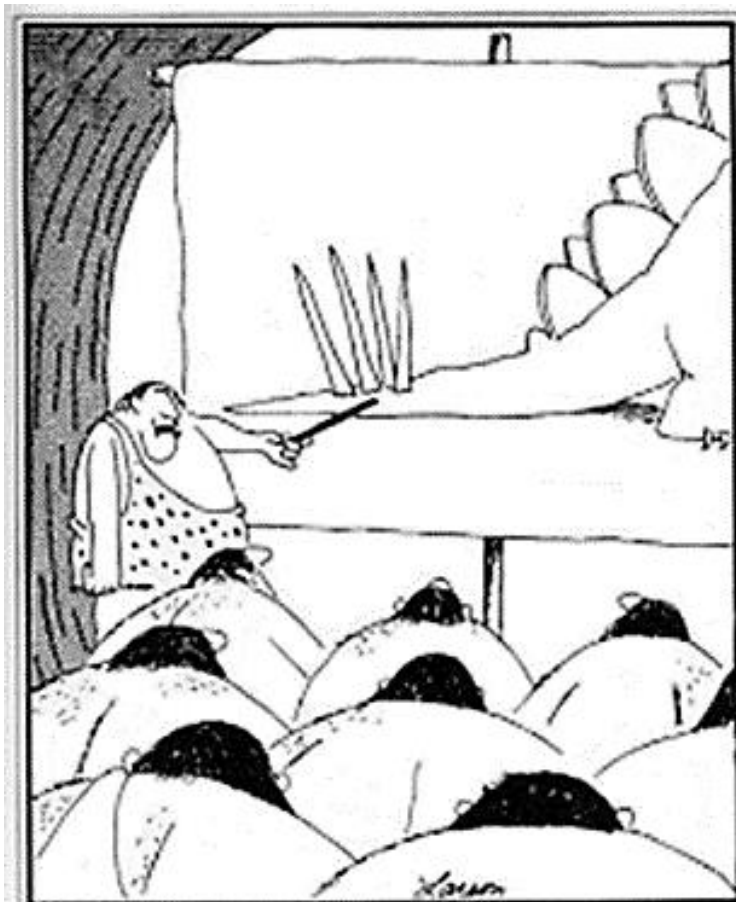
One of the Hasidic Jews replied, "We're from the groom's family."

(Joke) www, (cartoon) Alan Benge

It's really not all that old...

Have you noticed how little people (especially little boys), seem to go through a 'dinosaur stage'? They play with dinosaur toys and can rattle off names like *Triceratops* or *Tyrannosaurus rex* - which they like to shorten to the more familiar 'T-Rex'. If you, a mere adult, can't identify them correctly, they look at you with what feels like withering disappointment.

So, I thought I might start this month's column with some dinosaur facts. Stegosaurian dinosaurs had a distinctive arrangement of four spikes on their tails known as a "thagomizer". They are believed to have been a defensive measure against predators.



However, unlike most things scientific, that use fancy Latin names, the name "thagomizer" was invented by the cartoonist Gary Larson in 1982 in his comic strip "*Far Side*". Since then, thagomizer has been adopted in all scientific circles - research and education. Who said scientists don't have a sense of humour...?

Of course, the biggest flaw in Larson's cartoon is the implied co-existence of humans and the non-avian dinosaurs. The latter, died out in the Cretaceous-Paleogene extinction about 66 million years ago but our genus '*Homo*' emerged only about 3 million years ago. That leaves a gap of about 63 million years between the last of the Stegosaur and the first of our most distant ancestors. And that brings me to the point of this column.

It's all too easy to file everything that is 'old' in the 'old' file – whereas there is 'old' and there's 'very old' and there's even 'very, very old'. So, it's too easy to think of Jesus as 'old' and, therefore, irrelevant to life today. While we might not actually say that, our actions can sometimes speak louder than our words.

It's sobering to consider that Jesus was closer in time to using an iPhone (the first iPhone 1 was released in 2007) than He was to seeing the building of the Great Pyramid of Giza - built in the 26th century BC. Maybe that's one reason so many of the stories Jesus told us are so relevant to our lives today. Sure, they might have dressed differently, and the infrastructure was a bit different but...

The Good Samaritan and the folk who passed by on the other side of the road are right here with us in the 21st century. Likewise, the widow with her mite and the rich young ruler...

Jesus' teachings are not 'old'. They are every bit as relevant to us, in Eastbourne, today, as they were when He told them to His followers, in Galilee, some two millennia ago.

John Harris

Children's Power Hour – Heroines and heros

This month our heroine in Power Hour is Esther. Esther is indeed special for she was one of two women in the Bible to have a book named after them! Prior to learning about Esther, we had been following some male heroes, e.g., Jesus, Paul and Daniel.

Heroine and hero stories are important to our 7–8-year-old children because at this age they love these types of stories, but also the stories demonstrate the hero/heroine's strengths of character. The children awaken to whom they are, their strengths and weaknesses, and how to use them.

Esther's strengths were that she was committed to her faith (Jewish), had a passion to save her people (God's people exiled in Babylonia in the Persian Empire under King Xerxes), and had clever negotiating skills. But Esther was very afraid to step forward and negotiate because she knew that she could lose her life by going against the King's will. So, bravery was another of Esther's strengths.



To cut a long and complicated saga short, Esther, King Xerxes' new and beautiful queen, was able to 'turn the tables over' through some strategic conversations over special dinners. Not only did she have the nasty King's chief-of-staff, Haman, punished, but she also saved her people from extermination. Consequently, a two-day celebration to mark Esther's saving of her people was established and called 'Purim'.

Even today, Purim is celebrated around the Jewish world. On the first day, people go to the temple or synagogue and hear the reading of the Book of Esther. Then they exchange gifts of sweet or savory tarts in the shape of triangles. These treats are known as Haman's Hats. (I guess when you eat Haman's Hats, you would be cutting off his head). On the second day, there are fancy dress parades, with onlookers often wearing fancy headbands or hats.

In exploring Esther's heroic endeavours, our Power Hour children identified Esther's strengths which made positive change to the lives of many others. They also had a wee Purim celebration of Esther's success, by giving some 'Haman's Hats' to one another while wearing a fancy head-dress.



Term 3: 31 July to 2 October 2022

Please note: 2 October is a Shared Service with St Alban's. It will be at St Ronan's at 9:30am.

Blessings, **Susan Connell**

Phil's photo – More than just a game...

Here, in New Zealand, we enjoy a rich diversity of cultures among the polyglot peoples who make up the Kiwi nationality. It's so great to live in our beautiful country, with its 'Goldilocks' climate (not too hot, not too cold). Also, it's great to be so far away from the northern nations with their warring, their political unrest and their simmering, age-old racial, ethnic and religious tensions.



Most of us embrace and enjoy our cultural diversity. We enjoy the rich range of perspectives, and foods this diversity brings. Also, the music, the dress, the art and the dance...



One recent Sunday afternoon, I attended the final of the *Wellington Women's Rugby League* competition at the Jerry Collins Memorial Park, Porirua. The park, the facilities and the pitch were outstanding in their cleanliness and preparation.



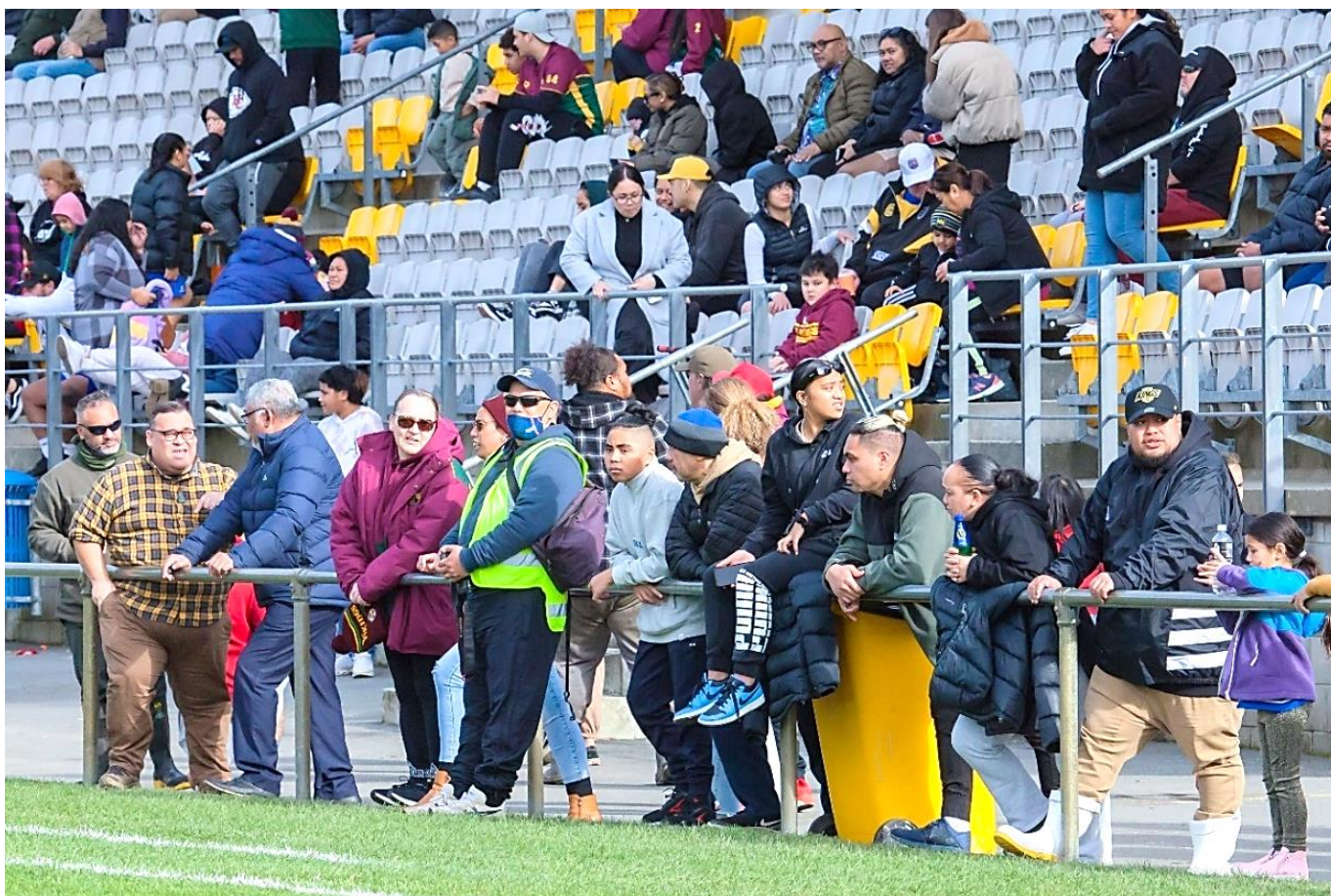
Although the focus of the event was the teams and the game, the team supporters and the players' families were also an essential element.

Both players and supporters comprised a colourful mixture of Māori and Pasifika, with only a handful of NZ Europeans like myself. They were all colourfully dressed in their teams' colours. Our local team, *Randwick* (blue/yellow strip) were playing the *Porirua Valkyries* (multi-coloured strip).

The ball skills were outstanding. The tackling was very hard – heavy player crunching heavy player. That must have hurt a bit...!

But great warmth and humour was also shared, not only among teammates but also with the opposition.

The spectators too were in very good humour - cheering on their own teams and offering humorous advice to the opposition spectators, who would reply in similar humorous vein.



But in the end, there had to be a winner and a loser. And although the game had been pretty brutal, hugs and kisses were freely exchanged between teammates and also with the opposition.

Clearly, I was of the minority culture (age, gender, skin, language) among those that took the field that day, but there was a warm feeling of welcome and acceptance as I met and interacted with these fabulous people. A really great Sunday afternoon...

Phil Bengé

Hallowed by your name...

This month the *Record* contributions came to 15 pages. Simple topological mathematics tells us our A5 format allows 4 or 8 or 12 or 16 pages – but not 15...

Sometimes when I have a 'thought' I develop it into a mini essay. Conveniently, this one fills page 15...



There are two versions of the Lord's prayer in the bible...

Matt 6:9-13 (NRSV)

*Father in heaven,
may your name be revered as holy.
May your kingdom come.
May your will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
And forgive us our debts,
as we also have forgiven our
debtors.
And do not bring us to the time of
trial, but rescue us from the evil
one.*

Luke 11:2-4 (NRSV)

*Father, hallowed be your name.
Your kingdom come.
Give us each day our daily bread.
And forgive us our sins,
for we ourselves forgive everyone
indebted to us.
And do not bring us to the time of
trial.*

But we are more familiar with variants of the 1662 Anglican version

*Our Father, which art in heaven,
Hallowed be thy Name;
Thy kingdom come;
Thy will be done
in earth, as it is in heaven:
Give us this day our daily bread;
And forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive them that trespass
against us;*

*And lead us not into temptation,
But deliver us from evil;
For thine is the kingdom,
the power, and the glory,
For ever and ever.*

Whole books have been written on the Lord's prayer - but I've not seen this.

That first line... 'Hallowed be your name'. What is God's name? God has many names (100s) in the bible. Each name describes some aspect of who He is, based on the writer's own special experience(s) of God. Lord, Father, Shepherd, Eternal, Almighty, Alpha and Omega, Saviour, Bridegroom, Holy one, Deliverer, Creator...

But each of us has his/her own unique and special experiences of God, so we will each have our own special 'names' for God, based on these experiences.

So, we should hallow (recall and value) those special experiences of God in our lives. They don't come every day. Treasure them. Bring one of yours to mind now, and be grateful for it...

Sandy



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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Contributions for the 'Record' are most welcome
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The views and opinions expressed in this publication are those of the authors
They do not necessarily represent those of St Ronan's Church

**And the closing date for our next *Record* for September 2022
is Sunday 28 August 2022**