



St Ronan's Presbyterian Church
Eastbourne

Record

February 2021

7 February	Worship with John Harris.....	9.30am
14 February	Worship with Reg Weeks.....	9.30am
21 February	Worship with TBA.....	9.30am
28 February	Worship with Merv Aitken.....	9.30am
7 March	Worship with Lionel Nunns.....	9.30am

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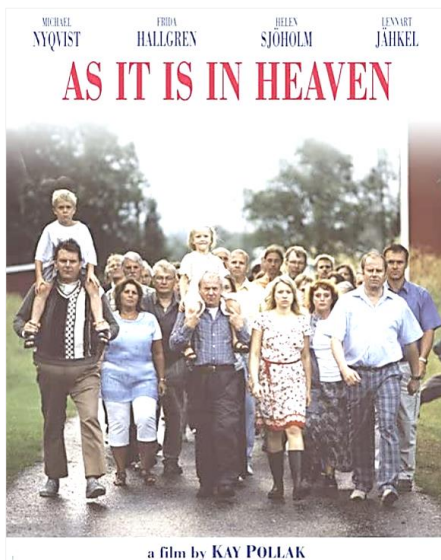
Power Hour – Sundays 9.30am
Breakfast Prayer – Tuesdays 7.30am
Mainly Music – Thursdays 9.15-11.15am
St Ronan's Pastoral Care

For pastoral care needs, please contact our Pastoral Care Co-ordinators,
Colin Dalziel 562 7238 or Mary Williams 568 3216

As it is in heaven reprised...

Back in the day, I wrote about a DVD which had been loaned to me by a good friend. I've just discovered it still sitting on my DVD shelf which I hope doesn't stretch the bonds of friendship too much.

However, the story is a good one and, as I remember it, a successful international conductor interrupts his career and returns to the small town in Sweden's far north where he spent his early childhood. He is seeking some peace and quiet but it's shattered when the local church choir seeks him out for advice. He can't say no, and from that time on nothing in the village is the same again.



As the amateur choir develops and grows, the closed and superficial relationships in the village are challenged and laid bare, honest exchanges reveal deep-held resentments, but a strong sense of togetherness in the choir develops a deep sense of community. This provides compassion and sanctuary for troubled members, while the choirmaster wrestles with his own demons and finally wins through to find deep friendship and love.

It's a truly engaging story which, nonetheless, as winter turns to spring in the far north, explores many of the deep issues that plague relationships everywhere, such as bullying, family violence, gossip, infidelity, hypocrisy, as well as the redeeming values of honesty, trust, hope and faith. It's a thoughtful and thought-provoking exploration of the multifaceted meaning of love.

As we start a new year, the world in which we live has been wracked (and in places wrecked) by those negative values, both socially and politically. And while we are so fortunate to enjoy a degree of freedom almost unique in the world, the problematic social issues still provide an urgent challenge, all too often thought to be "out there" or "over there" - but can be as close as next door.

People of faith would find an underlying resonance with the biblical themes of redemption and self-sacrifice. And, of course, the title is taken from a line in the Lord's prayer *Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven*. The storyline gives an interesting take on how that petition might be worked out in a real-life situation. It's on YouTube and well worth a watch.

Reg Weeks

The Rubbish Challenge: 10 steps to less waste in 10 months...

Why? We all know we make too much rubbish. Too much goes in the red bin, off to landfill. Too much is made for once-only use before getting chucked. Too much recycling gets contaminated and dumped. Not enough gets composted.



This is a problem not just for city councils. It's a problem for God's creation, and so it is a problem for God and for God's people. We all add to landfill waste and so we all get to share in solving the problem. Could this be a way of serving God? Could it be a face of our mission in 2021?

How? By taking small steps to cut down on our rubbish, we think about what we use and where it goes. We make choices about what to buy and how to dispose of what we don't want.

- The Rubbish Challenge is a series of little actions, one each month, that together add up to a big impact.
- The Rubbish Challenge is a resource for churches, families & individuals. Each month there's a thought, verse, prayer and practical task. Plus links to more...

10 Steps over 10 Months:

February:	Consider	July:	Paper towels
March:	Measure	August:	Office
April:	Recycling	September:	Kids
May:	Disposables	October:	Cleaning
June:	Food	November:	Celebrate

Step 1) Consider: *And God placed all things under his feet and appointed him to be head over everything. Ephesians 1:22*

● **Big Idea - Mission is Gospel in context** - Christ is Lord of everything and the Gospel of Christ is good news for everywhere. Mission happens at the points of connection between the eternal truth of salvation and the messy specifics of human life. In our time we face huge environmental issues. Following Jesus takes us wherever he leads, even into the rubbish dumps of the world.

● **Question - For reflection/discussion** - Whose problem is our rubbish? Is it a problem for God? It's great to throw things in the bin and someone else takes it away. But where does it go? What impact does it have on the environment? Is it our responsibility? Is this something our church/group/home would like to address this year?

● **Actions for February** - (1) Download the 'Waste' study guide from A Rocha's Rich Living series: www.arocha.org.nz/resources/rich-living-series (2) Read and talk about it with others. (3) Decide to do the Rubbish Challenge 10 Steps.

● **Prayer** - Almighty Creator, all things come from you. You call us to be responsible stewards. Jesus Christ, you are in all the world. You call us into mission to all the world. Life-giving Spirit, give us strength to follow Christ, in the little things and in the big things. **Amen**

(Contributed by **Reg Weeks**)

Clerk's corner...

Helen Withy: On 17 January we said a sad goodbye to Helen who has moved to Napier. Helen's farewell involved flowers, a card, some speeches and a few tears...



Helen has been a big part of St Ronan's for very many years and we miss her. We miss the person, and we also miss her quiet involvements in so many areas of St Ronan's life. Helen was: •the envelope secretary, •a Randwick breakfast lady, •she did various roster duties, •she was the roster policewoman¹, •she took the weekly food collections to Lower Hutt Foodbank, •she was involved with the *Record*. I think that's most of it – it's risky to make such lists, as one always leaves something obvious out...!

We will 'close ranks' for many of these functions, but Louise Day takes over as roster policewoman. Thanks Louise...😊

Jan Heine:

Recently, Jan moved from her Kotari Road home of very many years (and very many steps) to a lovely and spacious apartment in Woburn. A number of us went round there last Sunday, 31 January to share a potluck lunch with Jan and to give her new



home a St Ronan's church blessing. The short blessing service concluded with a Celtic prayer...

*The sacred Three,
My fortress be,
Encircling me.
Come and be round,
My hearth, my home.*

Jan's apartment is now a home - and it felt like it...!

¹ Helen's job was to remind us of our roster responsibilities. NB Without Lois' roster St Ronan's would not function, without Helen's reminders the roster would not function.

Embroidery: The *Eastbourne Embroidery Group* is no more. It started in 1980 as a division of the *Point Howard Art Society*. In more recent years, this group has been meeting at St Ronan's. The group met weekly through the year - come rain, come shine. But numbers have gradually dropped off, in spite of attempts to expand it, it had become unsustainable.

While on the one hand it is sad to report its closure, on the other we should be glad that the embroidery group has been valuable, for so many people, for so many years. Its closure now does not take away all the good it has achieved over all those years.



Times change, people change, pastimes change, leisure hours change. We are reminded... *For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven...* Ecclesiastes 3:1.

All gloom & despair? It may interest you to know St Ronan's is not all gloom and despair. We've welcomed a few new faces in the last year, and our Sunday morning attendances have risen slightly.

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Sandy Lang

***Larus dominicanus* L.**

Sitting by the computer is a poor substitute for watching the gulls revelling in the wind. As the wind sluices round the building, it loops, it eddies, it makes waves we can't see - but the birds can sense.

Together in motion, they slide down the furrows of the wind-waves, and lift up, up to the crests. And again, in case they miss a beat of the wind, round for another exhilarating ride - down, then up.



These common New Zealand 'Blackback gulls' are majestic - and more in keeping with their less-used name, 'Dominican gulls'.

Jan Heine (Photo Phil Benge)

God heard and seen in all things...

It's perhaps surprising, but a total delight, to realise that even at my somewhat advancing age, there are still many parts of New Zealand I have yet to discover.

So it was last month, when I set off on a four-day adventure in Mt Aspiring National Park, organised by the Milton Tramping Club. The park is home to the beautiful and mysterious Matukituki River and to the glistening peak Tititea (Mt Aspiring). As I boarded the bus in Dunedin on the first day, I really had no idea where we were headed.



Arrival - Day 1



The east branch of the river

The river, I was soon to discover, flows into Lake Wanaka and has two arms – the west and the east. Over three full days of tramping, our ably-led party of 37 explored both. As I looked up at the snow-capped mountains and glaciers, and gazed into the clean, fast-flowing river, Colin Gibson's hymn "*These hills*" came to mind.

"These hills where the hawk flies lonely."
We did indeed see and hear a kārearea swooping above us, guarding her nest and warning us shrilly to keep our distance.

"Mountains where the snows meet heaven." We were lucky; there had been some fresh snow the week before we arrived, though sadly the track to Rob Roy Glacier was closed due to storm damage. It is due to reopen this month.

"Pastures where the sheep graze calmly." Our lodge was situated in the heart of Mt Aspiring Station, where both sheep and cattle are farmed. The station has been owned by the Aspinall family for four generations, and it is fortunate the current owners have a good relationship with the Department of Conservation, as many of the tracks in the park also cross station land.

The lodge, to which we returned each evening, had been the old family homestead, but is now run by the Otago Youth Adventure Trust as a centre for



One of the more challenging bridges

youth leadership training programmes. Access to it is across the Matukituki River usually by tractor and trailer. However, on our arrival, as we clambered out of the bus, news that the tractor had a flat tyre was not encouraging. We walked for several kilometres alongside the river and across a footbridge to reach the lodge. Our heavy packs arrived some hours later once the wonderful Kelvin had fixed the puncture. Sighs of relief all round.

"Forests where the tree ferns tower, rivers running strong and clear." The first day's tramping for me was long and challenging. We seemed to spend hours scrambling over fallen logs, slithering around and over rocks streaming with water, heaving ourselves up steep riverbanks and negotiating narrow swing bridges. But there were great rewards

– the welcome shade of a South Island beech forest and the chance to fill our water bottles from the snow-fed river. Some braver souls even plunged into the icy water to cool off!

Being a solely New Zealand group felt particularly matey – not a foreign accent to be heard. Connections were quickly made during the tramps and over our leisurely, home-cooked meals back at the lodge. With plenty of willing people pitching in to help, clearing away was never a problem.

I felt so lucky to be on this trip, grateful to the Milton Tramping Club for creating these opportunities, to have seen the park at its best and with the weather perfect for our first three days. The last line of Colin's hymn sums up my experience perfectly: *"God [was] heard and seen in all things."*



As the rain began to fall on Day 4 one of the locals attacked the lodge guttering

Anne Manchester

Gluten², bread and our health...

Most people love bread and all the other products made from wheat. In this day and age with all the digestive problems we suffer (Crohn's, irritable bowel, reflux, cancer and coeliac disease) we need to ask *How safe is the food we eat – including bread?* I'll let you keep thinking about how you want to nourish your amazing, complex, incredible body...

THE LIFE-CHANGING LOAF

Ingredients:

- 1 cup (135g) sunflower seeds
- ½ cup (90g) flax seeds
- ½ cup (65g) hazelnuts or almonds
- 1½ cups (145g) rolled oats
- 2 Tbsp. chia seeds
- 4 Tbsp. psyllium seed husks (3 Tbsp. if using psyllium husk powder)
- 1 tsp. fine grain sea salt (add ½ tsp. if using coarse salt)
- 1 Tbsp. maple syrup (for sugar-free diets, use a pinch of stevia).
- 3 Tbsp. melted coconut oil or ghee.
- 1½ cups (350ml) water.



Directions:

1. In a flexible, silicon loaf pan, combine all dry ingredients, stir well. Whisk maple syrup, oil and water together in a measuring cup. Add this to the dry ingredients and mix very well until everything is completely soaked and the dough becomes very thick (if the dough is too thick to stir, add one or two teaspoons of water until the dough is manageable). Smooth out the top with the back of a spoon. Let sit out on the counter for at least two hours, or all day or overnight. To ensure the dough is ready, it should retain its shape even when you pull the sides of the loaf pan away from it.
2. Preheat oven to 175°C (350°F).
3. Place loaf pan in the oven on the middle rack and bake for 20 min. Remove bread from loaf pan, place it upside-down directly on the rack and bake for another 30-40 minutes. Bread is done when it sounds hollow when tapped. Let cool completely before slicing (difficult, but important).
4. Store in a tightly sealed container for up to five days. Freezes well too. Slice before freezing for quick and easy toast...!

(Recipe from the 'My New Roots' website)

Annette J Davidson

BN RN Nutritional Consultant

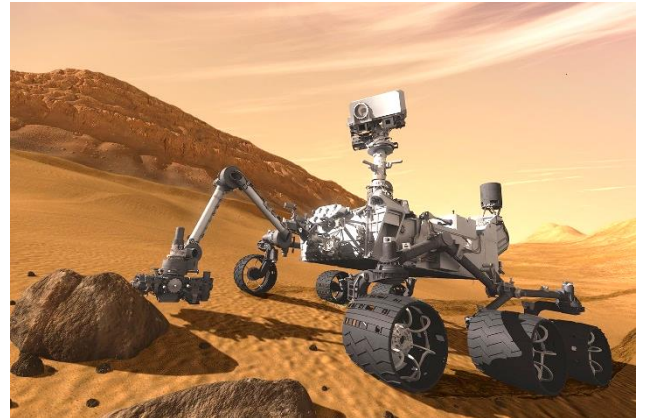
² 'Gluten' is a group of storage proteins found in many cereal grains. It refers to a mix of proteins occurring naturally in all grains and have been demonstrated able to trigger coeliac disease. These include all species of wheat (common wheat, durum, spelt, khorasan, emmer, einkorn), barley, rye and oats, as well as any hybrids of these species. Gluten is ~80% of the total protein in bread wheat. **Wiki**

Rood Screen – Lonely planet...

On 5 August 2011, the robotic rover 'Curiosity' landed on Mars after a 560 million km journey from Earth. Mars is only 64 million km away but space flight is never in a straight line.

Curiosity is a car-sized rover designed to explore the 'Gale' crater as part of NASA's Mars Science Laboratory. Its goals include investigating the Martian climate and geology and an assessment of whether the selected field site inside 'Gale' has ever offered environmental conditions favourable for microbial life.

Part of how it does this is by toddling around in its designated zone and scooping up samples of soil to analyse. The soil testing equipment on Curiosity makes a buzzing noise and the pitch of the noise changes, depending on which part of an experiment Curiosity is carrying out.



The buzzing gave the very clever scientists and engineers an idea. Could they program the experiment in such a way that the buzzing would occur with a recognizable sequence of pitches?

To cut a long story short, on 5 August 2012, exactly one year after 'Curiosity' landed on Mars, someone at Mission Control baked a cake and everyone celebrated. Meanwhile, 64 million km away, Curiosity sang Happy Birthday to itself.

It must have been the loneliest ever rendition of that song – and the most expensive. But those clever controllers proved it could be done. Google [curiosity happy birthday](#) and listen to it.

Curiosity may be far, far away, but its controllers are in constant touch.

It brings to mind Psalm 139

⁷Where can I go from Your Spirit?

Where can I flee from Your presence?

⁸If I go up to the heavens, You are there; If I make my bed in the depths, You are there.

⁹If I rise on the wings of the dawn, If I settle on the far side of the sea, ¹⁰even there Your hand will guide me, Your right hand will hold me fast.

¹¹If I say, "Surely the darkness will hide me and the light become night around me," ¹²even the darkness will not be dark to you; the night will shine like the day, for darkness is as light to you.

I believe Curiosity has sung Happy Birthday on each birthday since – and I suspect there has been a celebration at Mission Control too.

John Harris

PS Just in case you thought the engineers and scientists at NASA had gone soppy, this is not the only time they have anthropomorphised a robot.

On 25 January 2004, NASA had landed an earlier rover on Mars – the rover 'Opportunity' (aka Oppy). This looked a bit like *Wall-E* (a character from a Walt Disney film) and it was given the female gender.



She was designed to operate for 90 days but kept on keeping on for 15 years until her solar panels got covered in dust in a massive storm. This stopped them charging the batteries.

Oppy's last message was "My battery is low, and it's getting cold". The team on earth continued to try to contact Oppy for another eight months. As part of their signal, they created a Spotify playlist. Google **opportunity wake up**

They finally gave up on Oppy on 13 February 2019 and sent her Billie Holiday's love song as a sort of requiem.

*I'll find you in the morning sun
And when the night is new
I'll be looking at the moon
But I'll be seeing you*

The folk at Mission Control are beautiful people...!

Phil's photo – Good news, bad news...

Whether we like or not, living in this great land of New Zealand, we are daily subjected to the news of the day – news from here and news from overseas.

It seems to me, people are happy only when they can report bad news. So we are fed this diet of bad news that enters deeply into our psyches. After a while, one could be forgiven for believing there is nothing much good happening – anywhere...

I've never much subscribed to this point of view, so I was heartened when I read the recent obituary (Dominion Post, 30 Jan 2021) of one of New Zealand's finest leaders. Dr Rangimārie Te Turuki Arikirangi Rose Pere CBE.

I particularly liked the lines: *She loved life and celebrated each day in her world. She further stated there was no such thing as a terrible day. She was always positive and believed in giving out aroha - unconditional love - no matter what one may have done.*



So it was, with the strange weather we've been having. The tremendous winds and rough seas - different conditions each day. These make each wake-up, a delight to plan what could be ahead that day, whether the weather is majestically fine or abysmally foul - as only Wellington weather can be.

Each day becomes a challenge. How to adapt and how to enjoy...?



Recently, I shared an hour's fun and laughter with a photographer friend, as we tried to photograph a 130 km/h windstorm at Burden's Gate. In such a wind, a tripod is useless. It took all our skill just to stand up. We were a couple of very wobbly photographers that day...

Now, 2021 offers us a New Year of 365 days to adapt to, and to make the most of. Now isn't that a privilege? Let's just do it...!

Phil Bengé

Marking time...

Summer, week 7: We've passed midsummer's day. First light is now a little later, and sunset a little earlier. The periodic rains and accompanying Antarctic winds have been replaced with the wild, dry, desert airs from central Australia. It is balmy today – a glorious summer's day. The flowers are showing signs of fatigue and the nasturtium leaves are withering.

I reflected: Two weeks ago, I looked out on my garden and was stunned by the splendour that nature had unfolded in front of me. The brilliant oranges and reds of the calendula and the nasturtiums. A rich mass of huge pink/gold blooms on the solitary dahlia, the myriad greens of the grasses and trees, not to mention the baskets of variegated petunias, the pots of bedding begonias and the artichokes.



In the musical 'Oklahoma', on a similar morning, Curly sings:

*The corn is as high as an elephant's eye,
An' it looks like it's climbin' clear up to the sky.*



That's how I felt about my artichokes, nearly four metres high, and crowned by luminescent violet/blue blossoms. The sunchokes weren't far behind, disdainfully staring down on the puny beans, tomatoes and onion flowers below them.

A few years ago, I checked into a motel in Buffalo, NY. It was mid-winter, freezing cold, snow everywhere. The receptionist noted I had given a Los Angeles address. She said, "I used to live in LA, but I came here because I like the change in seasons."

I was incredulous. I muttered, "You can keep it...!" Every year at the end of December I would watch the TV news in my warm southern Californian sitting-

room and see the images of the black-clad residents of Minnesota and Wisconsin battling their snowdrifts.

But here, am I extolling the mid-summer. I now characterise winter as “that magical time of the year when the autumn blends into the spring” and I recall those amazing first weeks of summer when our bays’ steep hillsides are covered in a symphony of tumultuous colour from the myriad wildflowers; the air is saturated with their perfumes; and the black swans return to York Bay.

So, I got to thinking: Our year is divided into twelve months of about 4.3 weeks each ($52/12=4.3$). Our modern lives revolve around those time-periods. We count and schedule them by the hour, the day, the week, the calendar month. We are ruled by the rigorous accuracy of the calendar and what needs to be achieved. The natural world and its seasons recede to a faint backdrop.

I would like to recast my year so that it consists of four seasons of thirteen weeks each ($4 \times 13 = 52$). In this way I become more closely connected with the vibrant activity of the natural world around me, and more focussed on its dynamism. I partake of its enthusiasm and expectation. I measure the daylength from the changing positions of the sunrise and the sunset. I watch the wattles and the pōhutukawa, the kōwhai and the magnolias come into bloom in their due times; and the fruits set gently on the citrus, feijoas, grapes and olives. Their richness and variety a never-ending and ever-transforming enchantment, marvel and joy. The seagulls ride the thermals, the tui sing, and the kereru methodically demolish the fruit of the kawakawa.



Summer, week 8: The drab grey clouds and the Antarctic winds and rain showers have returned, but the petunias and the begonias still triumphantly sing. The weeds still flourish, and the fruits continue to swell.

The solstices and equinoxes were important in ancient cultures as is evidenced by Stonehenge-type constructions throughout the world³. Curiously, the Bible doesn’t mention them but perhaps their procession was such an embedded part of their culture that something so obvious and natural needed no special acknowledgement. The Greeks were possibly a little more sensitive, and it is difficult not to relate the mid-winter birth of Christ and the explosion of light recorded by John, to the winter solstice and the rebirth of life.

Geoff Mann

³ There are at least three sites in Australia where aborigines in ancient time, built Stonehenge-type structures, in SA, Vic and NSW. They are worth reading about. Try *Dark Emu: Black Seeds: Agriculture or Accident?* 2014 Bruce Pascoe. A reexamination of colonial accounts of Aboriginal people in Australia. Evidence for pre-colonial agriculture, engineering and building construction by the Aboriginal peoples.

POWER HOUR

Summer is like Sabbath & Sabbath is like Summer

Summer... I feel like everything stops for me. No more classes, no more meetings, no more distracting events, my friends and neighbours have gone walkabout. Instead, I can just open all my doors and windows and let all that lovely warm sunshine come in and relax and bask. I can be open simply to do whatever and whenever. I can drink in the unique trees, the flowers, the birds, the sea - nothing man-made. I have time to feel that awesome beauty of the world in a leisurely way.



Good heavens! As I write this in January, December feels so far away and February still seems a distant future, I can't yet contemplate. It's my responsibilities to others, necessary appointments and job and school which shake me out of my summer reverie.

Ah, summer is so restful. Summer minimises. Summer is the freedom to be open to listen, to enjoy, to respond and to absorb. Children are great at looking forward to summer and at showing their pleasure in it. And at the end of summer, they have grown so much! I enjoy seeing the children's healthy transition when they return to Power Hour.

Now, the Sabbath is a bit like summer. The general meaning of the 'Sabbath' in Jewish and Christian terms is a 'festive' day when people can enjoy their freedom from some of the regular labours of everyday life. That's stopping all those happenings, school, the job, weekend sports programmes and birthday parties. This minimisation of daily activity gives the chance for children and adults to be open to listening, absorbing and responding, deeply and reflectively, no matter their age.



The Sabbath thus offers opportunity to contemplate the spiritual things of life and to spend time with family (*Wikipedia*). So, the Sabbath is like summer, when there is time to "smell the flowers" and to breathe deeply (*photo, DomPost*).

Can children really develop their faith if they don't have regular summers and Sabbaths in their lives? It's summers and Sabbaths that provide children with healthy growth and enrichment in their faiths. They show such positivity and confidence when they can have the time to gain meaningful experiences and respond to others.

At the same time, their faith development and relationship with God feeds into their attitudes and approaches to themselves and others. So, caring for others and caring for themselves are two important areas of opportunity where they can positively grow with richness in spirit. Children long to feel worthy - to themselves and to others. And having that relationship with God is the glue that sticks things together.

Why can't children have mini-summers and mini-Sabbaths throughout the year, on different days, at different times and anywhere? However, having summers and Sabbaths at regular times does give assurance that the child's personal and faith development do happen. And we could have other mini-summers and mini-Sabbaths included too, couldn't we?

Term 1 2021 Children's Power Hour (ages 5-11) starts 14 February (Valentine's Day) to 11 April.

Please note Easter Day is on 4 April and Daylight Saving also finishes then.

The children join the first part of the church service at 9:30am, then move to the Education Block for Power Hour, later they rejoin the congregation at morning tea.

Blessings Susan Connell

The Sabbath (Sabbat): A notation...

From the Hebrew שָׁבַת, the literal meaning of Sabbath is a combination of *shavat* - to rest (Britannica) and the verb *shabbat* - to rest from labour (Wikipedia).



According to Exodus:16:23 the Sabbath is a day of rest on the seventh day, commanded by God to be kept as a holy day of rest, as God rested from creation. It is a day set aside for rest and worship.

Exodus 20:8 *Remember the Sabbath, to keep it holy.* Activities may include praying, meditating, studying the scriptures and teachings of latter-day prophets, reading wholesome material, spending time with family, visiting the sick and distressed and attending other church meetings.

Also of interest to underline the real understanding and practice of the Sabbath, is the miracle performed on the Sabbath by Jesus. Jesus healed a man with a withered hand on the Sabbath and he challenged the people to decide what was lawful for the Sabbath - *to do good or to do evil, to save life or to kill.* Mark 3:4

Susan Connell



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.
Please email them to slang@xtra.co.nz

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 March 2021
Sunday 28 February 2021**