



St Ronan's Presbyterian Church
Eastbourne

Record

June 2020

7 June	Worship with Ray Coats	9.30am/e-time
14 June	Worship with Reg Weeks	9.30am/e-time
21 June	Worship with Liz Barrow	9.30am/e-time
28 June	Worship with Lynn Russell	9.30am/e-time
5 July	Worship with Ray Coats	9.30am/e-time

e-time=yourtime=anytime

In this issue

<i>Meanwhile ..</i>	2
<i>Clerk's Corner</i>	4
<i>Church Re-Start Rules</i>	5
<i>My Early Dreams</i>	6
<i>Living Wage news</i>	8
<i>Poem Goes Viral</i>	9
<i>Foodbank News – Re-starting</i>	11
<i>Prayers from Tuesday morning Prayer Group</i>	12
<i>Rood screen – Rooles</i>	13
<i>Essential</i>	14
<i>Phil's Photo – at the Back Door</i>	16
<i>Chidren's Power Hour & Wiggly Church</i>	18

**Power Hour & Wiggly Church – at home Sundays 9.30am;
e-Breakfast Prayer – at home Tuesdays 7.30am
Mainly Music – at home 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

Meanwhile...

What a week of announcements worldwide. The Americans are back in the space race, planning to head for Mars; meanwhile race riots rock their major cities, and Hong Kong citizens continue to protest the tightening grip of authoritarianism. There have been promising breakthroughs in cancer treatment; meanwhile the world struggles to combat climate change. The scientific community is racing to produce an effective COVID-19 vaccine; meanwhile the nations are in turmoil gripped by the devastation of the Coronavirus pandemic. New Zealand is cautiously optimistic about moving to Alert Level One of the emergency response; meanwhile we are encouraged to continue with the simplest of protective measures – “Wash your hands!”



Many years ago I learnt of Ignaz Semmelweis, a Hungarian doctor who worked in the Vienna General Hospital in the 1840s. He is regarded as the father of handwashing as an antiseptic technique.

It was a teaching hospital and there were two maternity wards, one staffed by students and doctors, the other only by midwives. Concerned about the fact that many young mothers contracted a fever and died shortly after childbirth, Ignaz noticed that the mortality rate in the doctor's ward was twice that of the one staffed by the midwives. After coming up with a number of explanations and discarding them, he realised that the key difference was that the students and doctors worked in the autopsy room in the morning and then in the afternoon examined the women and delivered the babies. The midwives worked only in their ward.

The discovery of 'germs' was still some way off but Ignaz was convinced that the doctors carried diseased particles from the cadavers to the women, and so insisted the medical staff washed their hands with chlorine before entering the women's ward. The death rate fell dramatically but the doctors remained unconvinced – unwilling to admit that they were the cause of the mortality rate.

Later during the 1850s, Florence Nightingale, the Lady of the lamp, served in the Crimean war and implemented handwashing along with other hygiene practices in the war hospital where she worked. Her handwashing practices achieved a reduction in infections.

Sadly the hand hygiene promoted by Florence and Ignaz was not widely adopted and, strangely, it was not until the 1980s (that's not a misprint) that a number of food-borne outbreaks and associated infections led the Centre for Disease Control in America to identify hand hygiene as an important way to prevent the spread of infection. That heralded the first nationally endorsed guidelines for washing your hands, and now there is a global partnership committed to promoting handwashing with soap.

Such a simple solution – would that we could find such simple way to deal with racism.

But wait! Wasn't it Saint Paul writing to the Christians in Galatia who said that there is no longer Jew nor Greek, there is no longer slave nor free, there is no longer male and female, for all are one in Christ Jesus? That surely applies to all polarities of difference. There is no place in Christ for "them and us".

It may not be as simple as washing your hands but when Christians really learn to live that lesson, what a difference it could make.

Reg Weeks

An electronic update...

Many of you will have received from Sandy the weekly emailed *e-Service* with a reflection from the rostered preacher along with readings and some short prayers.

St Ronan's now has a private Facebook group [*St Ronan's virtual faith community*](#) (only members can read what is posted). It should be visible to anyone on Facebook by entering the name in the search bar. You can then ask to join the group, and I'll be notified.



Posted on this Facebook group page, you will find the *e-Service*, saved in video format combined with two hymns with music along with audio versions of the readings and reflection, and with graphics similar to our regular Sunday PowerPoint presentations.



We are aware that there are a number of reasons why people prefer not to use Facebook, so I also save a copy of this 'enhanced' *e-Service* as a timed PowerPoint slideshow, as well as in video format. These files are too big to email but if you contact me, I can send you a link to either, which will allow you to view or download the file.

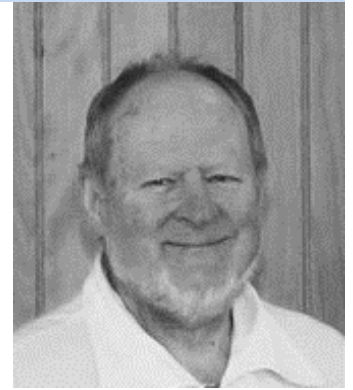
It's a very simple process, easily accessed by anyone using email, at any convenient time.

I'm also investigating other platforms and copyright requirements to see if we can make the Sunday Service available as a livestream video or later from the St Ronan's website.

Reg Weeks

Clerk's corner

COVID-19: It's now post-lockdown, with a further loosening predicted next week sometime. All much sooner than I'd predicted! Today as I write this, we've just had our first service back in the church since 15 March. Auspiciously, it is also Pentecost Sunday 31 May, the birthday of the Christian church. But not really the re-birth of St Ronan's, as St Ronan's is the people not the buildings and we never went anywhere. Indeed, we were probably busier than normal 'being church' during the lockdown...!



e-Services: I have been creating our weekly e-Services from material sourced from our named service leaders. Yesterday, I emailed off the 11th e-Service.

These started as a replacement for our in-church services but are now set to continue for the foreseeable future. We've picked up a few new people I'd not want to abandon, and the e-Services also serve to keep our regulars in touch on those Sundays when they, for one reason or another, are unable to come to church. Our Sunday attendance numbers (average 21) are about half of the number who attend from time to time (about 40).

As noted previously, I've made these e-Services as accessible as possible (all you need is email) to enable their use by those with limited equipment and/or with limited comfortableness with information technology. If you are not a recipient of these e-Services, just drop me a line at office@stronans.org.nz and I'll add you in to the distribution list.

COVID rules: Hirers of our premises are responsible for compliance for their own groups. We impose just two rules on them. (1) That they don't come on site if they are not feeling well and (2) that they wash or sanitise their hands before entering our buildings. This keeps all high-touch surfaces safe (doorknobs, light switches etc). It's our job to sanitise these regularly but it's everybody's job to ensure they don't get contaminated in between.

Hand washing/sanitising: Hand washing with soap and water beats hand sanitising. But hand sanitising beats contamination. Vulnerable people use our buildings throughout the week.

Both our toilets are now set up with new foam-soap and paper-towel dispensers. And the Education Block foyer (just outside the toilets, see photo) has an automatic hand sanitiser station. Just hold your hand under it to get a squirt of sanitiser – nothing to push – it senses your hand is there – magic!



e: slang@xtra.co.nz t:562 8752 m:021 222 0383

Sandy Lang

My early dreams of becoming a missionary

On Sunday June 7, I will be launching a new book – a memoir called *Memory Stick*. This has been nearly two years in the making, with publication suffering a bit of a hold up during the recent lockdown. It's an exciting but, at the same time, scary prospect to be sending this new baby of mine out into the world.

Memory Stick is 12 chapters in all, with the fourth entitled *Where's God?* Here is the first part of this chapter. I am sure some of these early memories will resonate with quite a few others at St Ronan's.

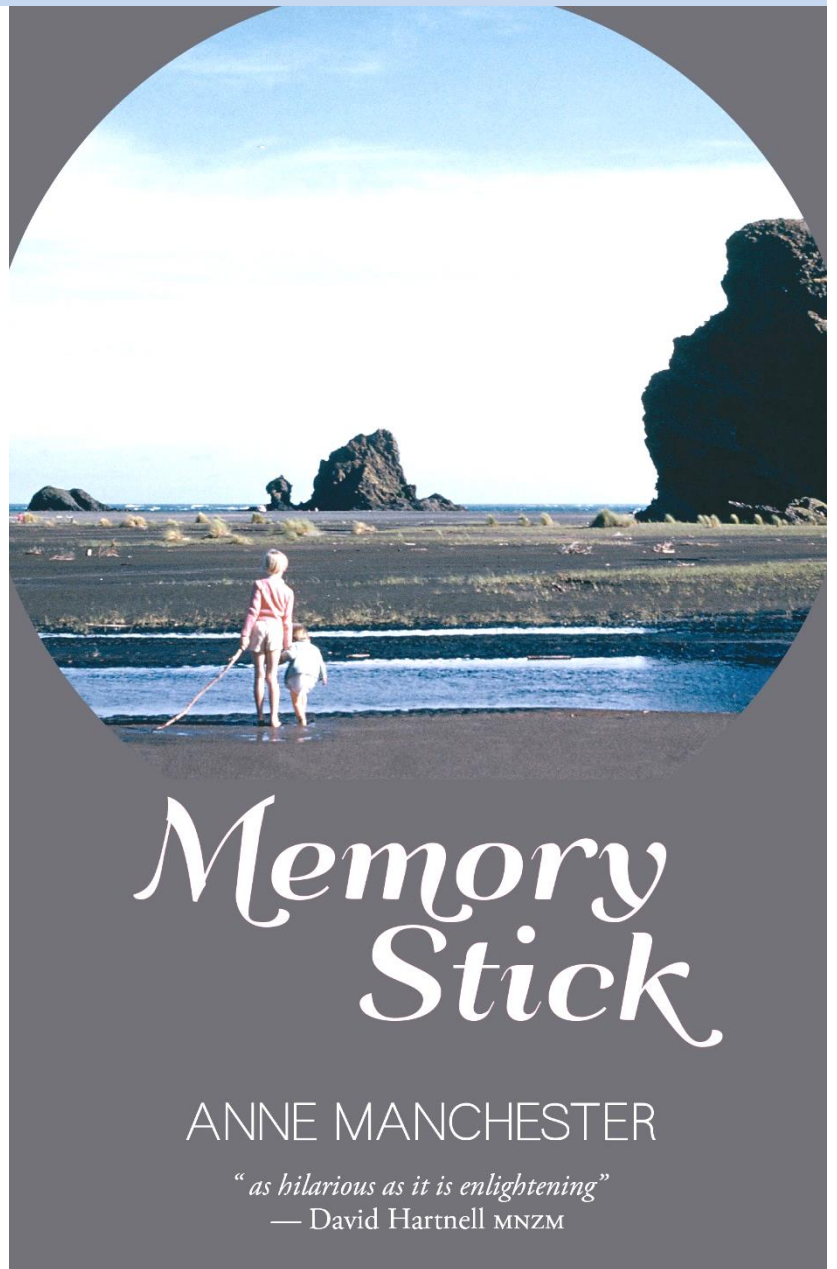


When my son James was about ten he dreamed of driving a 'chuggy' round the tarmac at Wellington Airport, towing luggage and catering trolleys to and from the planes. When I was his age I dreamed of becoming a missionary.

It was my Sunday school teacher at Ōrākei Presbyterian Church who inspired this ambition. I took myself to Sunday school – neither of my parents attended church but they did not object to my going.

Perhaps they were relieved to get me out of the house for a few hours. Even at age seven or eight I was desperate to find some meaning to my life, something that would take me away from the tension I experienced at home, and I loved the routine of church and Sunday school.

Each week when I walked into the unprepossessing brick church on Coates Avenue, I would receive a sticker of Jesus, or of an angel or an apostle, to add to



my sticker book. I became part of a community of believers, singing the same hymns and learning the same Bible stories.

There were no overhead projectors or PowerPoint presentations in the late 1950s. We would sit on the floor in our Sunday school room, one of several in the brick hall adjoining the church, and listen to the stories, watching them come to life in cut-out pictures assembled on felt-covered boards. We learned a set repertoire of songs written out in black crayon on large sheets of butchers' paper, and as we dropped our coins into the offertory box, we would enthusiastically sing:



*Hear the pennies dropping. Listen as they fall.
Every one for Jesus, he shall have them all.
Dropping, dropping, dropping, dropping,
Hear the pennies fall!
Every one for Jesus. He shall have them all!*

Best of all was when my teacher told us about her time spent as a missionary in Papua New Guinea. Her main forms of transport were canoe or motorbike. She described travelling long distances through thick jungle to reach isolated villages, bringing them the good news of the Christian God. What could be more meaningful than that? Farewell to a suburban life of drudgery like my mother's – my destiny was to bring the saving power of God to the uncivilised, to a dark-skinned, semi-clad people like those in PNG who would be eternally grateful for my efforts. At last my life had a purpose.

All I needed to do was read my Bible, pray, study and grow up.

Meanwhile, there were Sunday school concerts to prepare for. . .

One year, I chose to sing the English folksong Greensleeves. There would be no accompaniment as no one had the music, but I was confident I could manage without. The hall was packed with parents, including my own. When it came to my item, I stepped confidently to the front, keen to impress.

*Alas my love, you do me wrong
to cast me off discourteously.
And I have lov-ed you so long,
Delighting in your company.*

It was going well so far. But then came the chorus.

*Greensleeves was all my joy,
Greensleeves was my delight,
Greensleeves was my heart of gold,
And who but my lady, Greensleeves.*

Sadly, I had pitched the song too high at the start, so by the time I got to the first note of the chorus all that came out of my mouth was a feeble screech. Whether I reached the end of the song, I do not know, but I will never forget the humiliation as I re-joined the rest of the children, my cheeks burning with shame.

This experience did not stop me wanting to practise my missionary skills on my sister, however. At the tender age of four, she was subjected to compulsory Sunday school lessons at home, with her very own attendance book and stickers. For some reason she never applied herself with much enthusiasm and, at the end of the year, I could only award her a prize for regular attendance, not for any other accomplishment.

Anne Manchester

Living Wage Hutt Valley Network

It's been a while since the *Living Wage Hutt Valley Network* has met, although many of you have been working hard to ensure the most vulnerable in our communities are supported during the COVID-19 crisis.



The crisis has also shown us that the Living Wage is needed now more than ever. More than ever we need to look out for our most vulnerable, including workers on the lowest rates of pay. These workers need the Living Wage to get by. Anything less means they and their whānau will struggle to live in dignity and participate in society. We need to value our lowest paid workers who have been critical to the delivery of essential services and all the other workers whose work has been undervalued and underpaid. And we need our lowest paid workers, who spend all their incomes supporting the local shops and businesses, to have money in their pockets to support local economies.

A call to action on Hutt City Council's annual plan: Because low paid workers need support more than ever before, we expected Hutt City Council to ensure that the lowest paid workers received a much-needed pay increase this year. But the HCC draft annual plan includes a wage freeze. Although it makes sense to freeze high salaries, wage freezes disadvantage the lowest paid.

This is a call to action. The Living Wage Hutt Valley submission on the HCC annual plan was sent out, as well as asking for submissions by 23 May to support the councillors who want to continue to support the lowest paid in the HCC workforce and take leadership in our community.

A new campaign: Because of the importance of the Living Wage in the post COVID-19 economy, we've launched a new campaign called **NEVER GO BACK**, and will aim to:

- Support and promote Living Wage Employers, especially locals like: Seashore Cabaret; Hutt Union & Community Health Service; Miss Fortune's; Manaaki Ability Trust; Good Fortune Coffee and Waglands, a holiday retreat for dogs in Normandale.
- Call on local councils, like Hutt City Council, to show leadership in their communities and hold the line on the Living Wage.
- Organise to ensure the next government is one that takes leadership and pays their own workforce the Living Wage.

Farewell: Lyndy MacIntyre has retired from the community organising role and Marion Drake, a student leader is taking on the role. Lyndy has been a dynamo for the Hutt Valley network.

Jan Heine

Poem goes viral

A Kiwi poet's bedtime fairy tale video, *'The Great Realisation'*, has already racked up more than twenty-four million views across *Facebook* and *YouTube*.

It was written by the 'spoken-word' poet Tomos Roberts, who was born in Auckland to Welsh parents but now lives in the United Kingdom. The poem describes how the world changed after the arrival of the coronavirus pandemic. The video shows Roberts (aka Tom Foolery) reading the fairy tale to a young boy, who is actually Roberts' younger brother Cai.



Before the virus took over, people were too dependent on technology, the poem says, there was rampant overconsumption, and global warming was a major problem.

But as the pandemic struck and people were forced into lockdown, they started to speak to each other a lot more, especially to loved ones. The planet started to recuperate as factories and industries paused.

Roberts believes that shutting down much of the world for the past month has provided a great opportunity to rejig the world order, to find more joyful ways of living.



THE GREAT REALISATION, BY TOM FOOLERY

*"Tell me the one about the virus again, then I'll go to bed."
But my boy, you're growing weary, sleepy thoughts about your head.
"Please! That one's my favourite. I promise just once more."
Okay, snuggle down my boy, though I know you know full well,
the story starts before then, in a world I once would dwell.*

*It was a world of waste and wonder, of poverty and plenty,
Back before we understood, why hindsight's 2020.
You see, the people came up with companies, to trade across all lands.
But they swelled and got much bigger, than we ever could have planned.*

*We'd always had our wants, but now it got so quick,
You could have anything you dreamed of, in a day, and with a click.
We noticed families had stopped talking. That's not to say they never spoke.
But the meaning must have melted, and the work-life balance broke.*

*And the children's eyes grew squarer, every toddler had a phone.
They filtered out the imperfections, but amidst the noise they felt alone.
And every day the skies grew thicker, till we couldn't see the stars.
So, we flew in planes to find them, while down below we filled our cars.*

*We'd drive around all day in circles. We'd forgotten how to run.
We swapped the grass for tarmac, shrunk the parks till there were none.
We filled the sea with plastic, 'cause our waste was never capped.
Until each day when you went fishing, you'd pull them out already wrapped.*

*And while we drank and smoked and gambled, our leaders taught us why,
It's best not to upset the lobbies, more convenient to die.
But then in 2020, a new virus came our way.
The governments reacted, and told us all to hide away.*

*But while we all were hidden, amidst the fear and all the while,
The people dusted off their instincts, they remembered how to smile.
They started clapping to say thank you, and calling up their mums.
And while the car keys were gathering dust, they'd look forward to their runs.*

*And with the sky less full of voyagers, the earth began to breathe.
And the beaches brought new wildlife, that scuttled off into the seas.
Some people started dancing, some were singing, some were baking.
We'd grown so used to bad news, but some good news was in the making.*

*And so, when we found the cure, and were allowed to go outside,
We all preferred the world we found, to the one we'd left behind.
Old habits became extinct, and they made way for the new.
And every simple act of kindness was now given its due.*

*"But why did it take a virus to bring the people back together?"
Well, sometimes, you've got to get sick, my boy, before you start feeling better.
Now lie down, and dream of tomorrow, and all the things that we can do.
And who knows, if you dream hard enough, maybe some dreams will come true.
We now call it the Great Realisation and, yes, since then there have been many.
But that's the story of how it started, and why hindsight's 2020.*

Contributed by **Anne Manchester**

News on the Foodbank front



Lower Hutt Foodbank Inc.
P.O. Box 31172, Lower Hutt 5010
Phone: 568 7392

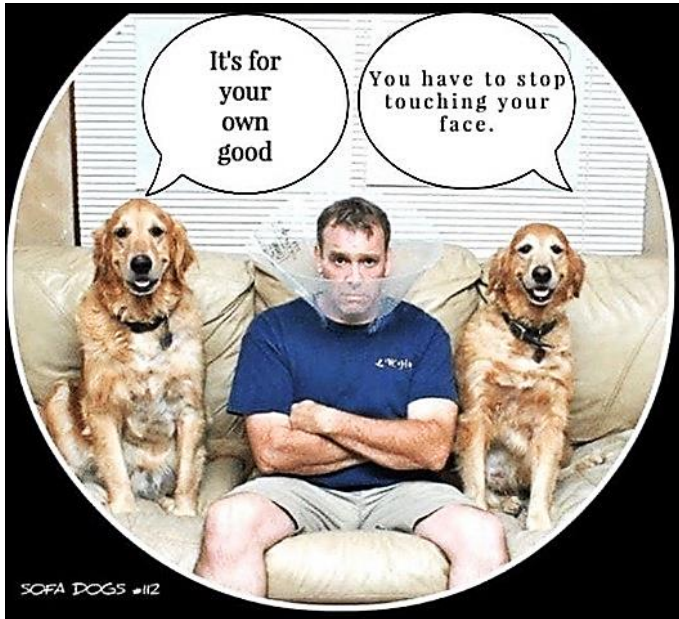
Email: huttfoodbank@gmail.com

Website: www.lowerhuttfoodbank.org.nz

The Lower Hutt Food Bank has decided to re-open at our usual site on Dudley Street site from **Monday June 8th**. We will be very happy to receive donations from that date.

Once again, we are very grateful for the way your congregation has contributed to our work.

Jenny Whimp, Lower Hutt Food Bank
And for St Ronan's thanks from **Helen Withy** 021 804624



From St Ronan's Tuesday morning breakfast prayer group

Prayer of thanks for the near elimination of COVID-19 in New Zealand

Everyone must submit themselves to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established (Rom 13:1).

Let us pray. Father God, in Jesus we give you our heartfelt thanks for the way the people of New Zealand have responded so positively to the lockdown requirements, as directed by the Government.

We thank you Lord, for the leadership of our Prime Minister, the Director General of Health and all those officials who are so ably advising and guiding the people of New Zealand safely through such a life-threatening disease.

We are grateful for all the front-line medical people and nurses who are testing or caring for others. Lord, we pray for your peace for the families of the 22 people who have died of COVID-19 in New Zealand.

Blessings and thanks to Sandy and Reg, and the guest service writers who prepare the e-Services and online audio-visual services, that have enabled us to stay in touch while in our homes during lock down.

Now may the Lord of Peace himself give you peace at all times, and in every way. The Lord be with you all. 2 Thess 3:16.

Colin Dalziel

Prayer for successful progress through COVID-19 lockdown levels 2, 1

Father of All Wisdom be with all New Zealanders, young and old, as we progress through the changing responses to the pandemic.

Help those re-establishing their lives socially, economically and environmentally as restrictions are lifted. And help those leading us to be wise and kind.

Grant rest to those who need it. And may those who have lost work, or income, or tuition find ways to recoup their losses. Amen.

Gill Burke

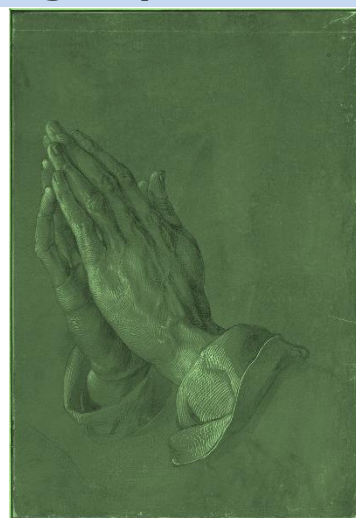
Prayer for St Ronan's Church

O Lord God and Heavenly Father, forgive us for our fear and apprehension. Help us to draw near to You who has saved us from the eternal pandemic of sin, for we have all sinned against You.

Let us not trust in anyone or anything – no spiritual hydroxychloroquine or any other spiritual quackery.

In You, O Lord, do we put our trust. Let us never be put to shame.

Paul Batchelor



Rood Screen – The Rooles

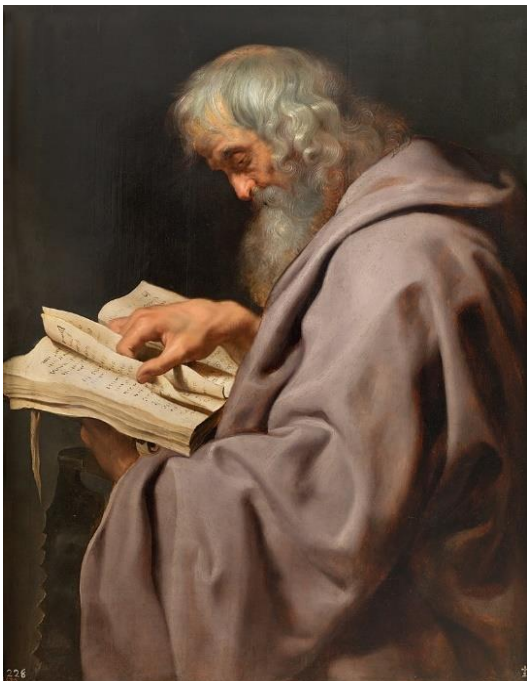
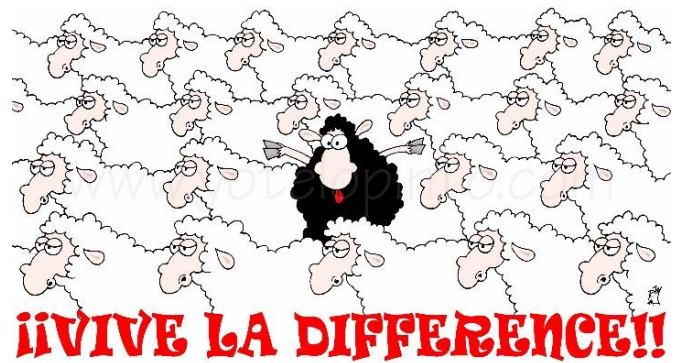
Do you remember the spelling rule that goes – ‘i’ before ‘e’ except after ‘c’? There is also a sub-rule that allows ‘e’ before ‘i’ if the combination sounds like a hard ‘a’ – so ‘neighbour’ and ‘weigh’ are spelled with an ‘ei’.

Of course as soon as you establish any language rule, along come the exceptions – so, caffeine, species, protein, sufficient, ancient, society, weird, theism, protein, sovereign, rein, reign, foreign, feisty, kaleidoscope, codeine, deify, deity, seize, beige, neither, counterfeit, zeitgeist, sheik, science, and conscience. But this many exceptions is anarchistic!

I once asked a wise old minister why our church was so full of schisms and dissent. Surely, if we are all here to worship the same God, then we ought all be in perfect harmony? Ought we not to have the same views, or at least similar views?

He replied that the very strength of today’s church was its diversity and its ability to accept challenges and differing points of view. Sure, we need a foundation set of rules, but it’s the differences, the exceptions, that ‘give the colour to the canvas.’

He went on to point out that the disciples Jesus chose were a pretty eclectic bunch. Although that made some sense to me at the time, I’d not really thought it through till now.



Simon Zealotes

Peter, James, John and Philip were all fishermen from Bethsaida and Capernaum. While that no doubt gave them a lot in common, consider that until Jesus’ call, they were all four competing for the same fish, working the same ‘favourite’ fishing spots and selling their catch on the same market. Hardly a good start for a friendship.

And then, Judas (Iscaiot), Jude (a nationalist, often now pictured with a club, and the patron saint of lost causes) and Simon (Zealotes) were all Jewish nationalists who initially followed Jesus because they each saw him as the leader who would defeat the Roman oppressors. Their ‘goals’ may have been similar but unlikely the ‘how’ – or they’d all have been surnamed ‘Iscaiot’ or ‘Zealotes’ (both violent Jewish sects).

And then, Bartholomew was a scholar of royal blood. A ‘book man’. How did he fit in with people who made their living with their hands?



Matthew

And Matthew was a publican, or tax collector for the Romans – on quite the opposite side from the three nationalists. We don't know what James' or Thomas' backgrounds were.

Anyway, there must have been some interesting chats around the campfire. But these were the twelve men Jesus chose to change the world – and they did.

As with spelling, without rules that provide the foundations, our faith would soon crumble when challenged. But once the foundations are in place, Jesus' formula appears to have been *vive la difference*.

Whenever we see and hear people in our church with views different from our own, we should thank God we are clearly doing something right!

Sometimes we do need to remind ourselves to disagree in love – but provided we manage that, it is the exceptions that will give us an exceptional church of exceptional people. It is our theological and political and cultural differences that will make us stronger, not our similarities.

John Harris

Essential...

When I have been asked how I have found the lockdown I have generally replied enthusiastically, "It's been marvellous! It's been so wonderfully quiet without the constant noise of factories and vehicles. The air everywhere is fresh and clean. And the harbour sparkles without the dimming mist of exhaust fumes. We should have lockdowns more often!"

An important feature however has been the recognition of the role of the "essential workers". This is a tacit acknowledgement of the social class/caste structure of our society. These "essential workers", the checkout operators, the courier drivers, the bus drivers, the trash collectors, along with nurses and teachers, struggle at the bottom of our democratic pyramid, and have frequently protested the poor remuneration they receive for their efforts in keeping our lives liveable.

Our communities are physically sifted according to ability to pay. As a result, the "essential workers" are frequently found living in areas which are often categorised as "deprived".

Our modern society is widening and exacerbating the rifts and chasms between the haves and the have-nots, the exploiters and the exploited. CV19 has shown us how much we all depend on one another, and how basic to our lifestyles are our "essential workers". We should now seize the opportunity to recognise and

appropriately reward these fellow citizens and restore to them the dignity they, their families and their communities deserve, and are entitled to.

As the CV19 saga has unfolded we have been shown the poor living conditions which have made so many of our people the most vulnerable to the virus – and all sorts of other diseases.

Would that CV19 could inspire our leaders not only to passively acknowledge the patent injustices and inequities of our society but to actively seek to expunge them.

“Ah, but this is a very complex issue and.....” I know that, but I have just set down the thoughts I have had over the past few weeks.

We have not seen subjugation and slavery as part of our history and tradition. But it is. Having invaded and stolen the land of the original occupants/owners, the invaders have imported and continue to import more essential workers-cum-slaves to support those who rely on them.

The consequences of such fragile structures have been repeatedly demonstrated in the history of the world, as the enslaved and underprivileged have revolted: in Egypt, in Rome, in France, in England, in Russia, in China, in South Africa.

There is nothing autocrats and dictators fear more than popular insurrection, and they will do all in their power to prevent and stifle it, as shown in 1400 BC in Egypt, in 30 AD in Jerusalem, in recent years in the Middle East, and in the past few weeks in China and Hong Kong.

We have just celebrated the empowering tongues of fire of Pentecost. They coincide with perhaps the most momentous feature of the CV19 phenomenon: the tongues of fire consuming the “land of the free, and the home of the brave”, laying bare its slave foundation and its inherent fragility.

The anglophone nations share many cultural traditions. The roots now being exposed in the USA are alive here in NZ and Australia as well.

CV19 has warned us. Have we the will to respond?

Jesus is alleged to have said: “The poor you will always have with you.” I’m sorry, I have to reject this as we have traditionally understood and accepted it. It is not an excuse but a call to action.

(For another, Australian, perspective, see/read: Victor Steffensen *Fire Country*)
Geoff Mann

Phil's photo – At the back door

A couple of weeks ago I was watching a photography tutorial on *You Tube*. The instructor commented that one didn't have to travel far to take great photos. There's always something interesting, right where you live. He lives in London, near Richmond and it's in



Richmond Park he walks his dog. He takes fabulous wildlife photos there and showed us some outstanding examples. I happened to be in the Richmond area some years back and took this shot of the River Thames. How different are the sluggish, brown, British rivers from our NZ ones!



So, 'go local' was my challenge a few days later, on this most beautiful, clear, windless morning. My assignment was the metalled Pencarrow road. Stunning, and starting only two kilometres from home. That day it was teeming with people out walking, out running, or out cycling. Many more of them nowadays. The lockdown's changed our leisure habits.

In some places the road runs close to the sea. It suffered some serious damage from the recent huge southerly swells.

In other places, a wide shingle bank has pushed the sea far back. The opportunistic bush flowering-plant species are silently invading this new soilless land. Taking back possession of the area from the intertidal algal species that previously held it in their thrall.



The lighthouse marks the spot where one at last says, "We've arrived!" And you stop to eat a warm, squashy sandwich and drink a cup of warm tea from the thermos, before turning back for home. Funny how often the wind changes at this moment, from a southerly (on the way down) to a northerly (on the way back). Murphy's Law is as relentless as the tide!



Oh, but what a joy, to weather the weather whatever the weather!

Phil Bengie

POWER HOUR AND WIGGLY CHURCH

THE HIDDEN

by **Joy Cowley** (from Psalms Down-under)



Everything has its roots in God.
In the greening of the tree,
the music of falling water,
the surge of the incoming tide,
the rise and fall of seaweed,
the barking of seals on a rock,
the dive of the humpback whale,
the I AM is manifest.

Everything is contained in God.
In the smoke from a driftwood fire,
the wind sharpening leaves of flax,
the shadow of trout in a moonlit stream,
the first fall of snow on mountains,
the the kingfisher flying to her nest,
The the I AM is moving.

Everything speaks of God.
In the winner's shout of celebration,
the laughter round the dinner table,
the child's cry of pain in the night,
the groan of a woman in childbirth,
the sigh of a man's last breath,
the I AM is heard.

God is everything's secret.

During Lockdown Level 4, Susan emailed us with a story about a little blackbird and we replied with a story about cats; both stories reflected on the wonder we can find in the most simple of moments.

Our cat story took place many years ago when I was walking along Oroua Street and I saw my mother standing by her gate with some shopping. It was odd that she hadn't gone inside her house, so I cautiously asked if everything was ok. She whispered for me to be very quiet - there were two cats in her driveway caught in an important moment - a territorial staring competition, or some sort of friendship issue. Mum was waiting for them to sort it out. She explained that it was a lovely day so she didn't mind waiting, and if she disturbed the cats, they might feel the need to fight later.

So we waited. All of a sudden, both cats got up and walked peacefully away.

That night I reflected on how many things there are that go on around us that we don't notice unless we take time. Mum's decision to let those cats be, may not have made much difference in the scheme of things; or it may have prevented a cat fight and the consequential injuries and vet bills that follow. What it definitely achieved was a moment in time; a moment to stop and think, to consider whether or not it was necessary to rush in, or whether it was possible to pause and pay attention.

Lockdown Level 4 was not easy for everyone, nor was it free of complaint, but it was definitely a time that gave us an opportunity for reflection. In our family, it gave us a chance to walk, to notice rocks and birds and butterflies, we saw a white rainbow in the morning mist and curious seaweed washed up after a

storm. We saw families together and people on their own, we saw dew drops and sunbeams and teddy bears, and we took time to notice things and reflect: God is everything's secret.

Elspeth

Blessings Susan Connell, Elspeth Cotsilinis, Matt McCorkindale



Speargrass (*Aciphylla colensoi*) near Rangiwahia Hut, Ruahines



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 5013

Local Ministry Team

Rev Reg Weeks	027 491 5947	third.age@xtra.co.nz
Sandy Lang	562 8753	slang@xtra.co.nz
Simon Shaw	562 8772	simonjshaw@xtra.co.nz
Colin Dalziel	562 7238	colinjdalziel@gmail.com
Michelle Bolger	562 8810	ferryroadddb@gmail.com
Parish Clerk	Sandy Lang	
Hall Bookings	Sandy Lang	
Church info line	562 7583	

Contributions for the 'Record' are most welcome.
Please place them in the Church letterbox or email to helen.withy@xtra.co.nz or
janheine@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 June 2020
Sunday 28th June 2020**

