



St Ronan's Presbyterian Church  
Eastbourne

# Record

## July 2021

4 July	Ross Scott.....	9.30am
11 July	Reg Weeks.....	9.30am
18 July	Merv Aitken.....	9.30am
25 July	Gill Burke.....	9.30am
1 August	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**

## ***The innocence of children...***

"June deleven" was how my daughter responded when asked her age - about when this photo was taken. She was born on the eleventh of June and now has teenage daughters of her own.



They both looked just as delightful at that age, and the current Facebook photos of my great-grandsons are just as heart-warming. Their excited exploration of the world around them is a joy to behold, and it often brings to mind Joy Cowley's poem, 'Treasure'...

*One fine morning, the child stood on a lawn  
covered with daisies and dandelions,  
and hardly dared breathe for beauty.  
The grass was thick around her ankles and in it,  
as far as she could see, were jewels laid out  
on spring green velvet.  
Each daisy was a perfect yellow cushion  
edged with white petals, some blushed tinted.  
Every dandelion was made from sunshine,  
and some had on their faces, wet diamonds  
that shivered and glittered when they rolled  
onto the child's fingers.  
She took a bunch of this perfect treasure  
into her father and he admired every flower  
his eyes growing soft with memory.  
Together they put them in a glass  
on the kitchen windowsill which instantly  
became a shrine to beauty.  
Later that day someone said "nice lawn.  
It's a pity there are so many weeds in it.  
I have a spray that will get rid of them."  
At that moment the child learned  
that when a treasure is judged a weed  
it has no value at all.*



Jesus told many stories to teach what would characterise the reign of God in human affairs - 'parables of the kingdom' they are called. We hear them regularly, and several speak of the kingdom as 'treasure'.

But I think the treasure of the kingdom (like beauty) is in the eye of the beholder and maybe it takes a child-like innocence to recognise it.

In the Contemporary English Translation of the gospel of Matthew Jesus says:  
*I promise you this. If you don't change and become like a child, you will never  
get into (recognise) the kingdom of heaven.* **Reg Weeks**  
[Credit. Psalms For The Road. Joy Cowley. Pleroma Press. With permission.]

## Clerk's corner...

**Church ladder:** This used to live on the northern fence just outside the Fellowship Room windows. It disappeared the other day. Seems someone's walked off with it...! I put a note on the *Eastbourne Community Facebook* page. No response. It's a Werner aluminium extension ladder 3.79 m long, yellow extension cord, "St Ronan's" is written in Vivid marker on inside face of the rail. 😞



**Phone and Wi-Fi:** Spark has now disconnected St Ronan's fibre phone and broadband connection. Our 'landline' phone and *Wi-Fi* are now served via a modem that links to the world via *Spark's* mobile network.

- Our monthly phone bill drops from \$110 to \$45.
- The new arrangement provides broadband speeds adequate for our needs (about half the fibre speed).
- If we buy a new 'landline' handset (the old one was obsolete) this can plug into the router in the church office to give us a 'landline type' connection.
- The 'landline' extension in the Education Block foyer has been removed.
- Almost everyone has a mobile phone in their pocket these days.

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

**Sandy Lang**

## Of cash and kind...

The collections we take up each Sunday involve both money for the work of St Ronan's and food for the Lower Hutt Foodbank. As these are blessed, our service leader usually remembers that the lion's share of our donations to the work of St Ronan's are of our 'time' and 'care' – not of our 'cash' and 'kind'. Let's remember to remember this... But focussing now on the 'cash' and 'kind'...

**Cash:** Our banker, the **BNZ**, phased out cheques on 1 July. This doesn't affect us, as St Ronan's payments are all electronic - we abandoned cheques long ago.



The **BNZ** recently closed its Petone branch – our home branch. This means cash deposits have now to be driven further, to a 'deposit machine' located in central Lower Hutt.

Meanwhile, our weekly 'in-the-plate' collections have got smaller and smaller (sometimes just a single, small, silver coin) as most of us have set up automatic payments (APs) to St Ronan's bank account **02-0544-0142859-000**

The Anglican's *Pop-in-and-Play* (at St Ronan's on Fridays) now uses a cashless system for their weekly 'subs' payments. Our *Mainly Music* (at St Ronan's on Thursdays) will soon go cashless too.



With no coin/notes to deposit from *Mainly Music* and scarcely any coin/notes in the plate on Sunday mornings, the processing and depositing of so few coins and notes in the time-honoured manner becomes ridiculous. The cost exceeds the amount banked...! What to do...?

We will likely stop our plate collections on Sunday mornings...

- But you'll be glad to hear our donation income via APs is holding up well.
- But the problem is our costs are rising faster than your donations.
- But that's a story for another day...!
- Another financial year ended on 30 June 2021.
- We're now working to set next year's budget.
- We will soon set a date for this year's AGM...

**Kind:** The amount of food in the Foodbank trolley each Sunday is encouraging. Enough of you remember to bring something along so the trolley is never empty. On 25 June we had a note from Jenny Whimp (Lower Hutt Foodbank)...



*I am writing on behalf of the Lower Hutt Foodbank Committee to offer our sincere gratitude to your congregation for their generous support of the Lower Hutt Food Bank. We at the Foodbank greatly appreciate the continued support of your church with their regular donations of food for the many families in the Hutt who are in need. We are largely dependent upon the ongoing generosity of the Hutt community. Your and other churches are our most consistent donors.*

*We can always use basic food items such as tins of food, cereals, pasta and sauces, jam and peanut butter, sugar, flour, tea and soup. Excess vegetables and fruit from your gardens are always well received too.*

*Under today's economic conditions, and particularly during this time with Covid causing many families to struggle to make ends meet, we are especially grateful for your help. Most of those who approach the Foodbank do so as a last resort, to gain some extra assistance to provide for their families when things are at their worst.*

*As the Foodbank is primarily a volunteer organisation, with no government funding, it is only through the generosity of the community throughout the Hutt Valley that we are able to assist these families. Your generosity has made a big difference to their lives... Once again thank you. Your willingness to help those less fortunate than yourselves is very much appreciated.*

*Many thanks, Jenny Whimp*

**Sandy Lang**

## St Ronan's e-Services...

It seems worthwhile to create a historical record of how the great COVID-19 pandemic of 2020, 2021 (and 2022?) affected St Ronan's ministry and mission. And where better to do this than in our church magazine, the *Record*... Also, it's worth recording how St Ronan's e-Services arose, and how and why they've continued well past lockdown - unlike the COVID responses of other churches.

**COVID timeline:** In March 2020 things changed very fast...

- 19/3/20 - All indoor gatherings of more than 100 people were cancelled.
- 21/3/20 - A four-tier Alert Level system was introduced.
- 21/3/20 - All NZ entered this system at Alert Level 2.
- 23/3/20 - All NZ moved to Alert Level 3.
- 25/3/20 - All NZ moved to Alert Level 4 - Self-isolation lockdown.

**Services stopped:** St Ronan's last regular service 'pre-COVID' was on 15/3/20 (Rev Norman Wilkins). The next service on 22/3/20 was cancelled (Liz Barrow). By the middle of the week (25/3/20) it was clear church services would have to be suspended for some time. What to do...?

**Hi-Tech:** The big churches quickly went hi-tech, producing live ZOOM services or website-streamed services. A huge amount of work (we learned afterwards). Not sustainable in terms of human resource...

Because COVID lockdown was international, on-line church services sprang up all over the globe. Suddenly, we could choose between hundreds of these. Some were brilliant: famous preachers, huge pipe organs, famous choirs, beautiful, ancient, baroque churches...

But a church is a 'local faith community', so none of these exotic performances was St Ronan's. None was 'us'...!



**Lo-tech:** Maybe St Ronan's could follow a lo-tech pathway? And thereby help (a) to better preserve the 'us' feeling, (b) to reduce the effort so as to be more sustainable in time and energy and (c) to make the services more accessible to the less tech-savvy of us and on our sometimes ancient e-hardware. Maybe (d) we could also retain something of the distinctive character of a St Ronan's church service – the familiar service elements, the familiar service leaders...

**e-Service:** Rev Niki Francis was due to take our next service on 29/3/20. I asked Niki if we could have from her the regular service material – her 'run-sheet' with the prayers and readings, and her reflection (sermon). The plan was to put this material into the body of an email along with the reflection as

an attachment (with a few images). We already had the email addresses of our 40 members, so, on 29/3/20, St Ronan's first *e-Service* was born. The general format hasn't changed much over the intervening months. St Ronan's people missed just the one service on 22/3/20...!

**Lockdown:** Alert Level 4 (no gatherings) lasted until 27/4/20 (6 Sundays) when we moved to Alert level 3 (gatherings up to 10 people). On 13/5/20 we moved to Alert Level 2 (gatherings of up to 100 people). After deliberation, St Ronan's restarted its regular church services on 31/5/20 (Rev Doug Rogers). This was a church service hiatus of 10 weeks.

At alert Level 2 gathering together again was OK for most, but not all. Some of us live in a retirement village, or our health or that of a close family member makes us especially vulnerable. Church attendance for the latter group was necessarily limited/impossible. So, we continued with our *e-Services* in parallel with our church services...

**Unexpected:** By the time we moved to Alert Level 1 (8/6/20), with nobody now excluded from church attendance by COVID worries, we discovered that our *e-Services* had been meeting some unexpected needs along the way.

Our *e-Services* allowed those unable/unwilling to attend church for a whole array of reasons, to gain a spiritual benefit from the work and wisdom of our line-up of service leaders. That's: •those unable to attend church for health reasons, •those merely 'a bit unwell' or 'away for the weekend', •those who would rather ponder this stuff quietly at home, rather than at church, •those engaged in Sunday School teaching (so regularly miss the service), •those (like me) who daydream during the service and would like to revisit the service content thoughtfully, later, and •some living overseas where COVID continues to reign supreme...

**Survey:** By late March 2021 (a year later), we had produced 54 weekly *e-Services*. I went on holiday for most of April and the *e-Services* stopped. On my return in early May, before restarting, it made sense to check if our *e-Services* had been appreciated. So, I sent an email to all 40 *e-Service* recipients seeking their feedback via a simple question - Do you look at the *e-Services* 'often' or 'sometimes' or 'never'?

**Results+analysis:** From the 40 recipients, I had 30 replies (75%). Of these 30 respondents, 5 (16%) said they 'never' look at them, 15 (50%) look at them 'sometimes' and 10 (33%) look at them 'often'. Because I had names, I could break this information down further. Noting that: •The 10 'oftens' tend to be those who have difficulty getting to church. •The 15 'sometimes' tend to be those who read them either to revisit something they heard in the service or who were unable to hear properly (deafness) or who were on holiday or temporarily unwell etc. •The 5 'nevers' fell into two groups:

- those who come to church regularly (and presumably listen carefully), and
- those who never/almost never come to church...

From this, I estimate<sup>1</sup> the number looking at each *e-Service* is about 15.

These responses were surprising and gratifying. More people looked at them than expected and some were very pleased to get them.

**Church services:** In terms of money and volunteer time our church services account for by far the largest part of what we do as a church.

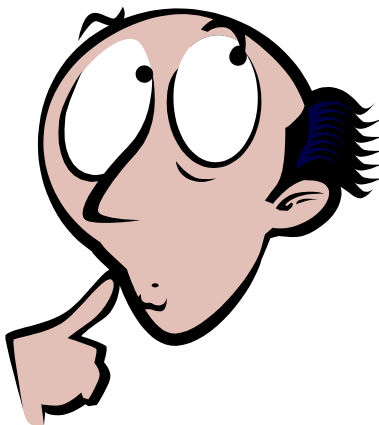
Each week, •the paid service leader does the hard, creative work to prepare and deliver the weekly church service (rated at 12 h, being roughly 8 h preparation and 4 h delivery). •We pay a further amount to format the service leader's material to create the printed order of service and the PowerPoint data show to aid the presentation, say, a further 2½ h of work. •a lot of volunteers are needed on the day to create a church service – the rostered stewards, bible readers, morning tea brewers, prayer leaders, musicians etc. •And the church building itself – used only for the one-hour, weekly, service.

All this for an average church service attendance of 22 people.

**Extra:** To create the *e-Service* email from the material already provided by the service leader adds a further 2½ h of volunteer work.

This extra work for an additional weekly 'audience' of about 15 people is both worthwhile and sustainable...

**Future?** Given that the consumers of the *e-Services* are arguably the more vulnerable of the two groups (viz. churchgoers vs. those stuck at home) it seems right to continue with our *e-Services*.



Indeed, one has to wonder why we've not been doing *e-Services* for our more vulnerable members for years...?

Is there anyone reading this report who would like to try our *e-Services*? Drop me an email. It's very easy to add you to the distribution list...!

**Sandy Lang**

<sup>1</sup> None of the 5 'nevers' [=0], say, ½ of the 15 'sometimes' [=7½] and ¾ of the 10 'oftens' [=7½]. Rough, but indicative...

## Direct proof that God must exist...



UK Chief Rabbi, Jonathan Sacks and George Carey, then Archbishop of Canterbury, had struck up a firm friendship fuelled by a mutual support of Arsenal Football Club.



So, when their beloved team suffered a massive home defeat under the very noses of these senior religious leaders, a national newspaper claimed the debacle as final proof that God does not exist.

"On the contrary," replied Sacks... "it is direct proof that God *must* exist, it's just that He supports Manchester United."

"The lesson that this real-life parable holds... ..is that, on the question of God and on how events in the world should be interpreted theologically, it is all too easy to follow the newspaper journalist, who had simply been looking the wrong way."



**Chief Rabbi Ephraim Mirvis** (BBC, *Thought for the Day*)

## The House of One...

After he received the Nobel Peace Prize in 1964, Martin Luther King wrote: *We have inherited a large house, a great 'world house' in which we have to live together - black and white, Easterner and Westerner, Gentile and Jew, Catholic and Protestant, Muslim and Hindu - a family unduly separated in ideas, culture and interest, who, because we can never again live apart, must learn somehow to live with each other in peace.*

The history of Berlin is filled with great successes, new beginnings, sudden endings and immeasurable guilt. Its Jews were emancipated around 1800 and then destroyed between 1933 and 1945. The Berlin Wall became the symbol of a divided world when it was built in 1961 and was then transformed into an enduring image of peace as it fell in 1989.

*The House of One* on Petriplatz, the medieval birthplace of Berlin, aims to add a new and hopeful chapter to the diverse history of the city. Berlin is soon to become home to something truly unique. Jews, Christians, and Muslims are planning to build a house of worship here – one that brings a



synagogue, a church and a mosque together under one roof. The three separate sections will be linked by a communal room in the centre of the building. This will serve as a meeting place, where worshippers and members of the public can come together and learn more about the religions and each other.

*It's important to always try to understand how someone else sees things, where someone is coming from or what they believe, Pastor Hohberg said. Society profits when there's dialogue. And that's what we're doing here.*

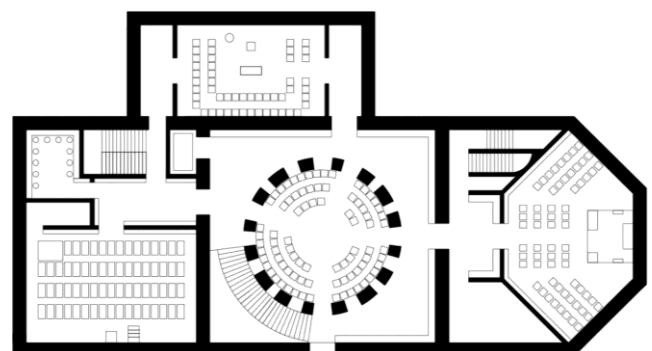
On Thursday 17 June 2021, the cornerstone for *The House of One* was laid by a seemingly unlikely trio: Pastor Gregor Hohberg, Rabbi Andreas Nachama and Imam Kadir Sancı.



The President of the German Bundestag, Wolfgang Schäuble, expressed his appreciation and described *The House of One* as extraordinary because it was planned from the beginning by representatives of the three religions together and called it *a place of tolerance and openness* where people of faith and others should meet in mutual respect.

During the ceremony, a Jewish prayer book, a piece of cloth from the Kaaba in Mecca, a

miniature of the Coventry Cross of Nails (symbol of peace and reconciliation) and a copy of the document naming the provost of what was then St Peter's Church as the first citizen of Berlin in 1237, were placed in a copper capsule. The architectural design as well as wishes and messages from people all over the world were also enclosed, along with other items. The capsule was then sealed into the foundation stone.



The location is Petriplatz is significant for Christians. The square is named after St Peter, the patron saint of the fishing folk who lived on nearby

Fischerinsel and there has been a succession of churches by that name there from the 13<sup>th</sup> century until the last one was demolished in 1964.

According to the Rabbi, the location is highly significant because *From my Jewish point of view the city where Jewish suffering was planned is now the*

city where a centre is being built by the three monotheistic religions which shaped European culture.

The imam sees *The House of One* as a sign, a signal to the world that the great majority of Muslims are peaceful and not violent. He added *We're not just building a house; we're also creating a heart and soul.*

Construction is expected to take five years.

I believe we should go down on bended knee and ask God's blessing on this project.

**John Harris**

### **Rood screen – Chamomiles and pansies...**

You may be forgiven for never having heard of an online cosmetic shop *Chamomiles and Pansies*. For starters, it is listed under its Polish name *Rumianki i bratki*. And, second, they don't sell cosmetics. It is a fake online shop offering a lifeline to victims of domestic violence, who are trapped in their homes.

The idea is that the victim can hide requests for help from their abuser at home by appearing to be shopping online.



When a victim writes asking to buy a cream, it is not a salesperson who responds. It is a psychologist. They will ask questions like *How long the 'skin problem' has been going on for?* or *How does the affected skin react to alcohol?* If someone places an order and leaves an address it's actually a code asking for authorities to visit their home. In less than a year, it has helped 350 people, 10% of whom have been male.

The thing about domestic abuse is that it is often so well camouflaged we fail to see it, even though the victims may be our friends, family, colleagues or neighbours.

There was a fellow in the Bible whose colleagues and neighbours assumed he was just fine. Zacchaeus had wealth and power. He must have been happy? What more could he want? But Jesus knew Zacchaeus had a need - because Jesus can see through the camouflage.

We need to ask Jesus to help us to look through His eyes, to see more clearly the needs of those around us.



If you are interested, you can read more about teenager Krysna Paszko and her fake online shop at [www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-56172456](http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-56172456)

**John Harris**

## Children's Power Hour

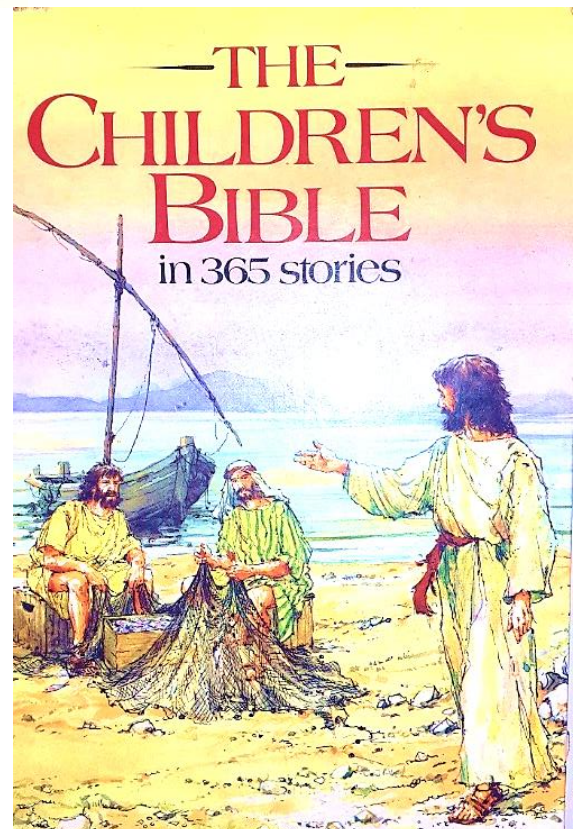
As John Harris recently reflected, having God and Jesus in your life makes a profound difference in your living. So, introducing God and Jesus in user-friendly ways to our preschool and primary school children makes a significant start in developing their faith and a sense of a life lived well. An excellent place to start is with telling Bible stories.



However, some Bible versions are better for children than others. Fortunately, we have a wide choice and preschoolers especially appreciate illustrated Bibles which vividly retell Bible stories. I am well beyond 5 years but I still like illustrations too! When children start to become fluent readers by 8-9 years they can graduate to a more full-on version of the Bible.

Here are some bridging 'in-betweeners' which children enjoy. They appeal to different interests, with their humour, comics, colours and artistic expressions. They also make an excellent touchstone as a birthday or Christmas gift.

*"The Children's Bible in 365 Stories".* Beautifully illustrated and loved by Primary children. Wonderful bedtime stories! Very good value.





"The Beginner's Super Girls, and, Super Heroes of the Bible" and "Bible Kings and Queens". Here are three fun activity books complementing Bible stories for 6-9 yrs.



**Photo Sources:** Available at Manna Christian Book Store, High Street, Lower Hutt  
[www.sunzbreakthrough.org.nz](http://www.sunzbreakthrough.org.nz)

**Term 2 ends 4 July** (School Holidays - Enjoy!!!)

**Term 3 from 1 August to 26 September** (Daylight Saving Starts)

**Blessings Susan**



## ***Phil's photo – A grey and dismal day...***

In Norway they say:  
'*Det finnes ikke dårlig vær,  
bare dårlig klær...*'

*'There is no bad weather,  
just bad clothes...'*

It was grey and dismal as I proceeded in a southerly direction along the seafront from my home in Pukatea Street. My face smarted from the impacts of a myriad, turbocharged raindrops as I pressed forwards into the teeth of the southerly gale.



But I was quite dry in my great big waterproof oilskin and my great big waterproof boots. And I had in my hand my great big waterproof camera and at my heel was my not-very-big but extremely waterproof Labrador dog (aka Daisy-Bell).

Daisy-Bell and I soon realised we were not alone. Others were out there too, enjoying the strong wind and the horizontal rain. These all greeted us with happy, friendly smiles...





So, though the day was still just as wet and windy, I saw it was not grey and dismal at all, but full of colour and good cheer... Life depends on how you look at it...!



**Phil Benge**



**New Zealand Community for Christian  
Meditation  
Wellington District Community Day**

**Saturday 3 July 2021**

**When the Going Gets Tough...  
with Shirley Duthie**

How do we grow our spiritual resilience?

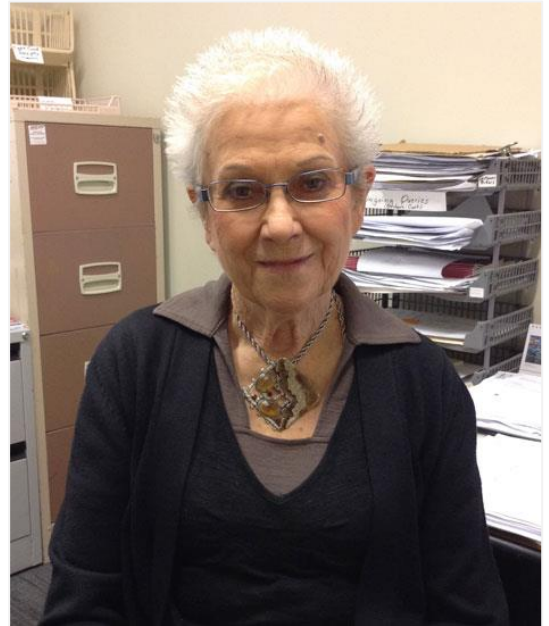
Through scripture, story and anecdote Shirley tackles the question in four parts. Initially we consider the wise and righteous Job and his, and our,

inability to grasp the fact that pain and suffering falls inexplicably on both the innocent and the guilty.

We explore, through a historical snapshot of one courageous person's experience of *both* Holocaust and Gulag existence, and the unpublished story of a couple's cross-harbour survival of the Wahine disaster, how our Creator sometimes uses very flawed people to extend compassion and mercy.

Finally, we look at how, in our older years, we have the opportunity to gather up the threads of spiritual resilience needed to peacefully navigate the last decades of life.

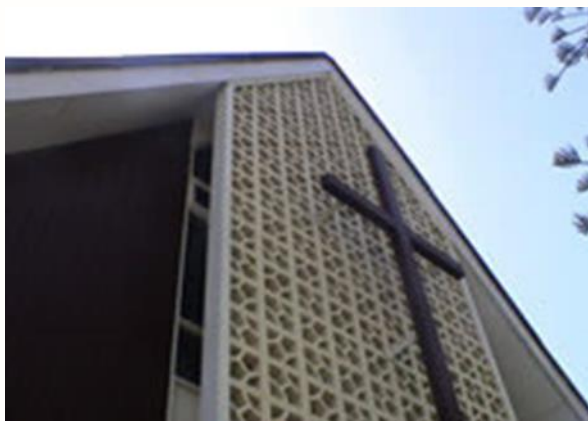
St James' Church Chapel  
Woburn Road  
Lower Hutt  
10.00am to 2.30pm.



**Parking:** *Use the spaces outlined in blue behind the Lower Hutt Library*

- Bring your own lunch. Hot drinks and morning tea provided.
- Koha (if possible) plus a gold coin for Friends.
- There will be two periods of meditation.
- People new to meditation are most welcome.

**Information:** Elspeth Preddey Regional Co-ordinator  
[elspeth.preddey@xtra.co.nz](mailto:elspeth.preddey@xtra.co.nz) (04) 472 3369



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

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## Directory

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

### Local Ministry Team

Rev Reg Weeks	027 491 5947	third.age@outlook.co.nz
Sandy Lang	562 8753	slang@xtra.co.nz
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Colin Dalziel	562 7238	colinjdalziel@gmail.com
Michelle Bolger	562 8810	ferryroaddb@gmail.com

Parish Clerk	Sandy Lang
Hall Bookings	Sandy Lang

Contributions for the 'Record' are most welcome  
Please email them to [lesmolloy7@gmail.com](mailto:lesmolloy7@gmail.com)  
Phone (04) 568 3377

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 August 2021  
Sunday 1 August 2021**