



St Ronan's Presbyterian Church
Eastbourne

Record

May 2020

3 May	Worship with Reg Weeks	e-time
10 May	Worship with Reg Weeks	e-time
17 May	Worship with Norman Wilkins	e-time
24 May	Worship with Liz Barrow	e-time
31 May	Worship with Doug Rogers	e-time
7 June	Worship with Ray Coates	e-time

e-time=yourtime=anytime

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**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

Sheep...

In the middle of a pandemic lock-down, why would I choose to write about sheep?

You may well ask. Well first off, I belong to a Zoom bible study group of members of the Order of Ecumenical Franciscans. It meets weekly and discusses the bible readings set down for the next Sunday. I'm the only member not living in the States, and I join in when I can. Perhaps I was more interested this week as I'm down to provide the reflection for the *e-Service* we are emailing out each week of the lock-down.



The readings this week includes the 23rd Psalm – “The Lord is my shepherd...” and the story in John’s gospel where Jesus talks about how in his day the shepherd walked ahead of his family’s small flock of sheep, which followed because they knew his voice. He was usually the youngest son in the family and his task was to find water and good grazing for his sheep, to protect them and care for them. At night, the various small flocks were penned up together in the village sheepfold. The group leader commented that New Zealand has a lot of sheep -

over 27.6 million, actually – and, for me, it brought many memories to mind. You see, my grandfather and his four sons, all farmed sheep, and it was my delight in school holidays to spend time with my cousins on those farms. A favourite memory is of rainy night when my uncle brought in to the big farm kitchen two wet and bedraggled orphaned lambs, wrapped them up in towels and set them on a blanket beside the warmth of the glowing wood stove.

Over the years, I learned that sheep-farming in New Zealand was big business, a far cry from the subsistence farming with which Jesus’ listeners were familiar – a style of shepherding that had changed little over the centuries, and there were 120 references to sheep in the scriptures they knew by heart. Little wonder that for generations the image of the shepherd, and all it implied, was regularly applied to their sovereign. They were judged by how well they lived up to that image. And in a coronation today the sceptre given to the sovereign has a long-standing symbolic connection with the shepherd’s staff.

In our discussion I noticed that urban Americans have almost no personal knowledge of sheep and tend to regard sheep as somewhat stupid animals. They get lost, they can’t find water or pasture without the shepherd, but in fact turn out to be among the smarter of domestic animals. And in Jesus day could recognise and follow their master’s voice.

There were nine in our group and none were aware of the flocks of wild mountain sheep that live in the Rocky Mountain National Park. With the growth of urbanisation in New Zealand, I wondered whether similar stereotypical attitudes to sheep, and to agriculture in general, have led to a lack of interest and appreciation of the depth of these biblical metaphors when seen in the context of 1st century Israel.

But how do these images help us when our flock, particularly the over 70s, are unable to gather as has been the normal pattern of the past? Maybe it's by recognising that while the patterns of the past have served us well, the situation has changed in fundamental ways. While in the interim we can do what we can to provide familiar resources, we are challenged to explore new ways of being church in a digital age. Also, to do that in ways that are distinctly relational, in ways not limited by geography, in ways that continue to feed us both with words, graphics and music. Perhaps we need to heed the words of John Wesley when criticised for not preaching in a church: "The world is my parish." He said...

Reg Weeks

Clerk's corner



COVID-19: Wow! How time's flown since the start of *Alert Level 4* lockdown...

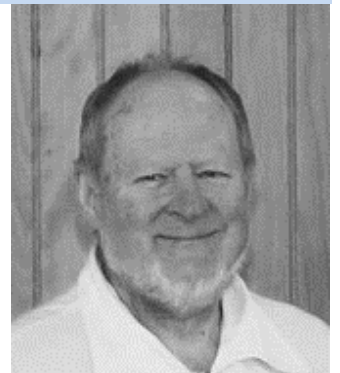
e-Services: Reg and I have been busy with our new *e-Services* which replace our *t-Services* (**t** for traditional, in the church). These *e-Services*

have become routine for us – seven of them so far...

Our aim with these *e-Services* is to retain as much as possible of our *t-Service's* •familiar service leaders •familiar format •familiar bible readers •familiar intercessory prayers etc. I'm sure there're more professional services out there – *but these are not 'us'* – St Ronan's is all about church community. It's also true some of these more professional services are also 'higher tech', with more audio-visual bells and whistles – *but not all of you have modern devices able to receive these* – so we aim for a minimal level of up-to-dateness in your PC or phone or tablet etc.


Meanwhile, if you are one of our 100+ **Record** readers (so are reading this) but you are *not* one of our 32+ email recipients for **e-Services**, just drop me a line at slang@xtra.co.nz and I'll add you in. Likewise, if you don't want to get our *e-Services*, but are, just drop me a line and I'll unsubscribe you.

t-Services: It's uncertain how long it will be till we can get back into our church together on a Sunday morning and so resume our normal way of life. With our congregation's age demography heavily weighted towards 'elderly' (no one ever admits to being 'old') we will have to get back down at least to *Alert Level 1* before we can restart (largeish groups, age 70+).



My guesstimate is it will be months before we're back. I'd love to be wrong. Essentially, not until we have an effective vaccine. Our government puts this timing at 12 to 18 months away (end of 2021). Notwithstanding, we see a lot on TV about the many COVID-19 vaccine projects sprung up around the world. But think of the massive amounts of money to be made from a vaccine, and you'll understand the massive investments of both time and money being put in to these projects, and the massive publicity being put out by the competing project leaders. Call me a cynic, but till we have it, we haven't got it...

Other support: Members of St Ronan's *Local Ministry Team* remain available to talk with you if you are finding things difficult, over the phone, or over the fence, or even on the beach or along the promenade – but from a safe distance. Just pick up the phone.

Other e-Support: Reg has now developed a new [st ronan's eastbourne](#)  Facebook page. For those familiar with the social media you may find this a good way to stay in touch.

Meanwhile, Michelle continues to maintain our website www.stronans.org.nz which is choc full of useful stuff.

Hand washing: It'll be a couple of years before COVID-19 becomes history. Till then, frequent hand washing with soap and water is being very strongly impressed upon us. You're doing this at home but when we're back into church again you'll find our new paper-towel dispensers are waiting for you. Both are white – the coloured ones turned out to be much harder to get hold of.

There are also three paper-towel disposal bins – one inside each toilet (*for the first, wet, paper towel*), and one just outside in the foyer (*for the second, damp paper towel, which you can also use to open the door to get out, without re-contaminating your clean hand on a mucky toilet-door knob*).

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

Sandy Lang

St Ronan's news...

For those who knew her, a *DomPost* death notice reads... **Agnes Mary Kenelly**, now in the arms of Jesus, passed away peacefully at Shona McFarlane Retirement Village on 24 April, 2020, aged 90 years. Dearly loved wife of the late Roy, sister of Caroline, Albert (John), Doris (deceased) and Neil, and a treasured aunty and great-aunty. All communications to Croft Funeral Home, Lower Hutt, 5040 robert@croftfunerals.co.nz There will be a private service to celebrate Agnes' life.

Diane Gilliam-Weeks says: we've been working from home electronically for six years now so there's little change for Reg and myself. Looking forward to getting past Level 2 so the over-70s can party!!! But that could be months away. Meanwhile, business as usual seeing clients on-line, Presbytery business on line and editing *Refresh*.

Lois N-C says: I'm starting to panic that after all these weeks of enforced leisure-time there are still no ticks on my optimistic 'to do' list.

- However, I feel blessed to have enjoyed sunny weather day after day.
- Long walks – friendly greetings. The feeling is 'we're all in this together'.
- Keeping in touch with friends via phone-calls/emails.
- Very little traffic noise – sounds of children playing instead.
- Sunday sleep-ins without being late for Church! (Many thanks to all those bringing the Service to us all).

Jan Heine says: Time for the Golden Rule. Many little acts of kindness are happening. Fresh fish, new baked bread, cakes, anzac bikkies. Phone calls, emails, are you coping? No excuse not to cope... It's nice...!

Foodbank

Recently we've all seen pictures in the media of the increase in people seeking food parcels – especially now we are one month in and other monthly payments are due. It is an overwhelming time for both families and the essential workers keeping up with demand.

Foodbanks around the country are calling for donations to help meet these needs to keep our families fed. So, if you are able to help, below are two struggling foodbank organisations that would truly benefit from donations.

Lower Hutt foodbank has handed over their food donations to the Salvation Army Foodbank who have scaled up their operations temporarily and now run the "Foodbank Project".

- On their website www.foodbank.org.nz it sets out how to donate and which locality you would like your donation to go to. Donations are accepted in Bundles: for example a Medium-sized bundle is \$60.22 and consists of Weetbix, UHT milk, tinned foods, spreads, bread, broccoli, pasta, coffee/tea, sugar, soap, toilet paper, toothpaste and brushes. Once the donation is received Countdown will deliver the shopping to the Foodbank in your locality of choice.

- Wellington City Mission www.wellingtoncitymission.org.nz also has an easy site taking donations of \$25, \$50, \$100, \$250 or higher.

- And, as always, donations can also be left in supermarket drop boxes.

This is a special and highly unusual time so I know any donation would be appreciated. And the system is very easy to use. Thanks...

Helen Withy 021 804 624

SCF

Save the Children Fund is taking donations for Vanuatu & Fiji.



Christian World Service is taking donations for those affected by Cyclone Harold. CWS is currently assessing how best to respond to people who have lost everything, so that donations will be passed on to those who can best help. Jordyn Kotara, Admin Assnt (03) 366 9274 jordyn.kotara@cws.org.nz

St Ronan's Tuesday morning e-breakfast/e-prayer group

Prayer of thanks for the past five weeks of Level 4 lockdown (Paul)

Heavenly Father, we thank You for this lockdown and the experience You have given us.

All through this, You have stripped away the busyness of life and quietened things. We thank You for calling us to a deeper and closer life in You and our Saviour The Lord Jesus Christ. Help us to surrender all – especially our wills – easily said but hard to do.

Many of us have become acutely aware of the brevity of life – one of my own relatives went into Derriford Hospital, Plymouth UK and never came out. She died of the virus after six days with no family or friend to comfort her. Even so, we thank and praise You for Your promise and comfort that 'the one who comes to Me I will by no means cast out.' John 6:37.



Indeed, those that come to You will never be left nor forsaken. May we ever be looking to Jesus the author and finisher of our faith for in Him we are never alone.

Prayer for the next *Alert Level 3* and *2* lockdowns (Les)



As we look forward to reaching the greater individual and group freedoms of *Alert Level 2*, we pray for those who are worse off than us. Comfort those who have lost their jobs or whose business may no longer be viable. We pray for all who are suffering mental and emotional stress as they struggle to see a safe path for the future.

Give us all courage and wisdom to reach out for the help we may need and for us in turn to help our neighbours in need. Jesus, you comforted and healed the downcast in your time on Earth and so we pray that the Great Comforter, the Holy Spirit, will guide and reassure the people of New Zealand in the weeks ahead.

Prayer for older people living in care, or alone in their bubbles (Gill)

We remember before God all older people living in residential care. In their isolation from visitors and virus, Lord, protect them from loneliness and distress.

Strengthen their faith and trust in you, and also that of their carers who continue serving them. Bless them all and help their families as they keep up good communication at a distance.

May those who live alone in their bubbles for various reasons be aware of Your love for them, experiencing Your friendship and provision. May they too enjoy the company of others, safely, and get through lockdown well, managing their paid or unpaid tasks throughout the changing *Alert* levels.

Kind and Gracious God, be their inspiration, their haven and their help.

Prayer for other countries of the world coping with COVID-19 (Allison)

Dear God, Creator of our world, we come to you for healing with outstretched hands and open hearts. Our world is in turmoil. Countries are closing borders and families are being separated as leaders try to protect their countries and citizens from COVID-19.

Many people are dying, and hospitals are full of infected people. The economies of most countries are at risk and people are seeking help to provide for their families. Jesus, you came that we might have life, and life in abundance. We pray that leaders of all nations will reach out to you for your wisdom and love so they can make sound decisions and the course of the pandemic can be halted and all people will know that you are Almighty God. Please give us the wisdom and courage to change our ways and learn how to nurture your creation in a sustainable way so these viruses will cease to infect us.

Prayer for St Ronan's Church (Colin)

We thank you Jesus that you are "The Christ, the Son of the living God" and that you will build your Church and the gates of hell will not overcome it (Matt 16).

As your church people, Lord, we lift up our hearts to you and ask for your comfort, guidance and strength, as we confront the dangers of COVID-19.

Even though we can't meet together, we have your Spirit in our hearts, your encouraging words of Scripture and we are able to keep in touch with each other through email, text and phone or video calls.

Thank you, Lord, and bless all the people who are involved with the preparation and presentations of our online church services and video meetings. Thank you for the inspiration and hope of the messages we receive.

We pray for your blessings, Jesus, for all the children and parents of Power hour /Wiggly church and Mainly Music. We thank you for the leaders and helpers who are able to keep in contact with the families during the lockdown.


"The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you." 2 Thessalonians 3:18

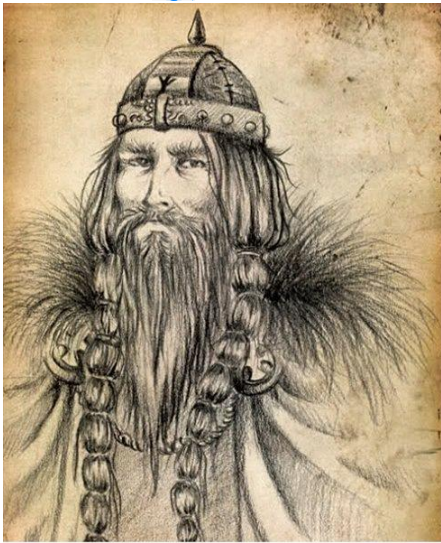
Allison & Les Molloy, Gill Burke, Paul Batchelor and Colin Dalziel

Rood Screen – Bluetooth wireless communication




I saw a church billboard recently that read: 'Prayer is the best wireless connection'. True as that may be, most today identify wireless communication with *Bluetooth*.

Bluetooth has been in the news recently because our government is proposing we use a Covid-19 tracking application on our smartphones. With this, your smartphone communicates with other Bluetooth users who are within sneezing distance and keeps a record of who you came that close to. In this way, if you do become ill, your contacts are very quickly traced.

Many of us use Bluetooth technology regularly and we instantly recognise the snappy  icon. But not everybody knows where the name comes from.



King Harald "Bluetooth" Gormsson was king of Denmark and Norway (~AD 958 to ~AD 986). He earned his nickname because he had a rather distinctive stained tooth. But why (you may ask) should a piece of late 20th century technology be named after an obscure Viking king? The answer is simple. Communication. Harald had a reputation as an outstanding communicator and, of course, communication is what Bluetooth is all about. He also constructed the oldest known bridge in Scandinavia. And what is a bridge for if it is not for bringing people together? And Harald brought Christianity to Denmark.

The Bluetooth logo is only  partly 20th century. It is a slightly stylised 'bind rune' that combines Harold's initials  (Hagall) and  (Bjarkan). You might say Harald truly has his signature on the modern technology...!

Jesus told us "*Go into all the world and preach the gospel*" Matt 28:19. Preaching the gospel is communicating, but preaching isn't only hard-out evangelising. Preaching the gospel is being Jesus' hands and feet here on earth and doing His good works. Preaching the gospel is picking up the phone and asking how a neighbour is. Preaching the gospel is dropping a meal round to someone who is struggling to cope. Preaching the gospel is communicating that Jesus loves and cares for His people. All people. Everywhere...

In a thousand years' time, will people remember your name and say you were an excellent communicator of the gospel?

John Harris

Phil's photo – Anzac Day 25 April 2020

Like none before – but we *did* remember them --



Phil Benge

And **Kia atawhai** - Be kind

That last shot is of Andrew Brown with Anne Manchester at her son David's memorial seat in Greenwood Park. Andrew was one of David Curtis' army friends. On Anzac Day, he was in Eastbourne to pay his respects to 'Sapper Curtis.' But Andrew was intercepted *en route* by a familiar, tall, ex-cop with a BIG camera, who phoned me so we could share it with him. That little act of copper kindness turned a more-dismal-than-usual Anzac Day into a more-satisfying-than-usual Anzac Day.

Incidentally, what senior politician in any country has ever asked a nation to be kind?

And on the Australian policy of repatriation of New Zealanders for relatively minor offenses, some of whom have only very distant links to New Zealand, Prime minister Jacinda Ardern said *"It continues to be a policy I fiercely disagree with. It's wrong, and I will continue to raise that."* She ruled out a tit-for-tat by introducing deportations for Australians convicted for serious crimes here.



•Kindness •Right vs wrong •Speak out to power •No revenge

What leadership. What a leader... (and I'm not always a Labour Party voter...!)

Sandy Lang

A thought about sheep...

Goats like to be led, and sheep tend to follow. Often I wonder how many goats were in those flocks? And some goats are very sheep-like. George Schaller (Stones of Silence) had a mission to decide if some breeds of Himalayan goats were goats or were they sheep?

In line this morning at
the Post Office,
three people came in
wearing masks....

PANIC !!!

Then they said
"This is a robbery"
and we all calmed down

Trying to herd Amanda's goats down hill from behind was hopeless. They didn't know what waving arms & shoo, shoo meant! Got fed up & ambled in front, when snuffle snuffle on my heels, there they were tight in behind, tripping me up! JCH

Erratum for April 5 end of daylight saving. And our clocks **fall back** at the end of daylight saving in this **autumn fall**, when it's spring they **spring forward**.



POWER HOUR AND WIGGLY CHURCH

I love the wonderful actions of children with their total open focus and fascination in exploring plants and animals and natural elements. This absorption can come more alive especially when a caring adult is willing to engage alongside with the children and at their level. The children know how to take hours in sensing, being patient and are happy.



I think I turned into a child the other day. On my daily walk that day, I climbed a public pathway in York Bay which has 92 steps. I was amazed at the strength of a young tame black bird which I met and it didn't know about the dangers of two-footed monsters.

Starting near the bottom of the staircase this wee bird was standing about 10 steps



up from me and would hop about making sure it kept its eye upon me. This way and that. So, slowly I started to climb further. Expecting the bird to fly away with me coming closer, I was most surprised to see that the wee thing just hopped up the next step, and the next, and the next step. So I paused again and the bird stopped again and hopped this way and that to get a good side view of me.

So I started again to slowly climb some more steps and the wee bird also hopped up the stairs. This climb and hop and pause went on until the last and 92nd step! Then on that last step the black bird just flew into the nearby tree. Now that is incredible strength for one so small and young to hop up all those stairs! I would never have imagined that! Even some people think that these stairs are too much for themselves to walk up. Really, how incredibly amazing are the makings of small animals.

Yes, it was a daily walk turned into an adventure where time became lost. I enjoyed relating with this young blackbird. I felt great awe of the blackbird's strength and connecting with me. I can only believe that the makings of this bird are God given. They certainly aren't man-made. How beautiful is that! God is good. God is in everything.

*All things bright and beautiful,
All creatures great and small,
All things wise and wonderful,
The Lord God made them all.*

*This month the PCANZ has announced that the national umbrella ministry group Kids Friendly for children and youth, has changed its name, and is expanding its focus to include a broader range of services. The new name is **Children and Families**: a whanau-based ministry. The new co-ordinators are Rev Robin Humphreys and Julie Penno.*

Term 2 In May, Power Hour and Wiggly Church continues in our homes with emailed weekly sessions. We will wait and see where our level is in June.

*Blessings, **Susan Connell, Elspeth Cotsilinis, Matt McCorkindale***



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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Local Ministry Team

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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 25th May 2020**

