



St Ronan's Presbyterian Church  
Eastbourne

# Record

## May 2022

1 May	Informal worship service.....	9.30am
8 May	Mervyn Aitken ( <i>Communion</i> ).....	9.30am
15 May	Informal worship service .....	9.30am
22 May	Lionel Nunns.....	9.30am
29 May	Doug Rogers - Pot-Luck lunch, bring plate to share.....	12.00pm
5 June	Informal worship service.....	9.30am

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**Power Hour – Sundays 9.30am**

**Breakfast Prayer – Tuesdays 7.45am**

**Mainly Music – Thursdays 9.15-11.15am**

For pastoral care needs, please contact our Pastoral Care Co-ordinators,

**Colin Dalziel 562 7238 or Mary Williams 568 3216**

## Special Assembly 22 (SA22)

Last week, I attended the Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Aotearoa New Zealand. It was the 36<sup>th</sup> I'd attended since I was appointed to a national position in the church by that very body. I held that position for 18 years, so being there was part of my job. Over the years, I've continued to have a connection with it in one way or another. And what great changes have occurred...!



This two-day Assembly meeting was a gathering of 170 commissioners - all on Zoom and with a very wide range of ethnicities.

The 'Top Table'...

Also, a significant role for the Moderator of Te Aka Puaho (our Māori synod), Ms Marina Rakuraku.

Also represented were the Pacific Island Synod, and Presbyterian Women. The usual six officials were seen at the 'top table', and on several occasions we had opportunity to discuss issues in break-out rooms.



...and what the Moderator sees

The Assembly in 1974 (my second) at which I was appointed to my new position, was a gathering of over 300 commissioners. Less than 10% of these were women, and only three of these women were ministers. When that many men lustily raise their voices in a well-known hymn, it was as though you had been transported to the midst of a crowd at a Welsh rugby match.

Back in 1974, we met in Auckland over a week, from Thursday to the following Wednesday, and it was all in the style of parliamentary debate with no opportunity to discuss in groups. Other than those presenting reports and proposals, speakers had up to three minutes - now it is only two minutes...!

In those days, Assemblies were annual and each congregation sent either the minister or an elder, in rotation.

Now, Assemblies meet every two years and although the number of elders and ministers is always equal, the overall number is now about half, so the Presbytery councils determine who will attend.

This seriously reduces the frequency with which the average parish minister gets to go, and thus vastly reduces the opportunities for social interaction with colleagues and friends across the country. Also, sadly for many, the sense of being a valued contributor to the life of the national organisation is eroded. On the other hand, electronic communication, social media, video and Zoom go a long way to redressing the balance and allowing the church to maintain organisational effectiveness. Back in the day it was all paper and post...

Check out [www.presbyterian.org.nz](http://www.presbyterian.org.nz) to gain a detailed overview of SA 22. Here is a selection of the many decisions made:

***Certificates of Good Standing:*** To maintain a Certificate of Good Standing, and thus remain on the Ministerial Roll, ministers are now required to fulfil the following compliance actions:

- Attend mandated Church ethics and risk-management workshops at least once every three years.
- Obtain a police check every three years and, when accepting a call to a new position, provide a copy of this to their presbytery.
- Attend regular professional supervision and provide to the presbytery an annual attendance report from their supervisor.

***Local Shared Ministry:*** A 'Local Ministry Team' has been renamed a 'Local Shared Ministry'. Changes for Local Shared Ministry were approved as:

- Consultative establishment and appointment to form a Local Shared Ministry team.
- Removal of individual training agreements and probation periods.
- Appointment of trained enablers to support Local Shared Ministry teams.

***Theological education and leadership training:*** These recommendations put forward by the Theological Education and Leadership Training (TELT) task group were carried:

- The principle of all leaders and ministers in the Church being life-long learners was affirmed.
- The Knox Centre for Ministry and Leadership is to be adequately resourced.
- The principle of fully funding ministry internships without the need for parish contribution is to be adopted.
- Consideration will be given to developing new ministry pathway options, as set out in the body of the Theological Education and Leadership Training report.



**Presbyterian Women of Aotearoa NZ:** Opportunities for full participation of women and girls in church courts, committees and other formal groups are to be provided.

- The Government is urged to take urgent action to enable all children and their families to enjoy a good life, through eliminating child and family poverty, making healthy housing the norm, and improving food security for children and families.

- The World Council of Churches *Thursdays in Black* campaign, committing to a world free from violence and rape, is to be promoted.

**Inclusivity:** The Church commits to a dialogue on a way forward in a Church divided over issues of sexuality, biblical morality and leadership.

**Emissions reductions:** The Council of Assembly is to establish a working group to promote initiatives to help the Church reduce carbon emissions by 5% per annum.

**Eco Church and climate change:** All ministry units within the Presbyterian Church are asked to undertake the 'Eco Church' survey developed by A Rocha [www.ecochurch.org.nz/self-assessment-](http://www.ecochurch.org.nz/self-assessment-) worksheet and choose one action point from each suggested area to complete over the coming year.

**Theology of property and money:** Congregations and presbyteries are encouraged to consider sharing resources. A task group is to be set up to investigate amending or replacing the Presbyterian Church Property Act 1885, to promote greater sharing of resources to further God's mission.

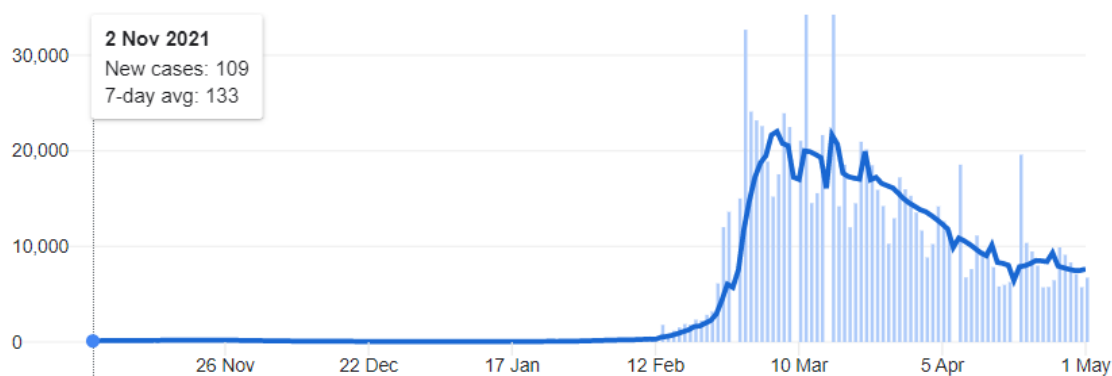
**Congregational reviews:** If circumstances require it, Presbyteries may appoint a commission to review the future of a congregation, with the options of continuing its mission, renewing its life and mission, or dissolution.

**Reg Weeks**

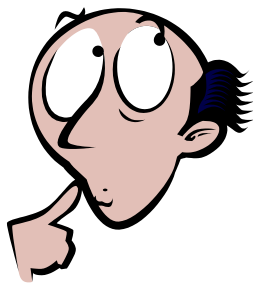
## Clerk's corner...

### WHAT A RELIEF (YOU SAY)...

This will be my last COVID report / COVID prophecy...



Peak COVID is well past. Cases have now declined to less than 10,000 a day. There's still plenty around. Some of us have had it mildly, others have been more unwell.



Mask use and distancing and good ventilation will all help minimise the chances you get it. It's a good idea to have some RAT test kits at home so if you wake up one morning feeling unwell you can quickly test yourself and act appropriately. Call one of us if you need help...

*Church ventilation* - It's a big building, and we have a small congregation, so we don't have to be silly about it. But we *will* have a bit more air exchange than usual in wintertime. As you know it's never exactly tropical in St R's. Please add an extra warm layer, then, as you sit in church for an hour on a Sunday morning you won't freeze.

*Church behaviour* - Let's just carry on as we have been...

**YOU** - Don't come if you've a cold, •Do wear a close-fitting mask (preferably a clinical one), •Do 'social distance' by 1+ metres, •Don't touch one another.

**WE** - Will keep a written attendance record, •Will maintain good ventilation, •Require a vaccine pass, •Do contactless communion.

*Eventually* - COVID will fade into the background and life will return to something more normal - but not just yet...

**SOME GREAT NEWS:** We recently enjoyed a very meaningful 'Combined' Good Friday service at St Ronan's (Combined = St Ronan's + St Alban's + San Antonio). Here, the benefits of our three churches working closely together became obvious to all. There was almost a party atmosphere as we mingled together afterwards and laughed and chatted...

*Sharing* - A result of this is St Ronan's has agreed with St Alban's we share our regular morning services together once every quarter. These four shared services will be on the 1<sup>st</sup> Sundays of January, April, July and October. This new sharing will be in addition to a commitment to continue to share those 'special' services together at Easter and Christmas and, maybe, at Matariki too.

The plan for these new quarterly services is we alternate venues. When at St Ronan's we will meet at 9.30am and have a St R's style communion service but with St Alban's doing the readings and delivering the sermon. The next quarter will see us turn up at 10am at Wellesley School for a St Alban's style communion service but with our people doing the readings and delivering the sermon. This way the inter-church sharing is both maximal and reciprocal.

What better outcome from that Good Friday Service...?

We share an Easter Faith, not a Christmas Faith...

Our symbol is a Cross, not a Cradle...

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

**Sandy Lang**

## **Briefs...**

**'Metals' bin:** Our new 'METALS' bin was set up on 30 April. Metal items should be 'clean' i.e., minimally contaminated by plastic, rubber, glass, wood, food, etc...

### **Contaminant tolerance**

For low-value metals (steel) tolerance is low.

For intermediate-value metals (stainless steel, aluminium) tolerance is higher.

For higher-value metals (brass, copper) tolerance is higher still. Let's see how it goes...

**At best** we'll •make a small income to help defray our high building maintenance costs while •at the same time recycling items that should not go to landfill. So, good for the planet, good for St Ronan's, good for the community that uses our buildings.

**At worst** we'll have thoughtless people dumping their rubbish in it, in which case we'll have to cease operation...

**Ramp:** The main door of the church has a 10 cm step which makes it inconvenient for wheelchair access and impossible for mobility scooter access.



Thanks to Eastbourne's MENZSHED, we now have a ramp that is light enough to move about but strong and wide enough to enable a mobility scooter to drive in. The Education Block also has a 10 cm step, so this ramp can be used there too. Thanks, Eastbourne MENZSHED...!

**Sandy Lang**

## **Making room for something new – an Easter reflection**

Over the years, I've attended St Ronan's Easter dawn services only infrequently – mostly because the idea of getting up around 6am rather puts me off.

But this year, I made the effort. And what a beautiful start to Easter Day it was, as a setting full moon stretched its beams across the harbour towards the little group gathered on the beach in the still morning air.



**Reg and Sandy get ready for the dawn service, Easter Day**

Reg led a simple but effective service, with some readings and two hymns, which we sang unaccompanied.

Reg followed the account of the resurrection of Jesus from John's gospel by one of Joy Cowley's psalms *'The Mystery of Paradox'*. This describes what lies at the heart of the gospel for her.

In an article in the *New Zealand Herald*, published just before Easter, Joy describes Easter as the mystery central to her life and as a metaphor for personal growth. Now facing failing eyesight at the age of 85, the beloved writer writes:

*'When I look back over a long life, it's not pleasure and success that fill me with gratitude, but the times of pain and loss that emptied me to make room for something new. Whether we are religious or not, we all have our own Easter stories.'*

*This year, I move towards Easter knowing I am going blind... Perhaps the loss of vision will be resurrected as inner sight... I know how spiritual growth works, and I trust it.'*

The way of the Cross is about coming alive again, says Joy, about your empty cup being filled with something greater. That is indeed a paradoxical mystery, the one found at the very heart of Jesus' life and teachings.

### **The Mystery of Paradox**

*The instinct for survival is loud in us.  
It cries, protect yourself! Don't take risks!  
Look after number one before others.  
But in the heart, comes a murmur,  
put others first and you will escape  
from the small prison of self.*

*Grab what you can! Our instinct shouts.  
Surround yourself with security  
and fearlessly guard your possessions.  
Get rid of all this stuff, the heart whispers.  
Your house has become so cluttered  
that the light no longer comes in.*

*Fight! Screams the instinct for survival.  
Get them before they get you.  
Show them that no one puts you down.  
Go to them in love, says the heart.  
Anger creates anger. War create war.  
Only love bears the fruit of love.*

*The primal instinct is loud in us  
but the voice of the heart is stronger.  
Who are you? We ask in prayer.  
You have always known me,  
says the voice of the heart.  
I am the way, the truth  
and the greater life.  
I am the Christ.*

Joy Cowley

**Anne Manchester**

## **Good Friday Combined Service**

This year St Ronan's was the venue for a Combined Good Friday service, involving leaders and members of San Antonio and St Alban's as well. It was well attended, with a full church, albeit sensibly spaced.

Seeking a little more social spacing from the gathered faithful downstairs, Peter and I and a friend snuck upstairs to enjoy the event from the mezzanine seating area. There we found Anne Manchester holding a hand drum, which she intended to use to signal the start of proceedings with 12 loud, slow, and sombre beats. Unfortunately for Pete, he had relaxed into his seat and his own thoughts when the first strike resounded behind his ear - he got quite a fright!! I was more prepared for what was coming as I could see the impending action from the corner of my eye!

After these evocative opening drumbeats, the congregation became silent. Later, we listened to an effective reading of John's gospel account of Jesus' passion leading to his crucifixion. The five voices in the gospel story were spoken by various members of the three churches. A large bare wooden cross was slowly brought into the church and left leaning against the front wall.

After the service there was no planned morning tea but many of the attendees stayed outside and caught up with their friends and neighbours. It was one of the most moving Good Friday services I have attended, solemn and respectful in the ritual remembrance, and happy in the informal gathering afterwards - a bit like a good funeral!

**Gill Burke**

## **More power than you imagined...!**

According to the manual, my car delivers 30 kW. From experience, I know this is more than adequate. But, truth be told, I have no idea what one kilowatt really is.

When I was growing up, power was measured in horsepower. Although I have never owned a horse, I *do* know what they look like, and I *have* seen horses display their strength in a variety of endeavours. So, imaging a unit of power based on a horse comes easily to me. Also, because the horse in horsepower isn't defined, I'm happy to allow myself a little poetic licence. Come with me...

**My imagination:** • My original 1964 Series IIA Land Rover boasted an 'adequate' 68 horsepower. And I was more than happy to imagine a large team of indefatigable Clydesdales hiding under the hood, ready to strain on their leather harnesses and pull me out of a mire or up a very steep slope.



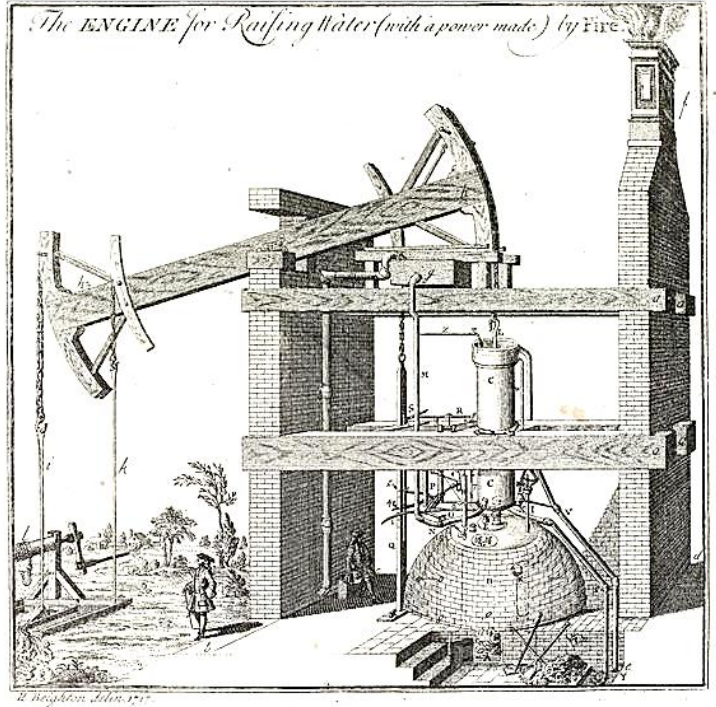
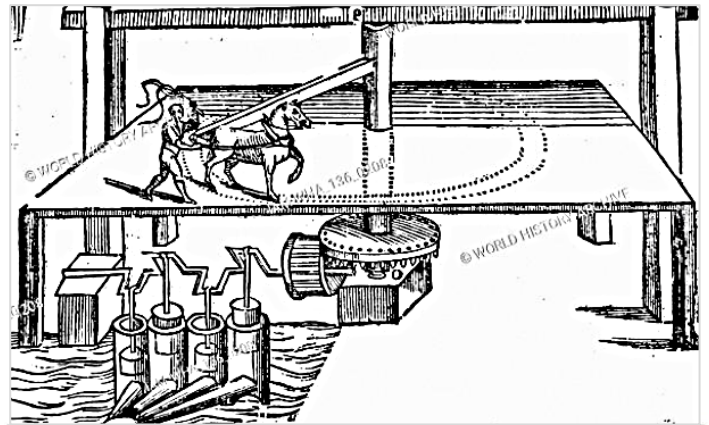
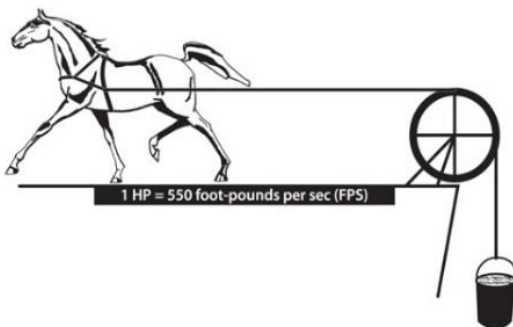


•Meanwhile, my little road car for shopping in Upper Hutt has under its hood a smaller team of average riding 'hacks' that can keep on, keeping on. •And my neighbour's Lamborghini is powered by a large team of galloping Arabian stallions...

**The actuality:** This is different. The original 'horsepower' was defined for a sad cart horse forced to walk around in boring circles, driving a pump, to drain a wet coalmine.

And a 'horsepower' was created in 1712 to advertise the latest Newcomen steam pump which could do the work of (and hence replace) many a bored, sad, old cart horse. Off to the knacker's yard... 😞

**Numbers:** Newcomen's cart horse could work all day raising a load of 550 pounds, one foot, every second.



It may interest you to learn a fit cyclist can deliver about 1 HP for a few minutes.

And you can deliver about 1 HP for a few seconds by running up the stairs.



Your HP = your weight in lb ÷ 550  
 x the number of steps x 9 inches  
 per step ÷ 12 ÷ the time taken in  
 seconds. Try it...! 😊



**My theory:** But that was all fine until I read recently one horse can deliver about 15 horsepower (for a short while). I suspect, for a Clydesdale, the horsepower-to-horse ratio is greater – maybe 25 horsepower.

So, my Land Rover now gets only about 2½ imaginary horses (if my ratio theory is right). Conversely, each of my horses has just grown 25-times in size and strength. See how badly I've underestimated the power of my horse...!

We have just celebrated Easter and praised the **power** of the Risen Lord, and now we are starting the lead up to Pentacost where we will be celebrating the **power** of the Holy Spirit.

My horses (imaginary and real) got me thinking about how much I've underestimated that divine power because I so rarely call on it. And, why don't I call on it? Probably because I underestimate it...! That great power is in three parts: (1) divine, (2) belief and (3) action.

We can't do a lot about the (1) divine part, other than ask God to provide it. But we can (2) believe. Jesus told the story about having faith the size of a mustard seed. *Truly I tell you, if you have faith as small as a mustard seed, you can say to this mountain, "Move from here to there" and it will move. Nothing will be impossible for you.* Matt 17:20

As for the (3) action part, the expression *God helps those who help themselves* originated in ancient Greece. I also rather like *A little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to rest - and poverty will come on you like a bandit and scarcity like an armed man.* Prov 6:10-12

Perhaps if we stopped underestimating the power of the Almighty.  
Perhaps if we truly believed.  
Perhaps if we asked God, and  
Perhaps if we got off our tailfeathers and DID something, then  
Perhaps we could make a difference in Ukraine...  
As Bob-the-Builder would say: *Can we do it? Yes, we can...!*

**John Harris**

### **Eastbourne giving 'Alms' to Ukraine**

On Saturday 30 April, St Ronan's was the venue for a remarkable community event – the Ukraine fundraiser 'Pop-up Op Shop', with all proceeds going to UNICEF's emergency humanitarian assistance to suffering children and families in Ukraine.

The driving force behind the event was a team consisting of Cath Loudon-Sim, Amanda Mallet, Karen Binnie, Libby Bloomfield and Sheryl Selwyn. In a short time they managed to assemble a network of 30-or-so helpers able to tap into a wellspring of goodwill in Eastbourne towards Ukraine's plight. Cath, a



member of 'Unity Community', an inter-denominational group of Christian women in Eastbourne, says she initially felt so powerless watching the tragedy of the Russian invasion of Ukraine. In sharing with the group, Cath hoped that together they could feel empowered by coming up with a charity project with threefold objectives:

- To raise money for humanitarian aid to Ukraine
- To give the Eastbourne community the opportunity to connect and unite in a common cause, and
- To promote sustainability by selling donated household items and gifting any unsold items to various local charities.



The organising team and some of their many helpers take a break beside the Ukrainian flag in St Ronan's Garden

Photo: Phil Benge

L to R: Oksana, Amanda, Maria, Karen, Libby, Cath, Carol, Sheryl

A network of volunteers was quickly established, drawing on Mainly Music, Pop-in-and-Play, Kindergarten, Toy Library, School etc, parents. Effective publicity, and word-of-mouth, resulted in an almost overwhelming donation of quality goods – every household item imaginable, from a kayak to a kitchen sink..! On Saturday, a throng of 100s of willing buyers contributed around \$10,000 to UNICEF's Ukraine Appeal. A remarkable success!

The downside of any charity sale is the aftermath clean-up – how to dispose of the unsold items? But, again, the network knew *what* needed to go *where*. On Saturday evening, the volunteers sorted the remaining goods into categories

which went off to various local charities; the Koha Shed in Wainuiomata; the Wellington City Mission; the Māori Women's Refuge; electronic goods to enhance STEM learning projects (Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths); etc. When we arrived for Sunday morning's 'informal worship service' in the morning tea room, yesterday's shoes and racks of clothes were all gone and the room (and the other rooms) were spotless.

Cath and her team are enormously grateful for the work of the many volunteers and the generosity of the wider Eastbourne and Bays community, as well as the help from Sandy Lang, Simon Shaw and Diane Gilliam-Weeks of St Ronan's ministry team.

**Les Molloy**

### ***Children's Power Hour – an Easter Journey***

With 6-year-olds, it's tricky to simplify the many facets of the Easter Journey. This year Power Hour's Easter Journey began with sharing yummy morning-tea pancakes and a brief story behind Mardi Gras.

Some Easter vocabulary and spelling was introduced: Lent, Holy Week, Palm Sunday, Last Supper, Good Friday, and Easter. The forty days of Lent was connected with a calendar to visualise this period, and how Easter is celebrated on the first Sunday after the first full moon after the 21 of March.

We learnt that the 40 days of Lent was parallel to Jesus' withdrawal into the desert for 40 days, after his baptism and before he began his public ministry.

Then, during Lent, we discussed possibilities of what we could give up or volunteer/give of ourselves to others, to emulate growing as disciples. Such as: not playing with a certain doll, not eating chocolate, keeping my room tidy, not squabbling with my brother, and ways of forgiving and caring.

In growing as disciples, our sessions this term focused on Jesus' ministry, with applications to our own daily life at home and school. Examples were: more *Inclusion* and *Equality* – with cartoons to help describe feelings and what we could say to include an onlooker into group play, *Forgiveness/Peace* – real and dramatic play examples of saying, "Sorry" and forgiving, with words like, "That's OK".

We built up a picture of a caring and peaceful Jesus and gained a new understanding of our living God on Earth. No wonder the Pharisees, the Jewish master-minders of ancient Jewish rules, were disturbed by a popular Jesus demonstrating a new way of understanding God and celebrating him as a King of Peace with palm leaf flags.





Sharing the Egg Tree at the Easter Services

To count out the 40 days of Lent, each week we decorated seven eggs and hung them on our Egg Tree. Then, at the Palm Sunday and Easter Day services, we shared our Egg Tree in floral arrangements.

Concluding our Easter journey, on Palm Sunday, first, we experienced Jesus' "I have many words to tell you..." at the Last Supper with the sharing of the symbolic "wine" (grape juice) and unleavened bread. Using Da Vinci's Last Supper painting, we identified which words had just been spoken. ("Who? The one to whom...."). Secondly, in an uplifting mood, we crafted baskets and filled them with fallen Autumn leaves and a red tulip bulb to plant - and with hope, to look forward to a beautiful new life in Spring.

**Power Hour Term 2: 8 May to 3 July**

**Susan Connell**

### ***St Ronan's to host 'Sunday Afternoon Chamber Concert'...***

For the past two years, parish clerk Sandy Lang has had a vision of St Ronan's Church becoming a concert venue. As with the church's previous 'Winter Series' of lectures, this could be another way of reaching out to the community.

Sandy first approached York Bay cellist Roger Brown with the idea. Then, just a few weeks ago, a musical colleague of Roger's, the well-known pianist Rosemary Barnes, rang Sandy 'out of the blue' to see if she could check out the church's acoustics. She, Roger and flautist Rebecca Steel were practising for a later chamber music concert in the city, but were short of an Eastbourne venue.

"Rosemary was delighted with the church and its acoustics and was immediately excited about *Trio Muritai* holding its inaugural performance there," Sandy said. "A date was set with a programme of German romantic music to be held on Sunday, May 15 at 4pm."

All three musicians have impressive musical pedigrees. Roger and Rebecca were contemporaries at the Christchurch School of Music and Canterbury University. Scholarships from the International Festival of Youth Orchestras and the QE2 Arts Foundation took Roger to London where he studied and worked for 23 years, mainly as a chamber orchestra and ensemble player. He

joined the New Zealand Symphony Orchestra (NZSO) in 1999, relinquishing this post two years ago.

Rebecca has lectured in flute at the University of Canterbury and played principal flute in the Christchurch Symphony Orchestra. She has worked for the Australian Opera and Ballet Orchestra in Sydney and studied in London. She moved to Wellington to play with the NZSO and Wellington Regional Orchestra, and is currently principal flautist with the Royal New Zealand Air Force Band.



**Rosemary Barnes - piano, Rebecca Steel - flute and Roger Brown – cello rehearse for their upcoming Eastbourne concert**

Rosemary is known throughout New Zealand as a pianist, vocal coach, music director, opera translator, chamber music collaborator and adjudicator. She spent 25 years based in London, working mainly in opera at English National Opera, Musica nel Chiostro (Italy) and Opera Northern Ireland. She ran the postgraduate opera diploma at the University of Auckland from 1993-99 and plays regularly with the Auckland Chamber Orchestra. She was awarded an MNZM for her services to music in the 2000 Queen's Birthday Honours.

Both Roger and Rosemary have been involved in productions mounted by Rhona Fraser's Opera in a Days Bay Garden.

*Trio Muritai* will be offering three works, beginning with Carl Reinecke's Undine Sonata for flute and piano Op167 and Schumann's Three Fantasy Pieces for cello and piano Op73. It will conclude with Mendelssohn's magnificent Piano Trio No 1 in D minor Op49. Recognised as one of his greatest chamber works, the piece was scored for piano, violin and cello, but is often performed in this configuration, with the flute replacing the violin.

The programme will run just over one hour with no interval. Admission is by general admission, with tickets, restricted to 100, costing \$20, children are free. For your ticket and programme, email Sandy at [slang@xtra.co.nz](mailto:slang@xtra.co.nz).

**Anne Manchester**

## Poem from a Doubting Thomas

I'm looking for an image, God,  
I know I must not worship an image -  
the commandments prohibit an idol -  
and I know you are a hidden god,  
yet I seek a sign of your presence.

I'm not looking for a self-help god,  
bathed in facial creams or lotions,  
unwrinkled, ageless, manicured images,  
a perfect image, idealized and abstract,  
no, the cosmetic surgery god is unreal,  
the god of advertising,  
marketplace religion.

I'm looking for a god who connects with me,  
in my condition, my shadows,  
a companion to walk beside me,  
not found through trance or escape,  
a god who touches my world.  
I'm looking for a scarred Christ.  
My name is Thomas.

© John Howell



*[Ed: This poem, 'Image', by Rev John Howell was part of the service he prepared for St Ronan's on Sunday 24 April, in response to the day's gospel reading - John 20:19-31]*





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
Simon Shaw	562 8772	simonjshaw@xtra.co.nz
Colin Dalziel	562 7238	colinjdalziel@gmail.com

Parish Clerk	Sandy Lang
Hall Bookings	Sandy Lang

Contributions for the 'Record' are most welcome  
Please email them to 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 June 2022  
is Sunday 29 May 2022**