



St Ronan's Presbyterian Church
Eastbourne

Record

November 2023

5 November	Joint service with St Alban's.....	9.30am
12 November	Reg Weeks.....	9.30am
19 November	Informal worship service.....	9.30am
26 November	Ross Scott.....	9.30am
3 December	Informal worship service.....	9.30am

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Power Hour – Sundays 9.30am
Breakfast Prayer – Tuesdays 8.00am
Mainly Music – Thursdays 9.15-11.15am

For pastoral care needs, please contact one of the Local Ministry Team
Rev Reg Weeks 027 491 5947, Simon Shaw 562 8772, Colin Dalziel 562 7238 or Sandy Lang 562 8753

Two by two...

If you ever thought 'Presbyterian' was a bit of a mouthful, try getting your tongue around the Celtic word, *Anamchara* - perhaps better known in English as *Anam Cara* because the Celtic word combines two concepts. *Anam* 'soul' and *Cara* 'friend' so we have the Celtic concept of a 'soul friend'. In the Celtic tradition a soul friend is considered an essential part of spiritual development. In the late '90s an Irish writer popularised this word in a book on Celtic wisdom, and those involved with the religious community based on the island of Iona have also contributed to a rising appreciation of Celtic spirituality.



So, what is a 'soul friend'? Psychotherapist William Ryan describes it as a 'compassionate presence' – in other words, someone you know well, who shares a similar view on things of the spirit, and with whom you can build trust and a deep level of sharing. Apparently, the word *Anamchara* originated in early Irish monasticism where it usually referred to a monk's spiritual guide and teacher; but the concept can also be traced back to the first Christian monastic communities in the Egyptian deserts around the third century CE.

And if you were looking for similar relationships in scripture, I would point you to Ecclesiastes 4:9 *Two are better than one... for if they fall, one will lift up the other*. Or read the story of the relationship between David and Jonathan, son of king Saul, recorded by the prophet Samuel, and typified by Johnathan's loyalty (1 Sam 23:17) *Do not be afraid of my father; you shall be king and I shall be second to you; my father knows that this is so*.

I suspect it was such relational insights that led Jesus to send out his disciples two by two on their practical training in visiting the surrounding villages without him, first the Twelve, and then the Seventy-two. (Mark 6:7 and Luke 10:1). And even though the many saints we celebrated last Sunday are named and acknowledged as individuals, they were always part of a Christian community. Stories abound of those they held in close companionship.

In the secular world, the helping professions have long been aware of the need for a supportive relationship for its members which will stand alongside the authority structures of line management. It is known as clinical supervision, and really began at the end of the 18th century in Vienna when on a regular Wednesday night Carl Jung, Erik Erikson, Alfred Adler, Karen Horney and others practising psychotherapy, met together under the guidance of Sigmund Freud to discuss their cases and share observations about their practices.

As the field of psychiatry began to develop and branch out into associated fields of social and relationship support, supervisory relationships also

developed alongside, often not defined, or mentioned in the literature, but rather their presence was largely assumed. After WWII in the late '40s, approaches to mental healing other than psychotherapy began to appear, such as marriage and family counselling, clinical social work, addiction counselling, youth counselling, among many others. At the same time the church was developing a variety of chaplaincies in hospitals, prisons and universities. As well as normal pastoral practice they were required to undergo units of clinical pastoral education and, when qualified, to remain in a professional clinical supervision relationship. Ministers in the mainline churches are now also required to have some clinical pastoral exposure and to be in a regular relationship with a trained pastoral supervisor.

Supervision for ministers is not friendship, giving advice, spiritual direction, therapy, counselling, prayer, telling your story, joint sermon preparation or discussion of common problems and concerns, but rather a safe professional relationship subject to very high ethical standards. While it is tempting to go to someone you know and like for supervision, a colleague or friend will limit the capacity of supervision to address your blind spots and challenge your practice of ministry. That's what it's for. It's about being accountable for the ministry you offer.

Then there is Spiritual Direction. According to one definition, spiritual direction is a trained ministry that assists individuals to attend to the presence and activity of God in their life. A spiritual director will listen attentively, ask questions, lead devotional exercises and, if and when appropriate, offer feedback or advice. All the while the director pays close attention to the Holy Spirit to discern together with the other person the work of God in his or her life.

While clinical supervision and spiritual direction seem very similar to the role of a soul friend in the ancient desert monasteries of Egypt, or those in the early years of Christianity in Ireland, and still have a very important roles in the life of the church today, the Anamchara concept moved over time from being a teacher/student relationship to much more like that of the disciples being sent out two by two, not only to support one another in working through that particular 'sending' but also as a model for their work as apostles, as recorded by Luke in the book of Acts. There were Paul and Barnabus, for example, or Paul and Luke himself, and in a different area, there were Peter and Mark, which eventually led to the writing of the accounts we have in the Gospels. These were 'two by two' relationships of support and encouragement in challenging practical circumstances, and I believe that such relationships have much to offer today.

I have served as a workplace chaplain, trained others in pastoral supervision, and as a pastoral supervisor am under supervision myself, but as a teenager active in Bible class, I had a friend I already knew well, who had similar views on things of the spirit, and with whom through those turbulent years I

continued to build trust and to share deeply, very much like the old Mainland Cheese ad, where the narrator, after recounting a lifetime remarks: "*I always thought we would be good friends – these things take time, y'know.*"

So it is with a soul friend; not a professional or teaching relationship but a 'compassionate presence', someone you come to know well, with similar views on things of the spirit, and with whom you can build trust and share deeply. Do you have an Anamchara? If you don't, then maybe it's something worth thinking about.

Reg Weeks

Clerk's corner...

Late: The *Record* is a tad late – blame the Point Howard slip. A long and boring story...

Advent studies: The four, one-hour, Advent studies written by Rev Doug Rogers will be from 7.30-8.30pm in St Ronan's Fellowship Room on the four Thursday evenings: •30 Nov, •7 Dec, •14 Dec and •21 Dec. Advent is a particularly busy period for most, so we will keep strictly to time. So far, I've had expressions of interest from ten people. If you are not one of the 10, it's about time you dropped me an email and so became the 11th (or the 12th etc)...



Of water and gardens: Our church gardens now boast a new retractable hose reel which is proving very useful for watering our recently seeded lawn, which is now growing over the huge excavation made for our new soak pit. Simon has installed some interesting looking leaf traps in the various downpipes serving the soak pit to minimise the flushing of leaf debris into the pit (so it will last longer and work better). Also, a 200 litre roof rainwater tank to help keep precious garden plants alive should we experience 'Level 4' water restrictions later in this El Niño summer. In advance, Robyn took and rooted numerous cuttings so the area of flower bed immediately behind the carport could be repopulated quickly following the (inevitable) devastation caused by the soak-pit excavations. All in all, things are working very well, and the place is beginning to look more like its old (pre-excavation, pre-devastation) self. Special thanks to Simon (property) and to Robyn (gardens)... 😊

Combined Community Carols: Do please mark Sunday 10 December in your diary now, so you can support and attend our all-age, Combined Community Carols at 5pm in the Muritai School Hall.

Our theme this year is 'Jesus the refugee.' Expect to discover a magnificent Bedouin tent - a wonderful construction by Jutta Chisholm...

Also, a live band, heaps of excited kids, a fire engine delivering a fat man clothed all in red and bringing each child something cold on a stick.

The Bedouin tent will help us remember those forced to flee their homes and who now find themselves living in tents, cars and other temporary accommodation. Very topical (think Palestine, think Ukraine). Bring with you an item of non-perishable food for the collection for the Food Bank (think Lower Hutt).

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Sandy Lang



Rood screen – Political promises...

Hopefully, by the time that you read this, the 'final count' of voting papers will be over and New Zealand will have a new government, the politicians with their feet already under their desks working hard to fulfil their campaign promises. Then, in another three years' time, we will judge them on their delivery, and either re-elect them or try someone else. It seems opportune to be reading about a ruler who truly DID deliver.

Emperor Ashoka was the world's first Buddhist ruler. He ruled the Indian sub-continent from 274-232 BCE.

Among his achievements were:

- He was the first ruler in history to ban slavery.
- He abolished the death penalty.
- He had banyan trees and mango groves planted to combat deforestation.
- He had rest houses and wells placed every 800 metres along the main roads.
- He restricted the killing of animals for the royal kitchens.
- Medical facilities were provided for humans as well as for animals.
- He encouraged obedience to parents, also "generosity toward priests and ascetics, and frugality in spending".



- He commissioned officers to work for the welfare and happiness of the poor, the aged, the infirm, and the women and children.
- He promoted the welfare of all beings.
- He advocated gender equality in education and religious institutions.

With minor tweaks, many of these policies would slot quite comfortably into a 2023 manifesto. For example, EV charging stations might replace the well points – and I am sure you can see others.

Just for perspective, in 250 BCE, Ptolemy II was Pharaoh of Egypt. Construction had only just started on the Great Wall of China. This was a VERY long time ago. Emperor Ashoka was way ahead of his time.



Jesus was way ahead of His time too. And He made some meaty promises. One of them is in Matthew 11:28-30 *Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.*

There are many, many people who will testify that Jesus really does deliver on this, as well as on His other promises. But you have to come to Him yourself. Have you asked Him?

John Harris

PS I should add that, before his conversion to Buddhism, Emperor Ashoka was a totally different and unsaintly person. It all goes to prove that even the worst of us CAN change.

Christmas Child Shoebox Appeal 2023

A BIG THANKYOU to everyone who contributed to the filling of six shoe boxes with many lovely gifts for needy children.

The boxes were blessed by Rev Doug Rodgers at our Sunday 29 October church lunch, before being taken to Manna Christian bookstore for delivery to the NZ processing Centre in Auckland. The NZ boxes are usually sent well before Christmas to areas in and around the Pacific.

Thanks to all contributors for this joyful children's outreach.



Colin Dalziel.

Janet's Christmas recipes...

1. Ice Cream Cake

Base: ½ Packet wine biscuits
2 tbs Butter - melted
1 tsp Cinnamon

Cake: ½ cup Fruit mincemeat (see tip below)
x tsps each of the following essences (to your taste): Vanilla, rum,
brandy, almond
½ Pint cream
¼ cup Icing Sugar

Glaze cherries for decoration
Crush biscuits and add cinnamon
Melt butter and add to biscuit crumbs
Press into a tin, lined with baking paper
Put tin into freezer
Whip cream until thick and fold in icing sugar
Mix together the fruit mincemeat and essences
Fold the two mixtures together and spread over the crumb base
Decorate with glaze cherries and return to freezer

Tip: I mix the fruit mince with grated apple, lemon rind and juice to make a less-sweet mixture

2. Lemon Ice Cream Cake

1 tin Sweetened condensed milk
300 ml Cream
½ cup Lemon juice and finely grated rind of 1 or 2 lemons
2 Egg whites
2 tbs Castor sugar
Combine the condensed milk, lemon juice and rind
Beat the cream
Beat the egg whites and add the sugar and beat again
Fold the three mixtures together and freeze

Tip: You can put this into a tin with the biscuit base (1 cup ginger biscuit crumbs, (or wine biscuit crumbs) mixed together with 50 g melted butter).

Power Hour – International church news from Blake

Recently, I was delighted to receive news from one of our Power Hour children, Blake McCorkindale, while she travelled in the Yucatan province of Mexico.

She and brother, Mills, discovered much about Mexico's rich heritage - its indigenous culture and later Spanish colonisation. Churches, introduced by the Christian Spanish, were seen in abundance.

Last month, we read Mills' report on the oldest church in Mexico, La Conchita, (Mexico City, 1525) - very beautiful with all the outside carved floral patterns, inspired by indigenous elements. Also, the distinctive Mexican colonial architectural feature of the atrial cross mounted in front of the church.

This month, Blake shares her choice of churches, San Antonio de Padua, (in Izamal, Yucatan, built in 1561). It is very impressive, huge and yellow! Our San Antonio of Eastbourne is small in comparison.

I am equally impressed by both Blake's and Mills' journals and with their gifting to us of their insights into international Christian expression. Thank you, Blake and Mills, for your research and insights.

Susan Connell

Blake's church: The church's name is San Antonio De Padua. It is located in the town of Izamal, Yucatan province, Mexico.



Daddy, Mills and Blake walking through the main gate of San Antonio de Padua

When the Spaniards conquered Izamal, they destroyed the major Maya temple, the Ppapp-Hol-Chac pyramid. In 1533 began to build from its stones, one of the first monasteries in the western hemisphere. Work on San Antonio De Padua was finished in 1561.

The main rectangular atrium has 75 arches around it. It is the largest closed atrium in America and the second largest atrium after St Peter's Square in the Vatican.

The city in which the church is based is Izamal, 'The Yellow City'. It is called the Yellow City because in 1993 Pope John Paul II came to visit, so they painted the city yellow to make it look good! There is a statue of the Pope in the church.

Blake McCorkindale



Some of the arches around the church



A statue of Pope John Paul II



Our family in Izamal

Phil's photo – 'And the band played...'

Starting in England's industrial Midlands in the early 19th century, brass bands become very popular in Victorian Britain and were a key focus at all sorts of community gatherings: civic and church, in times both of great joy and in times also of great sadness. Brass bands came to New Zealand with the early settlers.

During the eight years I lived in Masterton (1968-75), I played in the *Masterton District Brass Band*. There were five of us in the bass section - Wally (a builder), Ben (a house painter), George (a plumber), Paul (an office manager) and me, Phil, (a policeman) – I played the BBb Bass tuba - the biggest brass instrument, weighing in at about 10 kg...!

What made our bass section special was that although we each had different backgrounds and occupations, we five really gelled as a team. In my 45 years of playing brass, this was the finest bass section I've played in. We knew one another's strengths and weaknesses and compensated for them - looking after your mates is key. We created that beautiful deep sound so essential if a brass band is to play outstanding music. It's not just playing what's on the score sheet, it's how the section plays 'together' that creates the beautiful sound.

Last weekend, I returned to Masterton as this band celebrated 150 years of brass banding. They were playing in the beautiful grounds of Queen Elizabeth Park. A good crowd was gathered to listen to them on the sunny Sunday afternoon.



The programme extended well over an hour and contained some familiar and some less familiar brass-band pieces including the English military march *Army of the Nile* (KJ Alford 1941) and some neat tunes from some of Andrew Lloyd Webber's well-known musicals.

Back in the day, we were not the top NZ brass band, but we did win the *D Grade* at the national competitions in Rotorua in 1969, and we showed the rest

of the bands just what a small country town band could achieve in creative marching...!

Sadly, of the five of us in the bass section back then, three have since died - no doubt they now accompany the angelic singing in heaven. But my good mate Ben (the house painter) was there at the sesquicentennial celebrations. A couple of sentences of mutual greeting and it was like he and I had never been parted. It was so good to catch up with him...



These are just some of the photos I took of the band that afternoon. They brought back such happy memories of earlier times and of old friends.

Just such a lovely Sunday afternoon...

Phil Benge



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

Directory

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Contributions for the 'Record' are most welcome.
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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 December 2023
is Sunday 3 December 2023**