



St Ronan's Presbyterian Church
Eastbourne

Record

October 2020

4 October	Worship with John Harris	9.30am
11 October	Worship with Leanne Munro	9.30am
18 October	Worship with Gill Burke	9.30am
25 October	Worship with Liz Barrow	9.30am
1 Nov	Worship with John Howell	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

Running the race

Facebook has a delightful habit of showing you a photo taken some time in the past to remind you of what you were doing on that day. Well a few days ago that happened again for me.

I was reminded that on 22 September 2016, Diane and I had the opportunity to visit Olympia, the site sacred to the Greeks, and stand in what remains of the stadium where the earliest recorded Olympic games was held in 746 BC.



The entry tunnel

Our guide was a Greek archaeologist who gave us fascinating detail regarding these ancient forerunners of our modern Olympics, and the challenge they presented to those who wished to compete. Sadly, COVID-19 has disrupted this year's games scheduled for August and competitors must wait another year to compete - and do their best to remain at peak fitness in the interim.

The four-yearly games cycle continued in Olympia for over a thousand years until the spread of Christianity led to their

demise, by order of the Roman Emperor, Theodosius, in 393 AD.

The games drew competitors from countries all around the Mediterranean, where Greek was the common language.

It was surely these games which Paul had in mind when, in several of his letters to the early churches, he made reference both to running and to boxing - particularly in his letter to the Greek-speaking Christians in Corinth, only a couple of day's walk from Olympia:

"Surely you know that in a race all the runners take part in it but only one wins the prize."

"Every athlete in training submits to strict discipline, in order to be crowned with a wreath that will not last: but we do it for one that will last for ever."

"that is why I am like a boxer who does not waste his punches." 1 Cor.9:24 ff, Today's English Version (TEV).

Then again in his letter to those in Philippi:

"I run straight toward the goal in order to win the prize" Phil.3:14, TEV

And in his letter to Timothy:

"I have done my best in the race, I have run the full distance, I have kept the faith" 2 Tim 4:7.

However, the phrase resonating in my mind, the one I was actually looking for was that we *"must run with resolution the race that is set before us."*

It is actually in the letter to the Hebrews (possibly written by Barnabas or Apollo - see the New International Version Study Bible) where this is found.

"Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith."

But this translation says *"run with perseverance"*. Others I checked had *"determination"* or *"patience"*(12) or *"endurance"*(11) and even one with *"patient endurance"* but I couldn't find what had stuck in my mind – *"Run with resolution the race that is set before you."*

It was good old Mr Google who led me to the New English Bible published the year I was ordained (1970). It contains that long-remembered phrase.

One of the interesting aspects of reading the bible in English is that we often find a particular turn of phrase that for us carries a subtlety of



The stadium

meaning which illuminates a passage in ways that other versions don't always match. And that's important to remember, because the underlying Greek often has various shades of meaning, among which the translator must choose.

And it's worth reading a variety of versions, even if one speaks more sweetly to our ear.

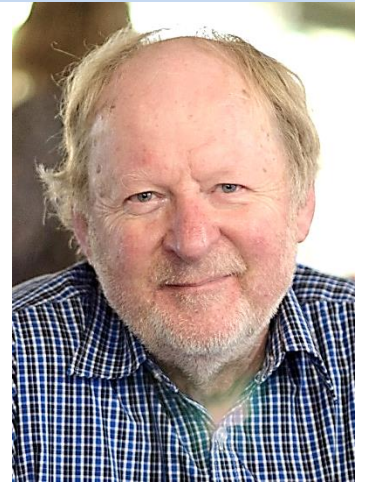
So whether you prefer patience, or endurance, or resolution, the important message Paul wants to convey is that the race of faith is more akin to a marathon than a sprint, and as we continue to face the vicissitudes of life and the ongoing difficulties flowing from our need to combat the threat of the virus, let us as the TEV puts it – *"keep our eyes fixed on Jesus, on whom our faith depends from beginning to end."* (Heb 12.2).

Reg Weeks

Clerk's corner

Church Chat (13/9/20): As usual, our church chat was useful. It produced a number of items for action or further discussion.

- We talked about the possibility of replacing the front two pews each side in the church with comfortable, armed, stackable, wood-frame chairs. *PC will explore this.*
- Someone suggested a heat pump to better warm the Fellowship Room. *PC considers this not economical for a space occupied for only short periods. Also, our very close proximity to neighbours would create a noise nuisance.*
- Someone suggested a heat pump to better warm the Hall. *This raises similar issues.*
- Someone suggested an LCD screen in church to replace the old projector and screen. *This would require multiple screens - e.g. 2 (or 4) downstairs, plus 2 upstairs (funerals).*
- Someone suggested (alternatively) a new projector. *A modern projector with x/y keystone would no longer obstruct the aisle (funerals) and would present a much better image, with truer colour than our elderly one. This seems a better option.*
- Reg suggested a weekly study group. *This was well received and is proceeding.*
- In recent months St Ronan's has received a couple of significant donations. *At least in part, it's felt these should go towards identifiable improvements, rather than to general church maintenance – but some balance between the two is reasonable.*



Annual General Meeting (20/9/20): Well that was easy. The only hiccup was a deficit budget occasioned by some recent and expensive (emergency) roof replacements. *Parish Council will have a special meeting to develop some well-thought-through recommendations to bring to a probably-quite-brief church meeting quite soon. Deficit budgets are not pretty things...*

Annual Report: On a more positive note, the AR document once again underlines that our little church (i.e. the people of St Ronan's) is in good health. And we're not just being smug.

(1) We maintain a satisfactory balance between worship and community service¹ - We are pretty active on both fronts.

(2) The move to an LMT a few years back has provided us with stability. It has also freed up parish council to focus on mission instead of introspection.

¹ Our mission statement is: *Our God calls us to worship and grow together and to show the love of Christ through serving our community...*

(3) And our service leadership is about second to none. We enjoy a wide diversity of styles that matches our wide diversity of backgrounds. We have about 20 different persons who take our services. The sheer quality of these people is impressive. And we can be pretty fussy as we manage our 'service-leader' spreadsheet.

We've three or four who come on some regular basis (Reg Weeks, Norman Wilkins and Doug Rogers – special thanks to these) with numerous others filling in the gaps – including several from our own congregation.

<50

(4) As for the 'crime' of being small, I note that 25% of the parishes of our presbytery (*Presbytery Central* stretches from Gisborne and Taranaki in the north, to Wellington in the south), like us, have memberships less than 50. Also, though over the last few years our numbers have declined somewhat (like everywhere), they have been more stable in recent months, with average attendances even rising slightly this year.

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Sandy Lang



October study

Parish Council has agreed to pilot a study series in the *Fellowship Room*.

These are planned for each Wednesday from 7 October. We will meet at 7.00 pm for coffee and cake, with discussion running from 7.15 to 8.15pm.

At this stage there are three possible themes:

1) Read and discuss the Gospel reading for the following Sunday.

This can be done as a form of Lectio Divina where the passage is read aloud and folk listen for a personally significant word or phrase. The passage is read again, and the discussion focuses on the implications of the whole passage either personally or for the congregation.

A second approach could be to explore the context, background and significance of the passage and its connection to the old testament passage

2) Discuss a topic related to growing in our faith.

Members of the group raise questions of theology, faith and practice

3) Play and discuss a Nooma video (circa 2005).

When Rob Bell was minister of the 6,000-member Mars Hill congregation in Michigan which he founded in 1999, he produced an excellent series of video discussions on a variety of faith topics. We have 17 of these.

Depending on the preferences of those who come, we may follow one option for the four evenings or we may use a different approach on each successive Wednesday.

For more information contact me 027 491 5947 or third.age@xtra.co.nz

Reg Weeks



A warm cuddly

Living in a caring community is like a warm cuddly, something that wraps you securely and you can take refuge in.

Many small gifts of kindness from friends, neighbours and strangers are like that: a gift of vegetables, a meal, a visit, and for those who can't climb up to my house, a phone call to chat over the day's events and the nation's.

I have enjoyed these gifts and I am grateful for the companionship they bring, while preparing to leave Days Bay for life on the flat. Thank you...

Jan Heine

Where your energy comes from – mitochondria...

Last month, we talked about your DNA and your dinner - this follows on from that.

Talking to friends and family, tiredness is a common topic. Often people find it hard to sleep or, on waking, still feel tired because they've not had a deep, restful sleep.

Mitochondria are responsible for producing our energy – they're microscopic powerhouses hiding within our cells. Mitochondria have their own DNA, which is similar to the DNA of primitive bacteria. They

produce adenosine triphosphate (ATP), an energy-carrying molecule. ATP holds the chemical energy made from the breakdown of our food in the presence of oxygen (respiration). ATP is the universal energy currency needed to run every process and reaction in our bodies.

Each human cell contains 100s, or even 1000s of these

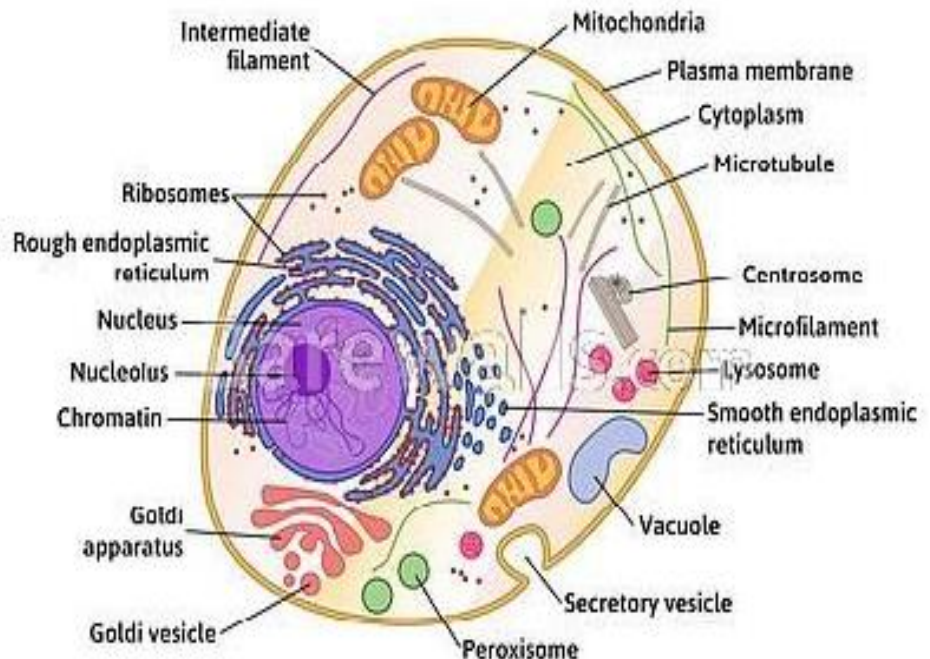
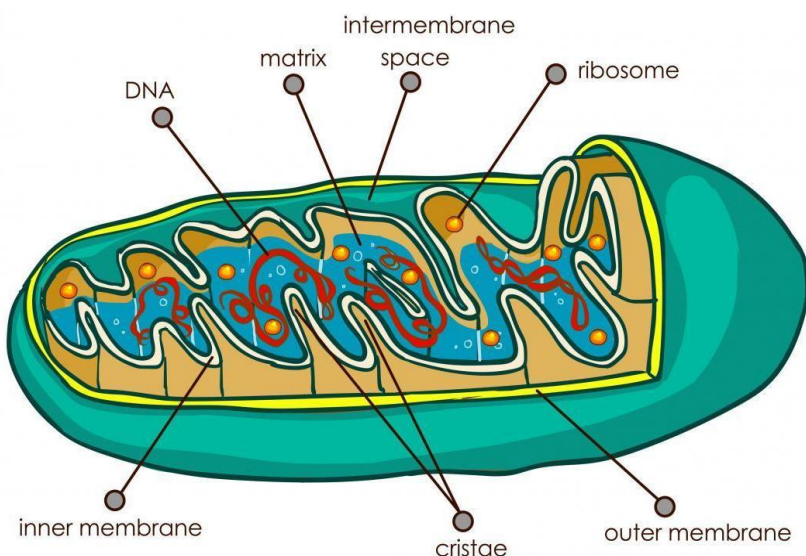


Diagram of human cell with sausage-shaped mitochondria



Enlarged mitochondrion - responsible for energy production

tiny organelles. Heart and brain cells have the highest numbers of mitochondria.

Especially as we age, mitochondria have huge consequences for our health, wellness and how energetic we feel.

Our bodies are very complex and the function of mitochondria, to produce our energy, can be impaired by smoking, stress, lack of sleep, environmental pollution (mould, smog) and

Easy Pineapple Biscuits

¾ cup diced fresh pineapple

1¾ cup gluten-free oats or quinoa flakes

½ cup raw cashews, chopped

¼ orange juice

2 tbsp orange zest

½ tsp ground cinnamon

½ cup shredded coconut

¼ cup pure maple syrup or honey

Place all ingredients in a bowl and mix. Roll into balls and place on tray flattening with a fork.

Bake at 180°C for 25-30 min or until cooked.

Store in an airtight container for 3-5 days

ENJOY! 😊

poor diet (too much refined sugar and flour) that causes blood-sugar imbalance and insulin resistance.

Mitochondrial function is also slowed by the natural processes of aging. But we are discovering new ways to support mitochondrial function as we age. Some of these are easier than you might think...!

Our diet is important because certain nutrients (such as the B vitamins, vitamins C and E, iron, magnesium and selenium) are involved in the production of ATP within our mitochondria.

Therefore, a nutrient-dense diet (rather than an energy-dense diet) is key to better aging and mitochondrial support. So, aim to increase your daily intake of fresh vegetables, fruits and whole grains.

And before you reach for a doughnut or other high-calorie food, go to your fruit bowl or have a healthy homemade snack and then go out for a walk.



Annette J Davidson
BN RN Nutritional Consultant

Rood Screen – Context & pretext...

I'm sure that, like me, you grew up with much wisdom wrapped up in easy-to-remember sayings. But did you know, many are mis-quotes or part-quotes?

Curiosity killed the cat

implies we should beware of being too curious. But the original *Curiosity killed the cat, but satisfaction brought it back* plays on a cat's supposed nine lives. It

means there's great pleasure in finding out something you really want to know.



Blood is thicker than water is used to imply family should come first. But the original *The blood of the covenant is thicker than the water of the womb* says the opposite. Relationships of choice are often stronger than those of birth.

Money is the root of all evil implies poverty is a virtue. But 1 Timothy 6:10, says *For the love of money is the root of all kinds of evil*. Having money is not the problem, it's the excessive wanting of money that's wrong.

Jack of all trades, but master at none implies general incompetence. But *A jack of all trades is master of none, but oftentimes better than master of one* tells us it's more useful to be able to turn your hand to a variety of tasks, than to be limited by having only one skill.

Birds of a feather flock together says we hang around with likeminded people. But *Birds of a feather flock together until the cat comes* warns us to beware of fair-weather friends.

The early bird catches the worm - but the second mouse gets the cheese doesn't need explaining. Nor does *Rome wasn't built in a day - but it burned in one*.

Starve a cold, feed a fever But, *If you starve a cold, you'll have to feed a fever* means if you don't eat, you'll be sick longer.



My country, right or wrong implies national interest over right and wrong. But, *My country, right or wrong; if right, to be kept right; and if wrong to be set right* is much more moral.

Be the change you wish to see in the world. What Mahatma Gandhi actually said was: *As a man changes his own nature, so does the attitude of the world change towards him. We need not wait to see what others do.*

No rest for the wicked is often used as a busy-person's excuse for staying up late, and it might be true, but the quote originated as a misquote from the Bible. Isaiah 15:21 *There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked.* The words "rest" and "peace" are related to each other, but the idea of sleep completely changes its meaning. It's about finding solace, not a nap.

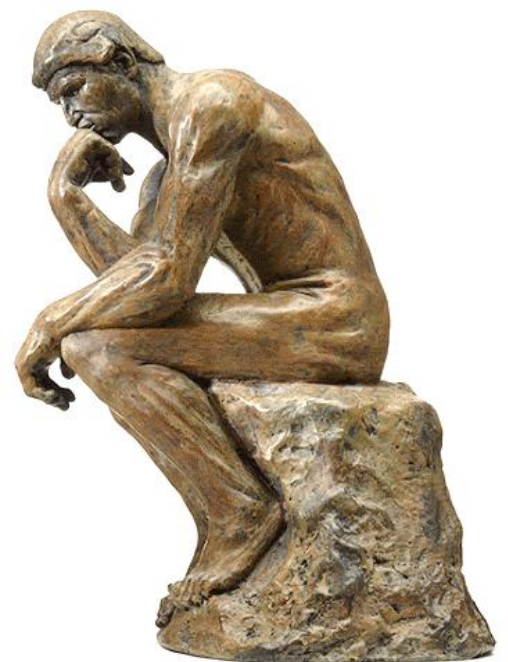
It's particularly interesting that, in their original forms, most of these sayings encourage us to embrace exciting, eclectic lives, driven by choice and passion. The shortened versions seem to encourage only conformity and maintenance of the *status quo*. I know which I prefer...!

Conformity isn't always good as *Great minds think alike - but fools seldom differ* reminds us.

More important, our use of misquotes underlines how irresponsible it is to pass on stories as facts, without first checking them. Of bible quotations, it's said *a text without a context is a pretext.*

Ephesians 4:29 tells us *Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen.*

Even more so today, as COVID-19 rumours abound. Keep safe, keep healthy and keep caring...!



John Harris

Phil's photo – A problem with politically correctness

Did you know that dear old Mother England has been overrun by the politically correct? These 'plonkers' wanted *Rule Britannia* and *Land of Hope and Glory* eliminated from this year's *Last Night of the Proms* at the Royal Albert Hall. They protested that the tunes and words were all about Britain's imperial and colonial past. Maybe some people from the affected countries might feel uncomfortable... And the BBC went along with them... *Tut-tut...!*



I say. "If this upsets you, don't go to the Royal Albert Hall, and don't watch it on TV. Go do your own thing, somewhere else, and tune in to a different channel."

The BBC's decision caused a huge popular backlash. Even Boris joined the fray. After some half-hearted attempts to appease both sides at once, the BBC finally saw the light and said "Right. Enough is enough..." and they reversed their inane decision. *Well done the BBC!*





In my COVID-enforced, armchair travels, I have had to resort to digging out some of my pre-COVID photos of the Land of Hope and Glory, for you all to enjoy.

Britons never, never, never, will be slaves. And nor will we Kiwis – so long as we don't allow tiny minorities to place restrictions on large majorities, thus upsetting the fabulous and democratic life we enjoy here in New Zealand!

Phil Benge



POWER HOUR – *History repeats itself*

Would you like to be: soft changeable clay or a fragile pottery bowl? The Power Hour children when asked, easily saw the difference between the flexible clay, shaped and reshaped, and the hard shards of a broken pottery bowl.



Similarly, Jeremiah, a prophet in Jerusalem, was directed by God to go and watch a potter for inspired direction he should use to speak to the endangered, stubborn and secular people of Judah (Babylonia was soon going to take over Judah and Israel). They didn't change their ways and were conquered.

Then Power Hour looked more closely at our own home and school settings and role-played being a stubborn child who would not get down from standing on a chair and a child who would follow the parent/teacher's directions to step down to a safe floor position. The children went on to explain the difference in consequences of harm versus peace/ harmony/safety of their stubborn versus their flexible behaviours.

Remember when we were young children at first doing whatever in exploring, touching what we shouldn't touch, learning the school and sport rules, sneakily breaking rules, then we start all over again as teens finding a balance between self and group growth and harmony and learning more customs along the way. Dying of embarrassment for making a mistake in front of friends or not.

Remember how we had to listen to our parents, grandparents, siblings, teacher tell us many times not to do something or get a telling off or 'go to your room' (seven is a good number of times until we get the message).

So things haven't changed. A flexible compatible behaviour leads to a good outcome whilst a stubborn uncompromising behaviour leads to a poor outcome. It was the same with Jeremiah long ago who pointed out that God warned His people that if they didn't change their ways then there would be destruction. However, "...if the people stopped doing the evil they have done," he will change His mind and not carry out plans to bring disaster upon them. (Jeremiah 18:5-11). Thus, if the people follow in God's ways then "He will carry out His plans to do good for them."

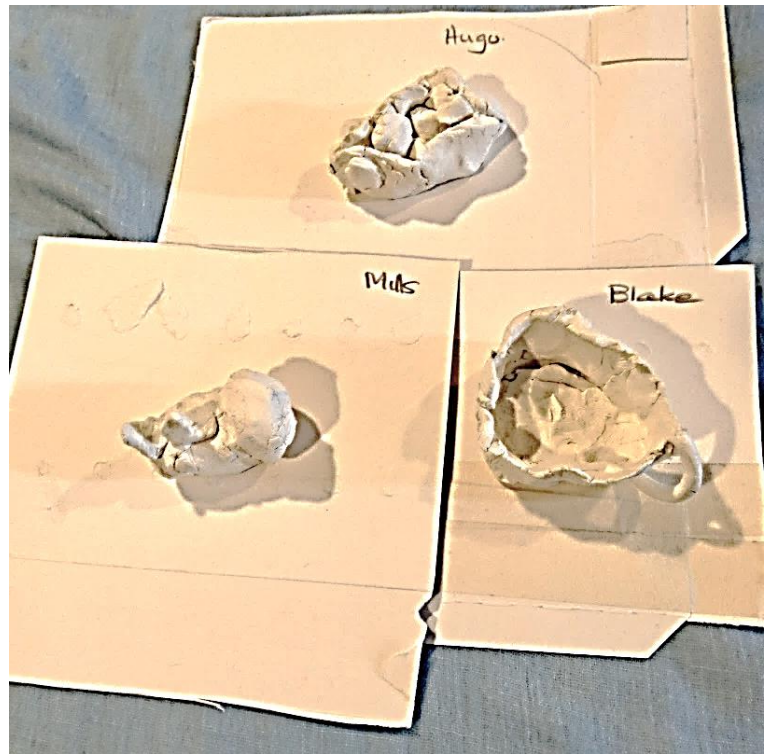
This is no different today when learning to live in a loving kind way. Now, in particular, it is social media and its thwarting way we need to avoid, and we need to stand strong in a good way with God.

Subsequently, you can imagine the reinforcing fun game the Power Hour children played of Jeremiah's story "Change Your Way" and



repeatedly used exchange of positions with high-fives and calling out "Change Your Way".

To wrap up, each of us quietly held, in the palms of our hands, a lump of squishy clay and thought of a time we did something regrettable, saying out loud, "I am sorry", then, reshaping the clay lump into something beautiful, e.g. a tea cup. Learning to actively change, with God on our side, does take thoughtful effort from the heart. Our children are very fortunate to have mentors assisting them to develop their spiritual selves. It does take a team to grow our children. Things haven't changed.



Did you know that? Jeremiah was known as the *weeping prophet* because he gave a sad message. Jeremiah had described Judah as a clay pot which God would have to break and remake.

Power Hour will take a break during school holidays (27th September to 11th October).

***Term 4 Power Hour 18 October – 13 December,
No PH on Holiday weekend 25 October.***

Term 4 will start 18th October. That Sunday we will bring our Samaritan's Purse Operation Christmas Child (Christmas Shoe Box), to the front of the church to be blessed, along with the other boxes from our church congregation.

Blessings Susan Connell

Shoe box appeal 2020

Bring filled Shoe Boxes to St Ronan's Church by Sunday 18th October. After a blessing during the service, they will be delivered to the local Shoe Box drop-off point to continue their journey.



Contact me for more information, leaflets and Shoe Boxes.

(562 7238) ***Colin Dalziel***

The 'Serenity Prayer'

It sometimes happens we get too much material for a 12-page *Record* but not quite enough for a 16-page one. It's not rocket science to realise you can't print 15 pages... This is one of those times and it leaves the production team scratching around for something worthwhile with which to fill the last page...

A couple of times recently I've had cause to remember what's been called the 'Serenity Prayer'. I met with this prayer first, when working with alcoholics in a north-London 'club' run by Salvation Army worker, Charlie Preece. That was a long time ago when I was a secondary student...!

The short version of this prayer adopted by, and popularised by, *Alcoholics Anonymous* reads...



Reinhold Nieuhr

*God, grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change,
courage to change the things I can,
and wisdom to know the difference.*

This prayer was originally penned by Karl Paul Reinhold Niebuhr (1892–1971). There are now numerous versions. A fuller one reads...

*God, give me grace to accept with serenity
the things that cannot be changed,
Courage to change the things
which should be changed,
and the Wisdom to distinguish
the one from the other.*

*Living one day at a time,
Enjoying one moment at a time,
Accepting hardship as a pathway to peace,
Taking, as Jesus did,
This sinful world as it is,
Not as I would have it,
Trusting that You will make all things right,
If I surrender to Your will,
So that I may be reasonably happy in this life,
And supremely happy with You forever in the next.
Amen*

Sandy Lang



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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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 November 2020
Sunday 27 October 2020**