



St Ronan's Presbyterian Church
Eastbourne

Record

August 2014

3 August	Holy Communion with Rev Ross Scott	9.30am
10 August	Worship with John Harris	9.30am
17 August	Worship with Mons Charles Cooper.....	9.30am
24 August	Worship with Rev Doug Rogers	9.30am
31 August	Worship with Richard Davis	9.30am

Power Hour Term 3 started Sunday 27 July
Bible Study – Sundays 11.15am
Meditation – Mondays 5.30pm
Breakfast Prayer - Tuesdays 7.30am
Mainly Music – Thursdays 9.30am

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**

Highlights in this issue

Clerk's Corner	2
Community Church	4
A Journey of Hope	6
Knitting outreach; Book review	8
Phil's Photo.....	9
Marjorie Cantlon (obituary)	10
Children's Power Hour; Ed & Jo's news	11

Clerk's Corner

Oh dear (you'll say) another long report from the parish clerk!

Commission: *St Ronan's* is currently under examination by a commission of *Wellington Presbytery*: Rev Hana Popea-Mauigoa (Convenor), Rev David Douglas (Co-convenor), Rev Doug Pau, Margaret Donaldson and Clive McGovern. Read previous issues of the *Record* for background. I understand the commission is still planning to submit their report to the 15th August meeting of *Wellington Presbytery*. We've not yet seen a draft of this.



Rev Michelle Shin (who featured large in the commission's proposal to us on 15th June) took a service for us last Sunday (20th July). Most of you seemed to enjoy her service and sermon – I did. A couple of new hymns, one of them especially appealed to me. For those unable to be there, you can read Michelle's sermon at www.stronans.org.nz.

Michelle has a soft voice (not like my booming voice that sometimes gets me into trouble) so it was unfortunate that we had a bit of a problem with the sound system that morning. I am confident that this can be fixed. Michelle did not have a problem making herself heard when she led Ed's licensing service to a full *St Ronan's* in December. Nor, I am told, does she have a problem in other churches. I believe that we will come to love Michelle for her spirituality, for her personal skills, and for her strong pastoral ethic.

Sexuality and leadership: Rev Andrew Norton (Moderator-designate of the *Presbyterian Church of NZ*) has invited all to take part in an opinion poll on the above. This is a tricky issue that has divided the church. I have been asked to bring his poll to your attention. You can take part at <http://tinyurl.com/l6573tb>. I have a copy of Andrew's supporting letter – email me if you want to read it.

AGM: Another year has rolled by. The next AGM will be after the morning service on Sunday 7th September 2014 (6 weeks). *Mark it in your diary now*. All those who presented a report last year, should present a report this year. Please may I have your report by 24th August (4 weeks). This will give me time (2 weeks) to collate and print the Annual Report document in good time.

Okiwi Trust: The *Okiwi Trust* is a local volunteer group that (for a donation) supports Eastbourne's elderly by providing car rides (Dr visits, hairdressers, shops in Eastbourne, Hutt and Wellington) and doing 20-minute jobs (picking up prescriptions, changing tap washers/light bulbs, moving firewood – see www.okiwi.org.nz).



Eastbourne's three churches take turns to fill a seat on the *Okiwi Trust Board*. The term is for three years. I understand the duties are something like attending 10 committee meetings per year. This is *not* being a trust volunteer – that's much more work! *St Alban's* has just done a committee term, and previously *San Antonio's*; now it's *St Ronan's* turn – *and we should step up to the mark*.



If you feel this is something you could do for us, please let me know and I'll put your name forward. Our Douglas Day did a term with this very worthwhile community service organisation a few years back. If you want to know more, he will be happy to answer your questions. Call Douglas on 568 8088. *Think twice before you flag this one away – it's an important witness from St Ronan's into the wider Eastbourne community.*

Refugees: There's been a bit of a shake-up at the *Red Cross* re their work with refugees, and this affects us. I recently spoke to Amy at *Red Cross* in Lower Hutt. Briefly, it's business as usual (the same people there, do the same jobs) but the changes do mean (a) they no longer collect, nor do they want, large items (furniture, white-ware). Also (b) they do not want electric heaters. Jenny Orange is moving out of handling (on behalf of *St Ronan's*) the purchase and distribution of heaters to refugee families. Her small stockpile is still required over the next few months but she will not be purchasing any more.

Prue Barker and team will continue to work with *Red Cross*, providing items for children's school bags. These are still very much in demand. They are also quite expensive but are essential for a child trying to find his/her way for the first time in a kiwi school.



Household items, too, are still in demand. They want good quality items. The rule is, if *you* wouldn't be happy using the item, then it's not good enough for a refugee family. The list includes: bedding – blankets, duvet inners, sets of sheets, new pillows, towels. Sets of kitchen stuff – pots/pans; crockery, cutlery, glasses, mugs, kitchen knives. Also small appliances – kettles, toasters, rice cookers, irons, telephone handsets, vacuum cleaners.

Elders: Norman has asked us to set up a roster of 'duty elders' to assist in our monthly communion services. Expect to see this new arrangement over the next few weeks.

Children's packages: It's not often at this time of year we have an influx of visiting small children on a Sunday morning. When this does occur, remember there is a small supply of suitable material kept in the 'crying room' just off the foyer.

slang@xtra.co.nz 562 8753

Sandy Lang

PS Jenny Orange... On behalf of St Ronan's, thank you for your involvement with refugees for so many years. This has been a wonderful ministry on behalf of us all. In time we may forget, but the many refugee families will remember, what you have achieved.

Refugee Services – NZ Red Cross

For more information visit www.redcross.org.nz or see posters on *St Ronan's* notice boards in the church foyer and fellowship room.

Thank You...

Jenny Orange



Community church

In his sermon on 6th July, Norman Wilkins said something to the effect that on the 'Mount of Transfiguration', Jesus stood in the tense middle-ground between the legal mind of Moses and the reactionary mind of Elijah.

This had me recalling that Jesus' 12 disciples were a pretty random bunch, that included Judas the dagger-man/Iscariot and Simon the Zealot (both reactionaries), a group of relatively apolitical fishermen and Matthew the tax collector (a quisling). This lot were pretty uncomfortable bedfellows.

Between being a member at *St Ronan's* in the 1980s and again in the 2010s, for many years I attended *Palmerston North Central Baptist Church*. At the time, numbers attending services were around 500 and these filled a large church building. But, they were not a particularly diverse group as, being in a city with numerous other churches, people were pretty fussy where they worshipped.

The huge (50,000) city churches one sometimes reads of in Africa and Asia are not the norm for Christendom. Nor even are the biggish city churches of Palmerston North and Wellington, or even of Lower Hutt. The churches to which St Paul wrote his epistles would mostly have been smaller than *St Ronan's*.

And they would also have been very diverse, as few could read and there was no 'New Testament' to keep them on the theological rails. One either aligned oneself with that motley little group, or one was not part of a church at all. Back in those days there was no *San Antonio's*, and no *St Alban's*, and no car to drive to church in the Hutt or Wellington. So, small and diverse is the norm for the Christian church – and it always has been.

It's my experience that truth on any issue usually lies somewhere down the middle between the left and the right. We need to hear opposing views, to stop us becoming extreme, to keep a proper balance. Therefore, *Vive la petite, Vive la difference, Vive la tension, and Vive St Ronan's!*

Sandy Lang

From Community Church to Community Garden

Next gardening session is this *Saturday, 2ⁿ August 11am*

And San Antonio School now has a real weather station (see right) that they take care of.



Sister Clement O'Sullivan, well-loved in our community, passed away in Ireland.

A Memorial Service to her will be held

Wednesday, 7pm, 6th August, San Antonio Church

A journey of hope, seeking justice for the environment

Many of us in *St Ronan's* congregation are retired, or semi-retired, and can be excused for occasionally looking back on our lives and reflecting on what we have learned and what advice we would pass on to those decision-makers shaping our world today. In today's fast-changing world it is not surprising if we sometimes are bewildered at humanities' inability, despite being "made in God's image", to sometimes learn from the mistakes of our forebears, not heeding the common sense wisdom of the ages, nor taking seriously Jesus's commission for us to be good stewards of God's wonderful bounty in the natural environment we have inherited. So, at Sandy's request, I will try and tell a little of my life journey thus far, and reflect on what I consider to be some very problematic issues facing humanity.

I was born in Silverstream in the middle of WWII, the eldest child in a working-class Catholic family of eight. I don't know why my parents gave me the middle name 'Francis' – maybe they had an inkling of my future wilderness passion and wryly gave me a model in the Italian Church's great patron saint of animals and the environment – Francis of Assisi! Both of my grandfathers had emigrated from Ireland to escape religious and economic persecution at the hands of colonising English elites. Their sense of social justice rubbed off on me, along with the self-sacrifice and dedication of the Marist Brothers who taught me so much about Catholic commitment to justice and peace during my education at St Bernard's College. Life in the Hutt Valley during the so-called 'boring' 1950s was very egalitarian and secure; after all, everybody had a job, we were all very middle class and had rugby, rock & roll, and the freedom to roam the bush, where I developed a life-long love affair with mountains.

University, a scientific job in *DSIR* research, marriage and children followed. Then a chance event led to a radical change in my life direction. In 1975, I was invited to the *East-West Centre* in Hawaii to join a multi-disciplinary group (from eastern and western cultures) to research cultural origins of the world's increasing environmental problems. It was an exciting time: Nixon had been impeached, the 'oil shocks' had shaken Americans' growthmania, and America's military might was brought to its knees as they lost the calamitous Vietnam War. We were involved in the charismatic renewal in our local church and most of our congregation were in the military, and so many of them were hurting, angry and disgusted at the whole Vietnam debacle, for fortress Honolulu was flooded with fleeing rich and powerful Vietnamese and returning demoralised US soldiers.

In the midst of all of this I was exposed to the work of some of the most visionary scientists in the US and our group became involved in the global "Limits to Growth" debate, the computer modelling predicting when the world would run out of non-renewable resources, which had been initiated in the early 1970s by The Club of Rome. Back in NZ we already had a NZ Club of Rome branch and we (including fellow parishioner Douglas Day) subsequently published a modest little book on NZ's contribution to the World Food Problem. However, the result of our multi-disciplinary work in Hawaii was a much more comprehensive (and scary) book entitled "The Unsteady State", analysing the myriad forces leading the world into unsustainable economic growth and environmental catastrophe (and this was 25 years before the main international concern with the huge instabilities stemming from accelerating global warming).

Truthfully, I was very relieved to come back to sleepy New Zealand where our rivers were then still pure, the sky was blue, and nobody seemed too concerned about this 'world problematique'. It was a looming global problem too vast for me to remain active in if I wanted to retain my sanity. So, like a coward, I narrowed my vision and decided to work for something akin to 'justice for the natural environment', especially returning to my love of New Zealand's wild places and how we could conserve them – very much in the spirit of stewardship for all living things which God covenanted with Noah (Genesis 9).

When I look back over my work over the past 30 years I realise just how lucky I have been to be born a New Zealander, to grow through our country's golden years of opportunity and prosperity, and subsequently come to share my knowledge and try to help a variety of peoples in Central Asia and East Asia. Possibly only in a small liberal country like New Zealand would I have been allowed to be both a conservation activist and a public servant, allowed to advise government agencies as well as criticise their shortcomings. Only by the luck of being born and raised in a small country was I able to influence, through book-writing and advocacy, some measure of the greater protection for our priceless national parks and conservation lands.

Particularly over the past 20 years since I took early retirement from our *Department of Conservation*, I have been fortunate to regularly visit some of the wildest and remotest places in the mountains, forests, and steppes of Siberia, China (including Tibet), Mongolia, Tajikistan (and the other 'stans' of Central Asia), Korea, Pakistan and Japan. This work, as a natural heritage consultant, has usually been on behalf of *IUCN* (the *World Conservation Union*) and *UNESCO* – often evaluating special places nominated by a country for *World Heritage* listing, our global heritage protected under the *UN's World Heritage Convention* because of its 'outstanding universal value'.

Sometimes this travel has been discomfiting and physically demanding (especially the high altitude as I get older); sometimes it is dangerous (especially in the Central Asian countries and Pakistan, which are swept up in the so-called 'War on Terror').



More rapid melting of the glaciers of the Pamir Mountains of Tajikistan makes travel into the mountains more hazardous.

But it has always been humbling to be the guest of so many good Asian people – farmers, nomadic herdsmen, villagers, rangers, soldiers, and so many others – poor yet proud of their natural heritage and culture, and determined to help protect it against exploitation. And often I have been invited into churches, mosques, temples (Buddhist, Tao, Shinto, and

Zoroastrian), and even the yurt of a practising shaman; when appropriate I have shared something of my Christian faith with my hosts, assuring them that God does love our world and its peoples and abhors injustice to both his people and the rest of Creation.

And I still think a lot about the increasing 'unsteady state' of our now-globalised world. The 'Elephant in the Room' which no one wants to acknowledge, least of all our weak and frightened world leaders, is growing larger day-by-day. The untamed beast, of course, is our human desire to grow without thinking of the consequences, to consume the world's resources – be they pure water, oil and gas, arable land, fish stocks, clean air – not just to survive like most of the subsistence farmers in Asia, but for many to live a grossly unsustainable consumer lifestyle. I don't mean to sound preachy, for I readily admit that I am part of this same 'consumer society', while trying to advocate more of a 'conservator society'.



A mountainous section of the Yellow River which is still blue (before it reaches the Loess Plateau and turns yellow with silt). This Chinese village has now been flooded under a lake dammed for hydroelectricity.

It is a huge problem which is going to confront our grand-children as adults. Are there solutions? Yes, of course, but they all involve change and the adoption of real Gospel values in our lives. But that is a big story, for another day perhaps a story which we all have ideas on how it should be told.

Les Molloy



Tibetan girls posing for tourists at Jiuzhaigou World Heritage Area. Indigenous cultures are under threat with the commercial demands of tourism.

Foodbank Reminder

As always, we do appreciate all the food you give so generously. Thank you all for your continuing support – you do make such a difference.

Mary Williams



Knitting (aka Beanies) outreach

July has been a very quiet month for knitting distribution. No parcels have been sent overseas, but GVN tell me they have volunteers going later in the year.

We do have another local outlet for knitting, through Eastbourne Plunket. They can use beanies, booties, tops and baby blankets, items made from wool. This knitting will go to needy families in the Hutt Valley. They are also happy to take items that would fit older siblings in the family. I still have some wool yarn if you need it.

Thank you for all your creative efforts. It is all much appreciated.

Carol Pringle 568-5061

After walking the Larapinta Trail, Northern Territory, Jan (Heine) checked out the Beanie Festival beanies still on show at the Araluen Art Centre, Alice Springs. Incredible creations they were, but not at all practical for children going to school as you can see.



From Enemy to Friend: Jewish Wisdom and the Pursuit of Peace

by Rabbi Amy Eilberg, Orbis Books, NY, 2014.

I was quite excited as I read the first pages of this book, as Rabbi Eilberg (the first woman ordained as a Conservative rabbi by the Jewish Theological seminary of America), wrote of her experiences, first as a hospital chaplain, and how this then developed into counselling and conflict resolution; how this then expanded into interfaith dialogue, at local, national and international levels. She introduces the concept of the "peacebuilder", as opposed to the "peacemaker". The whole is firmly grounded in the teachings of the Old Testament and other Jewish thinking throughout the ages, from Hillel in the first century BC, Maimonides in the Middle Ages to Martin Buber in our own time. If ever there was a book for congregational study this was it. I felt completely at home with the concepts and philosophies outlined and encouraged by the examples of their actualisation in everyday life in our modern world.

At the midpoint of the book there is a paragraph headed: "A Note to the Reader", where the rabbi writes: "During the coming pages, there may be moments when you notice emotion rising in you: anger, horror, even outrage. Perhaps you already feel angry about things I have said, or have been tempted to slam the book shut". It was at this point that I became very conscious that what I was reading was a book written by a Jew for Jews and assuming a Jewish audience. As I read the ensuing chapters I felt very much like a stranger intruding on a private family gathering. From that too there was much to learn.

At many levels this book has an enormous amount to teach us. It is worthy of mature congregational study, although it is certainly not designed for that purpose, and using it in that manner would require astute and diligent preparation. It would be an effort well rewarded.

Geoff Mann

Phil's Photo – The best computer ever...

Each of us has the best computer ever – far more sophisticated than anything built by *Hewlett Packard*. And it doesn't need 240V to kick it into action. Your brain is the most amazing and beautiful part of your body. When activated, it knows no boundaries (*Gen 11:6*).

Since the 1960s, we have come to realise that we each have two brains – a right and a left. The right deals with rhythm, imagination and colour, while the left deals with logic, speech and reasoning. To function, the two sides must engage with one another. The right envisions what may be achieved, the left makes it happen.



A recent local event displayed the creativity of the human brain at its finest. In early July, I (and some other dignitaries) and a few hundred boys, were invited to the opening of the fine new *Centennial Hall* at *Wellesley College*, by the Minister of Education, the Hon Hekia Parata.

The essential vision (right side) for the *Centennial Hall* goes back 16 years to 1996, when the chair of the Board of Trustees, Trevor Taylor, gathered together a small group to plan where the school should be heading. It was then the hall was really created. Now, a decade and a half later, has come the essential action (left side) and this magnificent new hall now stands proudly in the *Wellesley College* grounds.

A beautiful window faces west towards the harbour and Wellington. At a simple button push, an automaton hums into action at the eastern end of the building, to create sufficient tiered seating for almost the whole school. At another button push, this collapses to free up enough floor space to create a large, indoor-sports court. The ceiling is acoustically tiled.



I listened to a musical performance the next day and this was a joy.

The *Centennial Hall* would be a proud addition to any centre of learning in the world. But thanks to that early vision and then that later action, it is found right here in Days Bay. If you should get the opportunity, don't miss attending a function at the *Centennial Hall*. You will be as impressed as I was.

Phil Bengie

Obituary: Marjorie Cantlon 7 July 1920 – 2 July 2014

Marjorie (Marj) was a regular member of St Ronan's until she moved to the Shona McFarlane Retirement Village nearly four years ago. She died there recently just five days before her 94th birthday.

Marjorie was born in Hataitai and attended Kilbirnie School followed by Wellington Technical College where she studied Art, which became a life-long interest. She worked as a drawing assistant at the City Engineers Department.

In 1941, Marjorie married John and was to spend the war years with her family while John was overseas on Active Service. After his return, Marj and John and their young daughter Elizabeth made their home in Hataitai where they remained until 1959. John's work commitments over the next few years took them to Hokitika, Gisborne, New Plymouth, and Dunedin before they settled in Eastbourne in 1968.

In her earlier life Marjorie was involved in the theatre, acting in many plays with the Peter Pan Players and others. She played the piano well. In Eastbourne Marjorie continued with her many interests including gardening, floral art and as a member of the painting group. She was active in various Women's groups, the RSA and the Horticultural Society.

Marjorie served as an Elder at St Ronan's and was convenor of the Women's Fellowship for many years. She was a member of the Guild – a group who worked throughout the year to stock the stalls for the annual Fair. The early consignments of beanies for the outreach to the Orphans of Nepal included Marjorie's very neat knitting.

In Elizabeth's words "Marjorie remained young in outlook and interested in people her whole life; she made friends wherever she went".

Lois Noble-Campbell



And the occasion was Marjorie's 90th birthday (7th July 2010)



CHILDREN'S POWER HOUR

Throughout this year, we have been learning about the wonderful difference made by God's presence, not only in our lives today, but also in biblical leaders. In fact, God's encouragement and faith in God, is the big thing that gave the biblical leaders their edge of difference. Look at Abraham who lead his people into the land of Canaan and was willing to sacrifice his son. Or Moses who lead his people out of Egypt and brought down the Ten Commandments. What about self doubting Joshua who took Jericho and the Judges, Deborah, Barak, Gideon and Samson who fought off warring invading groups in their new home land of Israel?

For the 12 tribes of Israel this was an up-and-down time of realising how important their success depended upon their faith in God. And it is also with us as we daily learn about God and how invaluable God is to guiding us. In fact God is the most important thing to us in our lives! God is with us all the time. We don't even need a pocket to hold God like you would have to for a handkerchief! When men and woman Israelites took vows to dedicate a time to God, they were called "Nazirites".

"NAZIRITE" or "NAZARITE" is a new word for us, as we have just learnt how Samson, as a Nazirite dedicated at birth by his mother, used his super strength to help his people fend off the Philistines. Nazirite means one chosen or set apart from others for the service of God. Under the ancient Hebrew law, one vowed to not drink or eat wine, liquors and fruit of the vine; to let the hair grow; not enter any house polluted by a dead body in it nor attend a funeral. This vow could last 8 days, months or for one's whole life. At the end of the vow, the person brought several sacrifices to the temple and the priest cut off his hair and burnt it. Samuel and John the Baptist were Nazirites too (ATS Bible Dictionary).

Blessings

Susan Connell 568 5747



Natalie, the new addition to Jo & Ed Masters' family, arrived on 10th July, a 9lb 3oz sister for Adam who thinks she is pretty good. Life in Rotorua is going well for them all.



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

Directory

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

Office Hours	to make an appointment	562 7583
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Parish Clerk	Sandy Lang	562 8753
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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.

Your delivery person

Telephone

**The closing date for the September 2014 Record is
Sunday 31 August 2014**

