



St Ronan's Presbyterian Church
Eastbourne

Record

September 2024

1 September	Shared service with the Anglicans at St Ronan's.....	9:30am
8 September	Informal worship service.....	9:30am
15 September	Rev Reg Weeks.....	9:30am
22 September	Informal worship service.....	9:30am
29 September	BYO Fellowship lunch with Rev Doug Rogers.....	12 noon
6 October	Shared service with the Anglicans at San Antonio.....	9:30am

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

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The Season of Creation 2024

Diane and I had an enjoyable and inspiring weekend at the recent Presbytery Gathering in Palmerston North where the keynote speaker was the Right Reverend Rose Luxford, Moderator of the General Assembly. Among those present was the Reverend Morgan (Mo) from Whanganui. Both are deeply committed to the care of creation and Rose had asked Mo to write to the whole church about the Season of Creation. This is her message:



"This year our youth group has been involved in a local conservation project in Whanganui. Our involvement unfolded in a way that none of us anticipated so we expect the Spirit might have been involved in calling us to it. Once a month, we head to a big weed-ridden gully to pray, do a lectio reading of a Bible passage, then roll our sleeves up and get stuck in weeding, clearing, and for the last couple of months, planting trees. Inevitably we end up just playing. The thing I've noticed about us going to the gully is how it refreshes and renews us.

We've prayed different prayers and have noticed different things as we've read the Bible. We've started having different conversations with each other, and we've met new people from the neighbourhood who've joined us for the praying as well as the mahi. We've come to love this big gully. We love seeing how it's transforming, and we feel the transformation that has happened in us. To be outside and active in God's Creation has been tremendously hopeful.

When we engage with caring for God's Creation, we see that hope is vital – and that hopeful action can be transformational... Hope is longed for, and hope is needed. But not just the idea of it. Hope becomes transformational when we live it.

This is a key idea conveyed by Christian conservationist Tony Rinaudo, who recently visited Aotearoa with World Vision. Tony has spent over three decades working primarily in Niger, where he developed a method that has restored millions of hectares of degraded land in Africa. Tony emphasises the point that hope is not just something we talk about. Hope involves action. Hope is something we are called to embody and live out in practice.

'To hope and act with Creation' is the theme for this year's Season of Creation. Referencing Paul's letter to the Romans chapter 8, the focus is on how we might respond to the challenges of a groaning world with hopeful action.

Creating opportunities for hopeful action is something that we, the church, can offer, because hope is something we know. Hope is something we think about and pray about. Hope has always been part of our story. We are called to be

people who are hopeful, to be people who embody God's hope where it is needed most in our neighbourhoods and in our world.



The Season of Creation is a great opportunity for churches to create opportunities for hopeful action. There are numerous ways to celebrate this season, whether in church services or in

a special event - I recommend getting involved in a local conservation project!

I also recommend visiting the Eco Church website which has numerous resources to help you and your church community celebrate Season of Creation, including the official Season of Creation resource, with additional ideas and resources from Aotearoa."

On behalf of the PCANZ Moderator
Rev Mo Morgan
Regional Eco Church Coordinator
A Rocha Aotearoa New Zealand
mo.morgan@arocha.org

The Season of Creation began on Sunday 1 September and runs for a month. Here Mo presents us with a worthwhile challenge. Let's make time to talk about how we might respond.

Reg Weeks

Clerk's corner...

AGM: St Ronan's 100th Annual General Meeting will be on Sunday 15 September 2024 at 10:45am immediately after the service. We will hold the AGM in the Fellowship room, along with our cup of tea/coffee and a bickie. There's not that many of us these days and the Fellowship room has recently grown a bit bigger...

I will have the *Annual Report* to you by email by this Sunday 8 September – a week ahead of the AGM. This is so we can take the contents of the document 'as read' at our AGM. This keeps the meeting length to a minimum and the meeting attendance to a maximum.



In case you are uncertain about your St Ronan's membership. Everyone who comes along to St Ronan's is a member and has both speaking and voting rights. Easy...!

Centenary: It would seem from the complete lack of any response, that nobody read this little bit in the last Record. So, here it is again... *This will be St Ronan's 100th Annual Report. I wonder if we should mark this milestone with a little celebration. Not many of us will still be around for the 200th AGM and most of us missed the 1st AGM (in about 1924). What do you think...?*

Acoustic tiles: In recent months there's been a steep increase in use of our Hall by PumpDance. Their dance programmes are accompanied by quite loud, 'bass rich' music. Out of respect for our neighbours, we have been doing what we can to quieten things down a bit. •We have already relocated their sound system from the piano top to a new shelf (see right), so it no longer points directly out of the Hall's double doors (wide open for maximum ventilation). •We will shortly install areas of acoustic tiles on the wood panelling. These will make the Hall much less 'echoey' – and so more comfortable to be in acoustically. They will also reduce the amount of bass sound 'leaking' to the outside world.



Appearance - These large (60x60x1 cm) *Autex* acoustic tiles are commonly used in schools and other public areas for just such purposes. They are of a tough polyester fibre construction and come in a range of colours. I've chosen three different shades of green, which are reminiscent of the native bush of our Eastbourne hills. Another reason for choosing greens, is that the 'ginger' tones of the wall panels and floor, don't sit comfortably with most other colours...! The superimposed image I've created above (excuse the poor ginger colour match) is just one possible arrangement of these tiles.

Hall usage - It's worth noting that with multiple *PumpDance* classes, the *Toy Library*, and two play groups - *Mainly Music* and *Pop-in-and-Play* - our Hall is occupied for about 24 hours a week (term times), and by literally 100s of children and their accompanying adults. For the many Eastbourners who know St Ronan's, the image they have of us is of our Hall. But our Hall is dingy and its décor is a bit (a lot...!) dated and it always was very 'utility'. Hopefully, in addition to their acoustic properties, these coloured tiles will also present a somewhat lighter mood and cheer the place up a bit. [Maybe we should be looking at some new paint and new LED light fittings in the Hall...?](#)

ERPA: The *Eastbourne Retired Persons Association* (ERPA) is run by Rosemary and Keith Young. They organise a cup of tea and a talk, 4th Mondays each month, at 10:00am, at St Ronan's, in the Fellowship room.

On 23 September, our Wendy McCarter will tell us about ***The nations of Southern Africa***.

Then, on 21 October, our Anne Manchester will tell us about ***The Sub-Antarctic Islands***.

The ERPA group closes off their year in November with a lunch at Tartines...

Sharon Louise Lawson: I've recently heard that Sharon Lawson died peacefully on 27 August aged 79. Many of you will remember Sharon who worked parttime in our church office for many years. I knew her well from this time but knew little of her private life except that Anne and I would often see her at an orchestral concert at the Michael Fowler Centre. She's lived recent years in Ronan House, previously in Days Bay. From the obituary in the Post on Thursday 29 August, I further learned that Sharon was mother to Danny and Gerard, and sister to Ash and Mike. Also, grandmother to Hannah and James.

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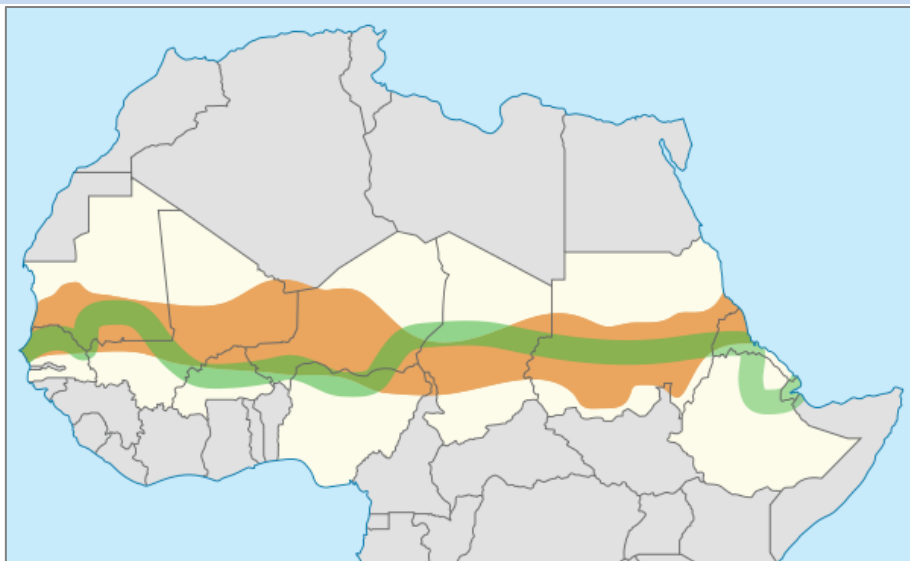
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Sandy Lang

Rood screen - Africa's Great Green Wall

If you visualise a map of Africa and draw an imaginary line across the widest part, from Dakar to Djibouti, it will cross countries like Mauritania, Mali, Niger, Chad, Sudan and Ethiopia. And if you try to conjure up a mental image of those countries, I suspect you will see drought, famine, encroaching desert and war. Not a pretty thought.



Probably the last thing to come to mind would be 'green'.

And yet back in the 1950s, the British explorer Richard St Barbe Baker proposed a 'Green front' to act as a 50-kilometre-deep tree buffer to contain the expanding desert. At the time, the idea went nowhere, but it was revived in 2002 at a summit in N'Djamena (the capital of Chad) to commemorate 'World Day to Combat Desertification and Drought'.

Although it was originally a tree planting initiative, the project evolved into a development programming tool. In 2007, Burkina Faso, Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sudan and Chad created the

Pan African Agency of the Great Green Wall to tackle the social, economic and environmental impacts of land degradation and desertification. The concept evolved into promoting water harvesting techniques, greenery protection and improving indigenous land use techniques, aimed at creating a mosaic of green and productive landscapes across North Africa. [Google [great green wall wiki](#)]

The ongoing goal of the project is to restore 100 million hectares of degraded land and capture 250 million tonnes of carbon dioxide, and create 10 million jobs, all by 2030. As of March 2019, 15% of the wall was complete with significant gains made in Nigeria, Senegal and Ethiopia. In Senegal, over 11 million trees had been planted. Nigeria had restored 4.9 million hectares of degraded land and Ethiopia had reclaimed 15 million hectares.

In January 2021 at the *One Planet Summit*, US\$14.3 billion was pledged to launch the *Great Green Wall Accelerator* – but as of March 2023, only \$2.5 billion of that pledge had materialised. In contrast, at the time of writing, the US has alone spent \$175 billion on the war in Ukraine and \$18 billion on the war in Gaza.



So, a project that could help combat the effects of climate change, provide food and jobs for millions of people, provide industrialised countries with a carbon sink and possibly help stem the flow of refugees, limps on, relying on minimal funding and volunteers. It doesn't make the mainstream

news, but it is still doing an incredible job. [Google [great green wall dw](#)]

Sometimes, the church is a bit like that. Underfunded and reliant on volunteers but still doing an incredible job. That applies to the churches in the local community as well as the church universal.

But I guess that is how Jesus operated. Minimal funding, volunteers and not much fuss.

What have you volunteered for lately?

John Harris

Libraries, museums, galleries - and other 'nice-to-haves'

Recently, local news reported PM Chris Luxon addressing New Zealand mayors, telling them to focus on providing essential services rather than 'nice-to-haves'. (Large new conference centres obviously being in the latter category). Chris Hipkins responded by pointing out the importance to communities of free public libraries, funded by councils - not just services such as roading, sewerage and water.

In the early 2000s, when I undertook an 'Introduction to library studies' paper, an Indian woman told me how wonderful it was to enjoy free access to books in public libraries in New Zealand - something we tend to take for granted. For me, joy also comes from our free public galleries and art spaces.

Upper Hutt's Whirinaki/Expressions civic gallery recently hosted a fascinating exhibition of 40 guitars called 'Medieval to Metal: the Art and Evolution of the Guitar', loaned by the National Guitar Museum of America. While the exhibition has just closed, an illustrated summary of it and interview with the museum's founder is available (Google [medieval to metal rnz](#)).



Pottery enthusiasts might enjoy 'Paul Maseyk: Jugs in New Zealand Painting', on at the Dowse Art Museum until mid-October. New Plymouth potter Maseyk has created some very large and other smaller jugs, inspired by those in still-life paintings of various artists, such as Colin McCahon and Frances Hodgkins.

I do not want to invite a debate on the merits of various local council projects, and I'm sure most of us want our infrastructure problems addressed. But we can and should, still celebrate and enjoy the creativity and services of many delightful civic amenities.

A few other suggestions to try if you haven't visited them are: the Settlers Museum on Petone Esplanade; Pataka in Porirua; and when you are in Christchurch, the library at New Brighton with great sea views of Scott "Razor" Robinson's surf beach. Enjoy...!

Gill Burke

Winter ramblings on a double-decker

Double-decker buses seem completely out of place as they cruise along Muritai Road and Marine Drive; especially when you get on one and find you are, if not the only passenger, then just one of two or three. Stand on the corner at Queensgate, and you see these monolithic pachyderms muscle their way through the traffic to pull into the bus stop. In the Hutt Valley, only Eastbourne has these machines – and that only because our bus service connects into Wellington, where they are much more common.

Our Eastbourne-exiting buses carry relatively few local passengers but pick up many more as they move through Moera, central Hutt and Petone. Coming the other way it's the inverse story; the buses coming out of Wellington are often packed. Not all the buses of course are double-deckers, but when one comes my way, I happily jump on, climb up the tight spiral to the upper deck and, if I can, to the prime seat at the front. I can't get there as nimbly and quickly as toddlers or teenagers, but it's a privilege I must not forego.

It's a little uncanny watching the trees go by at arm's length and seeing the bus stop signs just inches in front of you. But what I really enjoy is the enhanced view I get of the surrounding community. Travelling along Randwick Road I gaze through gaping open factory doors, down long driveways to the small businesses hidden at the back, into people's gardens, and over the rooftops to the houses, apartments, trees and streets lying beyond.



Travelling along the waterfront into Wellington I see in detail the enormous activity occurring in the widening of the foreshore and realise how much, with our roads, motorways and railways, we have modified the landscape over the past 150 years.

The view from the top deck as you ride through Eastbourne quickly shows how densely populated our seaside village has become, how small the sections are, and how intensely they have been, and continue to be, infilled. I needed one day to go to Johnsonville. I hopped on a bus in Wellington which had 'Johnsonville' as its destination and, because it was a double-decker, took my

accustomed position up top in front, and had the entire upper deck to myself. This was a #24 bus which climbed up through Onslow and Khandallah and through what I have to call the 'Indian Heights', since all the street names are Indian. I was surprised how steep the roads are, and how high we seemed to go. I could look out and see all of Wellington harbour, with Somes Island just a small blob in the middle of a huge blue lake.

On its reverse journey the #24 bus goes to Seatoun; its route out of Courtenay Place is across to Oriental Parade, then up through Roseneath to Hataitai and Kilbirnie, then through Miramar and Maupuia to Mt Crawford before coming down in Seatoun.

Another interesting bus route is #121 (single-decker buses only), which has its southern terminus, facing south, in Seaview Road near the old Ford factory. It turns into Gracefield Road, then runs through Gracefield, Waiwhetu and Waterloo to Queensgate; from Queensgate it swings around Kings Crescent to the Hospital, then makes its way through Naenae, along the Eastern Hutt Road via Wingate and Moore Wilson's to Stokes Valley. There it climbs up to Stokes Valley Heights in the north, then comes down again before ascending to the hills in the south in Holborn. This is longest bus route in the Hutt Valley. So, if you've got guests from out of town who want to see the area, you can suggest a #121 to see Lower Hutt, and a #24 (double-decker) to see some of the sights of Wellington.

Travelling on the buses is hassle-free; I can get from A to B without having to concern myself with harried other drivers or having to find a parking spot. In Eastbourne we have a very good bus service, especially in the mornings before 11:00am. But so often I will get on a bus and find there only one or two other passengers. Occasionally Point Howard is the last stop before I get off at the library. We have a good service, but I often worry that if we don't use it, we'll lose it.

In decades past I used to marvel at the amount of traffic going along Marine Drive. Now it is much heavier, and not just because the seawall is being widened. I often ask myself 'how come?' for such a small community. Some of it is delivery vehicles for Rimu Street; some of it is commuters and other locals who prefer not to take the bus or the ferry; but much of it has always been just the many trades people coming to maintain, modify and enhance the existing homes. It is sobering to see how Eastbourne has 'matured' over the years, with additions and contractions, and thriving vegetation, an impression which is reinforced by the view from the top of a double-decker bus.

Geoff Mann

Recent Presbytery gathering

Presbytery Central met at St Alban's church in Palmerston North on Saturday 17 August. There were around 80 attendees from 39 of the 79 parishes in Presbytery Central.

For me the highlight was the keynote speech given by Rt Rev Rose Luxford, PCANZ's moderator. Rose talked to her moderatorial theme, 'Authentic and Hopeful in Christ' and about the messages she has picked up as she travels to parishes around the country. We are living in a much more polarised society.

Presbytery's strategy was discussed in small groups, with the frequent reminder that Presbytery is us and not some remote organisation in Palmerston North. So, if you want to make a change, get involved!

In the afternoon the winner of the Youth Film Festival was announced (no red carpet). This was followed by the AGM. The budget had previously been approved online. Presbytery continues to direct funds from the sale of surplus property into mission initiatives and an operating deficit of \$345,608 is budgeted for the current year.

The session finished with workshops before concluding with a blessing. Reg and Diane enjoyed an afternoon with all the ministers on the Friday and stayed to hear Moderator Rose Luxford's sermon on Sunday.

Simon Shaw

Welcome address to Presbytery AGM 2024

[Many of St Ronan's congregation members will recall the Rev Leanne Munro, who pastored us in an 'interim' capacity more than a decade ago. Diane Gilliam-Weeks has provided this part of Leane's welcome to Presbytery's recent 2024 AGM. *Ed.*]

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with all of you. [2 Corinthians 13:13]. Tenā koutou katoa, Kia orana, Talofa, Malo e lelei, Fakalofa lahi atu, Greetings.

'The Presbytery'... two words I have heard quite a bit in the eight months I have been Moderator. But what is 'The Presbytery'? Simply, it's you and me. It's all our churches, who are part of the PCANZ family in this region. Our churches are rural and urban, some are union parishes, some Pacific Island churches, some are predominantly Pākehā, while some are a wonderful rainbow mix of people from different places and cultures.



How we 'do' church differs; how we speak of God may be different. Some are full of boisterous energy, others are quieter. Some are 'holding their own' and active in their place, others are coming to terms with change they did not want. The issues we face in our different faith communities are similar, but not identical. The responses/solutions will not be the same, but there will be things we can learn from one another. We are 'The Presbytery' and we are not all the same. But we are all the people of God in Presbytery Central Nukuhau Tapu.

So, when at your next session, board of managers, parish council meeting, or over a cup of tea you say "The Presbytery", and it might be in frustration, please remember that 'The Presbytery' is not a faceless entity. It is you and me. Those who serve on Presbytery Council, our workgroups, our Regional Moderators, the Moderator of Presbytery, Ministry Settlement Boards, Interim Moderators, anyone on a Commission - they are all volunteers, giving of their time to undertake these functions. It can take longer to get things done than we'd like because we rely on people - you and me - to undertake all the above roles. Our staff - Rev Peter MacKenzie as Executive Secretary, Andrew Gore as Administrative Assistant, Stuart Simpson as Mission Catalyst, Nga Rolston and Kyle Hastelow as Youth Enablers, Julie Morse as Treasurer - are our support, but also need our support. Please pray for them regularly - and ask how they're doing occasionally. I have a question for you - if you are frustrated with Presbytery, if you want things to change, what are you going to do about it?

My vision is of people who work together, collaboratively. Who sit with each other when hard decisions have to be made and grief is raw, rejoice with each other when there are celebrations and laughter to share, and above all are patient and kind with each other - even when, as does happen, tough conversations need to be had.

In October, all Presbytery Councils have been invited by Council of Assembly on behalf of Moderators Rt Rev Rose Luxford (PCANZ) and Rev Tamiana Thrupp (Te Aka Puaho) to attend a hui at Te Maungarongo marae, Ohope. It will be an opportunity for us to be together and re-tell our stories, helping us be us and finding times to be, and not just times to debate. Several members of our council will be attending, as well as younger representatives from Presbytery not already part of council or employed by us.

Finally, like many of you I have been shaken by the extent of abuse in State- and Faith-based care that the Royal Commission has reported on. Lament seems one appropriate response, but lament is only good if it is done honestly. By that, I mean if there is also honest apology, accountability taken, restoration and some recompense in whatever form made. If you haven't already, please read the [letter](#) from our Moderator, Rt Rev Rose Luxford, and the [letter](#) from the Council of Assembly Co-Convenor Kat Solomona as to our response as a church. Links to these were supplied in recent issues of Central Roundup.

May on all of us rest the GRACE of our Lord, Jesus Christ, and the LOVE of God and the RECEIVING TOGETHER of the Holy Spirit always and forever.

Rev Leanne Munro

Moderator, Presbytery Central Nukuhau Tapu

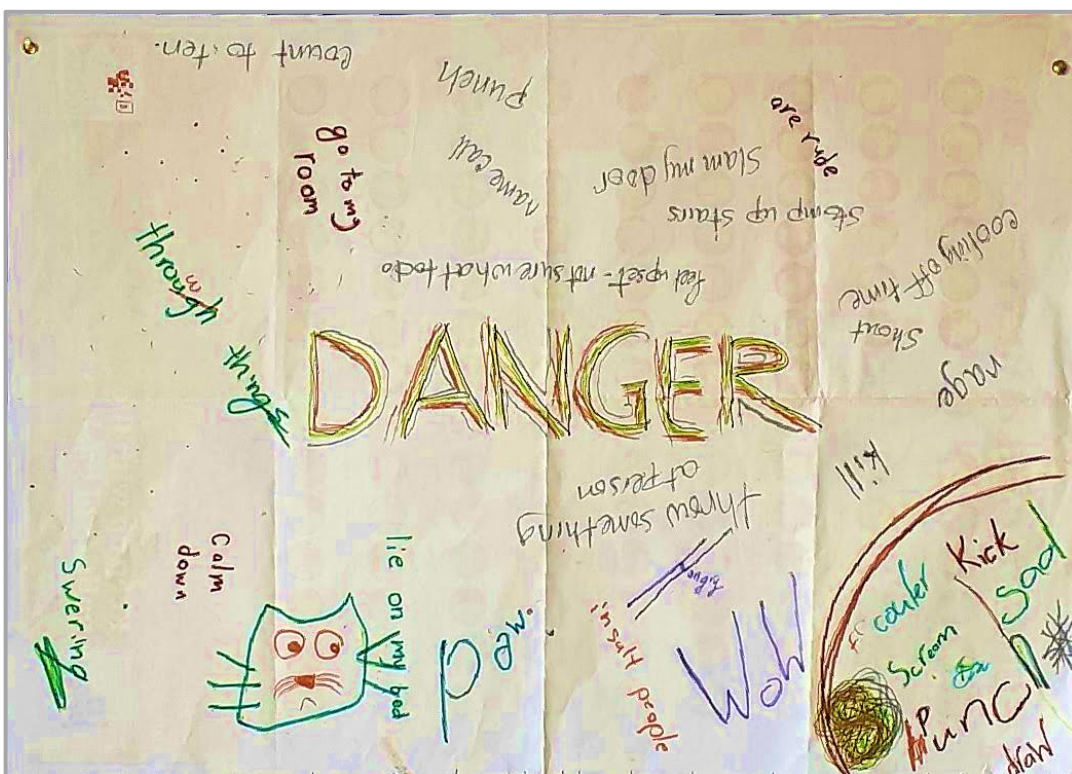
[Ed. If you would like to read these two letters, you will be able to access the above to links via the e-version of this Record issue available shortly at www.stronans.org.nz/record.html]

Children's Power Hour – 'Anger' and 'Danger'

We will never again assume that the Genesis story of Adam and Eve is something simple for younger ones! Why? We found that when we looked deeper at Adam and Eve's sombre and murderous story about their sons, Cain and Abel, there was much that was relevant to ourselves, and with our faith and our relationship with God.

The background to the Cain and Abel story is that Cain first became jealous of his brother Abel after God accepted Abel's newborn first lamb for the altar, but didn't accept Cain's gathering of garden vegetables for the altar. Then with great anger, Cain diverted Abel and murdered him. God asked him where his brother was, but Cain shouted back angrily, "How should I know?"

What we did discover was so deep and meaningful to us. As a starter, we were quite clear that our lives are not always happy. Then the Cain and Abel story was posed as a mystery: 'What happened to Cain's brother, Abel?' We answered by searching in the Bible and found Genesis 4 (*Cain had killed his brother in great anger. Then Cain had to leave and wandered about east of Eden in the land of Nod*).



Subsequently, turning to ourselves, we explored 'ANGER' and wrote it in the middle of a large sheet of paper and identified what sort of things we might do when we are angry. These were then written around the edges of the sheet – e.g. punching; lying on my bed;

throwing things; swearing; kicking and screaming; attempting to calm down by counting to ten; sadness; insulting people; stomping upstairs; slamming my door; sulking in my room.

Discussion led to us to conclude that the feelings of anger weren't wrong, but if we were not careful, angry feelings might lead us to do wrong (and not follow in God's way).

So, then we added a big 'D' before the word 'ANGER'. Indeed, 'ANGER' can easily become 'DANGER' if not kept in control. We also noted that being 'HANGRY' (poor behaviour from being hungry and tired especially after school) was not very good either. We then shared a story of a solitary boy on an after-school bus, who punched another student in the face when he was just tapped on the shoulder.

Going full circle back to Cain and Abel, we identified that Abel had followed in God's way and Cain had not. Cain's disrespect, lack of humbleness and not doing as God wants, sadly got him into serious trouble. Indeed, his out-of-control anger was 'DANGEROUS'.

To identify do's and don'ts when we feel anger, we found Ephesians 4:23-27 helpful:

DON'T....

- Don't sin
- Don't stay angry
- Don't give the devil a chance

DO....

- Do get rid of your old self: change your ways – make a new self
- Do count to 10
- Do pray
- Do tell (admit) the truth
- Do talk to other thoughtful/wise/Christian people

Worthy corollaries which we learnt were:

- It's not what happens to us that counts but what we do about it.
- A soft answer turns away wrath (a gentle answer will calm a person's anger, but an unkind answer will cause more anger. Proverbs 15:1).

Susan Connell

Term 3, Power Hour, 28 July–22 September.

Term 4, Power Hour, 20 October–15 December.

A weekend of kai, sharing and celebration...

Spring's arrival has been marked by wonderful gatherings and sharings between the congregations of St Ronan's and St Alban's.

On Saturday 31 August, people lined the long tables in St Ronan's Hall to share in a hāngī. Earlier in the day, this had been cooked in a specially dug pit in the St Alban's garden. Members of both congregations and people from the wider community helped prepare the vegetables and watched the pit being dug.



Jeremy Lovell-Smith tends the hāngī fire

This initiative grew out of the beginners' Te Reo classes organised by the Rev Sue Brown and held in San Antonio Church over the last two months. Surely, this is ecumenism in action...!



A tray of vegetables ready for the hāngī pit

And then there was more sharing on Sunday 1 September when the two congregations gathered in their 1st Sunday in the month 'Shared Service' to appreciate the life and work of New Zealand song writer, poet, theologian, prophet and taonga, Shirley Erena Murray.

Everything sung and most of the prayers and readings came from Shirley's pen. The service was based on one Sue Brown and I had run at Ngaio Union Church earlier last year, when I was still in the midst of researching Shirley's life.



Anne shares some stories from Shirley's childhood with St Ronan's & St Alban's children

The shared service was also a chance to celebrate the publication of my completed biography of Shirley, *Peace is Her Song, The life and legacy of Shirley Erena Murray*. This time, I had the book in my hands and could quote from it. A major milestone...!

Anne Manchester



Riding on the running board of her Uncle Jack's Chevrolet was a happy childhood memory for Shirley (tallest), her brother Bruce and their neighbourhood friends (c.1940)



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 October 2024
is Sunday 29 September 2024**