

It is hard to be unaffected by Advent and Christmas. It is a season of heightened and often contradictory emotions. Some of us can't get enough of it and some of us want it to go away. But even the latter would miss the perverse pleasure they get from grumbling about Christmas if it disappeared. It is even more complicated for church people. We have a whole lot more to complain about – how there is less and less of Christ and



more and more of mass marketing every year.

This year I was stopped in my own well-worn track of complaining thoughts by one interesting fact. The celebration of Christmas as a church festival began shortly after Constantine the Great embraced Christianity in 313. Not many years later the Archbishop of Constantinople found it necessary to warn against the excess of feasting and the neglect of religious observance on the holy day. The conflicting views about how we should observe Christmas go right back to its beginnings. In fact this is probably the oldest Christmas tradition of all!

Anyway, Protestant denominations like our own are the worst offenders, repeatedly cancelling Christmas over the centuries. Christmas, however, refused to die. So let us, as Christians, celebrate the season in a spirit of humility and simply be grateful for whatever gifts Christmas may bring this year, be they spiritual or material. *Continued...* 

## **The Joy You Give**By John Greenleaf Whittier

Somehow not only for Christmas
But all the long year through
The joy that you give to others
Is the joy that comes back to you
And the more you spend in blessing
The poor and lonely and sad
The more of your heart's possessing
Returns to you glad.

John Greenleaf Whittier was the nineteenth century American hymn writer and poet who wrote the hymn, 'Dear Lord and Father of Mankind'. He was known as 'the Quaker poet' and was renowned (and reviled) for his ardent anti-slavery campaign.

Rev. Anna Gilkison

#### **About People**

The Pastoral Care Team hope you are all enjoying the warmer weather and the sunshine which, we think, makes us all feel brighter. We especially think of those who are unwell and those who are currently in hospital. We wish both Pamela Smith and Dallas Revans speedy recoveries.

We congratulate those having birthdays in December and also those celebrating anniversaries, especially Rachel and Peter Rush, now sixty years married! Enjoy all your special occasions!

We send you our best wishes for a happy and peaceful Christmas in this beautiful part of the world in which we are so lucky to live. Christmas is a great time to enjoy our special memories of the happy Christmases we have shared with family and friends over the years - for most of us... many of them!

For those of us lucky to have family and friends visiting us over the Christmas period – enjoy them. If you know of someone who possibly won't have visitors, visit them in the Christmas spirit.

Christmas blessings to you all from, the Pastoral Care Team, Jennie, Lyn, Erice, Merrill, Carole, Mary, Diane and Diana (for Waikanae)

# Christmas Presents for Women's Refuge

Again this year we are hoping Kapiti Uniting members will support the Women's Refuge by donating Christmas presents for the families they assist.



Although presents for children are welcome the Refuge says they would be especially grateful for presents for teenagers and mothers.

You can label each gift for a mother, teenager, boy or girl, as in the past, but it's fine to just leave the gift unwrapped and put it under the Christmas Tree, as the Women's Refuge workers will need to see which gift is suitable for each mother or young person.

Women's Refuge is always very grateful for the presents we donate.

Please put the gifts under the Christmas Tree in the Raumati Church by Sunday 11 December.

#### **Carol Singing Afternoon Tea**

Sunday 11 December, 2 pm - 3.30 pm Raumati Hall



The Minister and the Pastoral Care Group are hosting an afternoon of carol singing and refreshments.

We hope the time will suit those of you who are unable to attend Christmas services on a Sunday morning.

Transport will be arranged for those who need it. This is not a members-only event, feel free to bring friends, neighbours, family.

Please contact Kate in the office if you require transport.

#### Waikanae Church

On Tuesday, 15 November, it was Waikanae's turn to host the Methodist Women's Fellowship (MWF) Wellington District meeting. We hosted two visitors from Waiwhetu Uniting Church, Lower Hutt and three from Wesley Wellington Parish, Taranaki Street and welcomed three ladies from our own Raumati Church, as well as Rev Anna Gilkison.

After we introduced ourselves, Marie Smith shared a little about the history of Waikanae Church, and led a devotion about the wonder and uniqueness of seashells. She then treated us to some stories and photos of past presidents and other executives who had gathered at the NZMWF national conference she recently attended in Auckland. We also learned about the new MWF project for 2023. In conjunction with Christian World Service, we are supporting the Special Project for Tonga, in which Tongan women are helped to rebuild and improve their livelihoods after their recent volcanic eruption, tsunami, and COVID-19. In village-based groups, the women work together to improve family livelihoods and the well-being of their communities. There will be more information on this next year.

The ladies then all ate lunch together amid a warm atmosphere of Christian fellowship, and didn't leave until 1.30pm! Special thanks to Marie and Cynthia Brooks for organising the hospitality.



Meeting of the MWF, from left: Cynthia Brooks, Tala Cleverley, Siliua, Brenda Baker, and Rev Anna Gilkison.

In other news, Waikanae has been a little below average in attendance numbers this last month, mainly because people are very busy travelling to and fro all over the country, and some of our folks have been sick. During the last month, we were so very pleased to host quite a few Raumati folks as visitors and service leaders this month, including Syd and Joy Mepham, Robin and Heather List, Carole Rudings, Maureen Calhaem and Kate Foley. In the immortal words of Bruce Forsythe, "Didn't they do well!" They also managed to make a few inroads into our biscuit supplies!



Meeting of the MWF, from left: Marie Smith, Rev Nicola Grundy, Honor Moss, Maureen Calhaem, Carole Rudings, Merrill Baker, and Mary Balchin.

We thank God for Desmond Corrigan, who has now presented both of his draft reports—one on health and safety and the other on communications—to the Waikanae Committee. Both of these reports have uncovered many issues and situations that Waikanae—and indeed the parish—will need to consider. These are discussions that are fairly wide-ranging and really can't be rushed, so the committee members are taking some time to work through Desmond's findings. Kate Foley, as a 'representative' from Raumati, has also had preliminary discussions with Desmond, with a view to working out ideas and procedures for the parish for the future.

#### **Christmas Day Service**

John and Diana Roberts will lead Christmas Day worship at Waikanae Church at the earlier start time of 9.00am. We will celebrate with a family-friendly service on the theme of 'Opening Doors'. We usually get quite a few holiday visitors for the Christmas Day service with the church well-filled. We are looking forward to this special time.

#### New Year's Day Worship

Again, John and Diana will lead worship at Waikanae on New Year's Day, beginning at the earlier time of 9.00am, in the informal setting of the church lounge. It will be in three parts, beginning with a New Year focus, followed by a renewing of our covenant relationship with God, and ending with a celebration of Holy Communion. We will conclude the gathering with morning tea.

In closing, we at Waikanae pray for safe travels, good health, and blessed times of refreshing for all of you in the parish over this coming Christmas season.

Renata Joyner, Waikanae Committee



#### New Zealand Methodist Women's Fellowship

#### "If you want to go fast, go alone. If you want to go far, go together"

NZMWF National Council meeting was held in Auckland 14-16 October, and attended by 38 women from Invercargill to Dargaville. The meeting was well planned by Tuitui Salevao and her executive from the Samoan District. It was good to meet in person after two years of Zoom meetings.

From the 2021-22 Special Project \$23,587 was given for Covid relief in Fiji and \$9,434 for Granger Grove, Anglican Social Services. Tributes were paid to the women who had died during the year.

Smethurst Fund available for women doing study courses, attending seminars or university. \$14,430 was given during 2021-2022.

Friendship Scholarship Fund gave \$7,600 to 15 Pacific Island girls who were in Year 12 or 13 at a New Zealand secondary school.

Kurahuna Fund - \$4,500 was given to Māori girls attending a New Zealand secondary school

The 2023 Special Project through CWS is Aid to Tonga following the eruption and tsunami. The New Zealand component is "The Living Wage Movement".

The incoming National President for 2023-2025 is Lesieli Tiulipe Pope from the Tongan District.



Previous National Presidents of the New Zealand Women's Methodist Fellowship at the Council. The current National President, Tui Salevao, is in the front in white and Lesieli Pope, the incoming National President is sitting next to Marie Smith.



# Kapiti Uniting Parish

Christmas service times

#### Raumati Church

10 Weka Road Christmas Eve 9 pm Christmas Day 10 am

#### Waikanae Church

9 Taiata Street Christmas Day 9 am

www.kup.org.nz Phone 04 902 5809

#### **Market Day**

I would like to thank everyone who had a part in making the Market Day a success. From the first tentative meeting, through all the planning, the advertising and organising, it proved yet again what we can do if we all pull together.

After a very wet start, the weather improved and the interaction with the community was obvious and folks were enjoying walking around, talking to friendly, welcoming people in a safe and encouraging environment.

I have heard many positive comments about the atmosphere and I saw lots of happy little faces, some looking very cute, with painted faces, accompanied by adults who were genuinely grateful that they had found something the children wanted, which they did not have to pay for.

Clearly, many people put a lot of time and effort into their stalls and I cannot list them all here. However, special thanks must go to Ralph for once again being willing to go the extra mile, to Kate for the advertising coverage and keeping it all together in the background.

To first-time stall holder Dianne, with a great variety of plants, to Joy and her art, to Lynn and her craft, to Thrifty volunteers, to Nancy with the raffles, John and the garage sale, Nina who made wraps, to the lovely ladies who provided morning tea. From the cake stall goes a special mention to Marcia Collins who dropped off a large fruit cake, fruit loaves, and biscuits, before she flew to Auckland, to Hazel Ollerenshaw who made some delicious marmalade and others who made jam and pickles and to everyone who did some baking, thank you for making the stall the success that it was. To the BBQ stars who kept a lot of people fed and to Anna who seized the opportunity to mix and mingle, both were very much appreciated.

Mary White - Parish Council Chairperson

#### **Community Garden**

Last Saturday, when finishing for the day at Thrifty Place, Maureen and I had a very pleasant conversation with four people who were heading to the Community Garden.

They explained that they did not need any produce, but they often walked that way, did a bit of weeding, noted that the strawberries would have to be covered and said they would look for some netting; they live in an apartment with no garden and were very grateful for the opportunity to get their hands into the soil and to be able to watch the plants progress.

It is a pleasant area to visit: maybe the Council would give us some benches to sit on. I know there is a park across the road, but it is busy with sport being played and dog walkers and I am not aware of places to sit under trees. We have a lovely spot and the more that the community feel welcome on a church property, the better in my opinion. Parents sometimes bring their children to learn about plants. It takes so little effort to bring a sense of peace and for others to be able to appreciate the work that goes into this endeavour. Is that not what we are all about?



To those who were concerned that Peter rabbit may have left the property, fear not. I am reliably informed he has been seen nibbling the buttercups.

I used to be a "Clean-up Gardener". Gardening meant weeding.
The garden was a potential weed bed to be controlled.
Now I am learning the pleasure of planting, tending, feeding the soil.

It's about growing. Sandra Winton

### **Parish Market Day**





Plant Stall: Kevin and Dianne Boyce with friend, Talia.

Cake Stall: Susan Copping serves a customer. Art Auction: Scores of quality art works for auction.





#### Cribs in Kapiti

About 30 nativity cribs will be on display at Our Lady of Kapiti church, Paraparaumu.

The cribs will be on display from 16 to 23 December between 7.30pm and 10.30pm. Entry is by a can of food or a gold coin donation.



Members of the arts and crafts group that meets weekly in the Raumati church's basement room had some unexpected visitors at their 8 November gathering. NZ company Attitude Pictures - a world-leading producer of documentaries about people living with disabilities - is creating a new series for TVNZ called 'Down for Love', that features group member Neville Pugh.

Neville said that one of the favourite things he does each week is the craft group, so the film company seized the opportunity to record him enjoying his time exploring new crafts and being with friends. The episode will feature next year.





Kapiti Uniting Parish

# **Children's** Christmas Carol \*

Service

Join us for afternoon tea, Christmas carols and a story

Wednesday 7 December, 2.45pm - 4pm Raumati Church, 10 Weka Road

Afternoon tea served from 2.45 pm Carols and story at 3.20 pm

> Free event All ages welcome

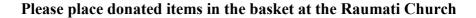
www.kup.org.nz











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#### New to the Parish



Welcome to Jack Gardner, our new general hand at the Raumati Church. You may see Jack in the weekends, sweeping the driveway and refilling the kitchen/toilet supplies.

For many years, Dorothy Woods has spent countless hours undertaking these tasks. Thank you Dorothy for all your service to the Parish. It has been very much appreciated by those of us at the Raumati Church.

#### The Wicked Fairy at the Manger

My gift for the child:

No wife, kids, home;
No money sense. Unemployable.
Friends, yes. But the wrong sort –
The workshy, women, wimps,
Petty infringers of the law, persons
With notifiable diseases,
Poll tax collectors, tarts:
The bottom rung.

His end?
I think we'll make it
Public, prolonged, painful.
Right, said the Baby. That was roughly
What we had in mind.

U A Fanthorpe

#### **News from the Playgroups**

When you read this, the school year will be almost over. The Playgroups at both Raumati and Waikanae will have their final sessions for the year in the week beginning 12 December.

Term 4 has been a really satisfactory time for both the Monday group at Raumati and the Friday group at Waikanae.

Term 4 started with our newly appointed Coordinator Sasha White at the helm. We are so fortunate to have a person of Sasha's experience and talent involved in this significant community outreach of the Parish. Not only does she have



Sasha White

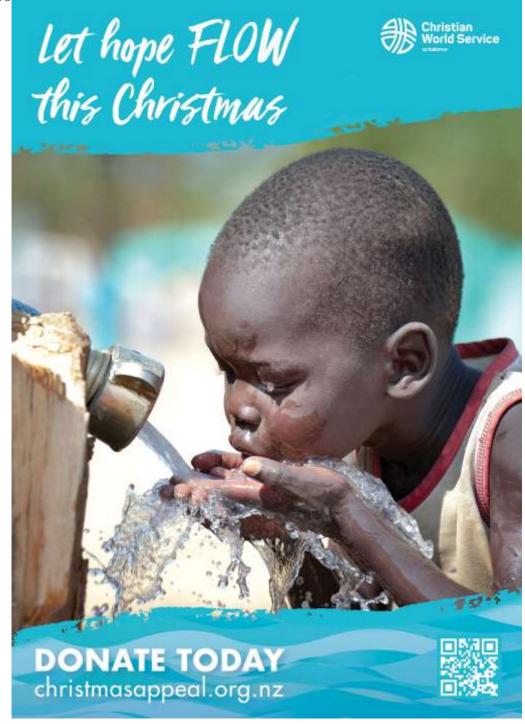
experience in early childhood settings, she is also a gifted dance tutor in a local dance school. Sasha has also over the years been involved in Mainly Music groups here on the Coast and is now adapting all these skills in the programme she is running on behalf of the Kapiti Uniting Parish.

The Playgroup Support Team includes Marie Smith, Louise Faulke, Maureen Calhaem and Joy Mepham. It has been a real pleasure to work together prayerfully to continue the many years of encouraging parents and those who care for pre-schoolers, and both Sasha and the support group feel that we share aspirations for the adults and children we meet with each week.

The Monday group at Raumati meets in the church hall at 9.30 am-11.30 am each week and the Waikanae group meets at the same time each Friday in the Waikanae church hall. We would appreciate some help at both setting up and clearing up at each setting. At present Marie and Don Smith continue to volunteer every Friday at Waikanae and Maureen Calhaem is at Raumati every Monday. If you are even slightly interested to join the volunteer group feel free to come in for a cup of tea (or coffee) at any of the sessions. If you would just like to pop in to see what actually happens you are most welcome.

The Playgroups do not function outside of the Church programme, They are very much part of it. Both Sasha and the Support team value your continuing prayerful support and interest.

On behalf of the Playgroup Support Team, Joy Mepham





# "... and the life was the light of all people" John 1.46

#### About the Theme

At Christmas we listen to the life-changing story that shows God's great gift of love to us all. Through Advent we can listen and watch as the story unfolds, rediscovering the love that is at the heart of the universe. It is this love that inspires us to live in hope, doing what we can to make our world a place where all people can live in dignity and peace.

#### Facing the Climate Crisis in Hope

The Christmas Appeal begins with the climate challenge that faces the whole world. Whether or not one uses the language of climate emergency, daily life has become harsher for many people and communities unable to adapt to successive droughts or rising waters. The poorest people and countries have contributed the least to the rising temperatures but they are the ones who are carrying the largest cost.

More than half of the world's population over 3.3 billion are "highly vulnerable" to the impacts of climate change according to the most recent IPPC report. Global unity and action is critical to address the use of fossil fuels and other factors contributing to climate change.

At the same time people on the frontline of climate change need assistance with water, food, shelter and more, to replace what they have already lost. It is not fair that the communities that have lost their land to water or drought, through no fault of their own, should have to carry the cost of relocation.

Climate change is contributing to the loss of life and livelihoods. It is also a driver of conflict. Supporting families and communities to adapt to our changed environment in ways that respect and honour their dignity is critical as global temperatures continue to rise.

Those most affected are too busy to give into despair, they must find hope.

The biggest challenge is not what is happening, but how we respond to the mounting evidence of change. Our partners have integrated climate change into the work they do in communities just as they are doing in response to the pandemic. Donations to the Christmas Appeal will go to people living on the frontlines of climate change.

It is for this reason we begin Advent by finding hope in the work of the Pacific Conference of Churches (PCC). In many ways they have set sail ahead of us, showing us what needs to be done by accompanying people whose homes and livelihoods are disappearing under water. At the same time PCC invites us to think theologically, to Reweave the Ecological Mats. In October General Secretary Rev. James Bhagwan and Programmes Manager Frances Namoumou spoke about this work.

On the second Sunday, which has Peace as its theme, we focus on the Department of Service to Palestinian Refugees, navigating tense and challenging conflicts to share water and life. On the third Sunday, we find Joy with small farmers in Nicaragua who are celebrating a better water supply and new ways to grow food. On the fourth Sunday, we share with families devastated by the floods that covered one third of Pakistan in water. And on Christmas Day, we read the story of one boy and his grandmother in the dry southwest of Uganda who share a simple prayer for water.

#### Finding Life and Light

In the lead up to Christmas there is much to think about and much to be done. It is easy to focus on the next event in the calendar, the food we need to prepare or the gifts we must buy. Soon we will be wrapped up in the Advent hymns and carols and the ancient Christmas story.

But listen carefully to the readings for Advent. It is in the Bible readings that we confront the hard stuff. What does it mean to 'Prepare the Way of the Lord' when the planet is burning and violence impacts so many people?

# John 1:4b "... and the life was the light of all people."

In the opening verses of John's Gospel, we are confronted with the creative power of God, the giver of life. Verse John 1:4b shows us the way. As people of faith, we have a responsibility to live for hope in God's world. By giving gifts of love, we can share that hope. In our prayers we can show our concern for the whole of creation. By working together, we can create more momentum for change, taking action so more people have water, food and justice.

#### The Climate Crisis

This year's Christmas Appeal highlights the life-changing, life-giving work of five of our partners sharing hope on the frontline of climate change. They are part of local communities, taking practical steps so people have safe water and can better protect themselves when disaster strikes.

We are thankful for your gifts to these partners over many years. You have shared resources so they can improve people's livelihoods and find ways to protect themselves from harm and have a say in matters that affect them. Thanks to their community building work, our partners have developed local strategies to keep people strong even when water may be lapping around their homes. In the words of the Pacific Climate Warriors, "We are not drowning, we are fighting".

Your donations will give them the resources they need now to make sure families have water and food, displaced people have shelter, children can attend school and people can provide the psychosocial support they need for their own well-being.

Listening to the voices of those who have survived violence, disaster and hardship, we can find the energy we need to stand alongside people who need food, water and justice. When we work together in ways that give life, we share in God's love for the world. This is our Christmas story.

#### Towards Water Justice and a Sustainable Future

The world has reached the halfway mark on the Agenda for Sustainable

Development 2030 with its 17 goals and 169 targets. This Christmas we focus on two of these goals:



#### In numbers

- 1 in 4 people need access to safe drinking water.
- 1 in 3 people need basic handwashing facilities in their homes.
- 3.6 billion people need safe sanitation.
- The number of weather-related disasters – floods, droughts, storms and extreme temperatures – has increased by a factor of five over the past 50 years
- Since 2000, flood-related disasters have increased by 134% and the number and duration of droughts have increased by 29%.

# Thrifty Place

Quality second-hand clothing and household items

Tuesday 11 am to 4 pm Thursday 11 am to 4 pm Saturday 10.30 am to 1 pm

Raumati Church
Kapiti Uniting Parish
10 Weka Road
Raumati Beach
04 902 5809
kapitiuniting@outlook.com

Find us on Facebook and Instagram



#### **Kapiti Horticultural Society**

Friday 2 December, 7 pm Raumati Uniting Church, lower meeting room.

Sheryl from Mitre 10 Garden Centre will be doing a "Show and tell" of all the latest and greatest of the new plant varieties now available.

Competition - Festive Table Decoration. Raffles, Sales Table, Supper. Be in to win the grand prize for the meeting's competition. Open to all.

Free event.

#### Raumati Morning Women's Fellowship

Thursday 8 December, 10 am, Raumati Uniting Church, upstairs meeting room

Our speaker will be Allyson Dewe.
Topic: Making Christmas decorations.

Please bring a gift for Women's Refuge to place under the Christmas tree in the church.

Please label your gift for either a mother, boy or girl and the age of the child.

Contact Merrill Baker on 902 4134 or 027 343 2307.

#### **E-Prayer Requests**

A group from your Parish family receives requests for prayer every week.

You can either ring, text, email or ask for the request to be passed on.

Mary Francis 904 0457 or <u>billandmary262@gmail.com</u>
Merrill Baker 902 4134 or <u>amkram.nz@gmail.com</u>
Mary White 298 7727 or <u>marywhite@xtra.co.nz</u>

The requests will remain confidential and names will not be used without your permission.

#### **Kapiti Counselling Service**

The Parish's own professional counselling service is available for confidential counselling or discussions for any member of the Parish or their family.

The counsellors are Marie Livesey and Penny Currier.
Phone 902 5809.

#### **Parish Directory**

		1 001 1511 2 11 0 0 0 0 1 3	
Par	rish Minister:	Rev. Anna Gilkison	298 7576
		anna.gilkison@outlook.com	027 620 8146
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Par	rish Council	Jan Rae	298 2562
	Secretary:	janiserae47@gmail.com	
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		Nauman	

#### **Parish Office Contact**

Parish Office phone: 902 5809

Parish Office Administrator: Kate Foley (021 120 8045) Address: 10 Weka Road, Raumati Beach

Office hours: Tuesday - Friday 9.30 am - 12.30 pm

Office e-mail: kapitiuniting@outlook.com Parish website: www.kapitiunitingparish.org.nz

Waikanae Church Corner of Ngapaki and Taiata Streets,

Waikanae

## **December: regular events**

Mondays	9.30 am-11.30 am	Raumati Playgroup,
		last session this year, 12 December.
Tuesdays	10 am-12 pm	Women's Craft Group, Raumati
	11 am-4 pm	Thrifty Place
Thursdays	11 am-4 pm	Thrifty Place
	2.30-3 pm	Fruit and Vege Co-op pick up, Raumati
Fridays	9.30 am-11.30 am	Waikanae Playgroup
		last session this year, 16 December
Saturdays	10.30 am-1 pm	Thrifty Place

## **December:** for your diary

Thur 8th	10 am	Raumati Morning Women's Fellowship
Sun 11th	After	Waikanae Committee, Waikanae
	morning tea	
Mon 12th	1.30 pm	Board Games, Carole Rudings' home
Tue 13th	10 am	Pastoral Care Group, Raumati
Wed 14th	10 am	Property and Finance, Raumati
Thur 15th	4 pm	Thrifty Place closes for 2022
Fri 23rd	12.30 pm	Parish office closes for 2022

## January: for your diary

Mon 9th	1.30 pm	Board Games, Carole Rudings' home
Sat 14th	10.30 am	Thrifty place opens for 2023
Fri 20th		<b>Deadline for February Together</b>
Mon 23rd	1.30 pm	Board Games, Carole Rudings' home
Tue 24th	9.30 am	Parish Office opens for 2023
Fri 27th	10 am	Folding and distribution of February Together

This Together magazine was delivered to you by
Phone



## **December Services**



Date	Waikanae	United@9	Raumati	
	9.30 am	9 am	10 am	
4th	Maureen	Syd Mepham	Rev. Anna	
Advent 2	Calhaem	HC	Gilkison HC	
7th		Children's Christmas Carol Service Rev. Anna Gilkison and Kevin and Dianne Boyce, Raumati <b>2.45 pm</b>		
11th	Rev. Anna Gilkison, HC	Rev. Robin/ Heather List	Kevin Boyce	
Advent 3	Carol Singing Afternoon Tea, Pastoral Care Group Raumati Hall, <b>2 pm - 3.30 pm</b>			
18th Waikanae Barrie Wo Advent 4 Worship Team Raumati, 10				
Saturday 24th	Rev. Anna Gilkison			
Christmas Eve	Raumati, <b>9 pm</b>			
Sunday 25th	John and Diana	Rev. Anna Gilkison		
Christmas Day	Roberts <b>9 am</b>	Raumati <b>10 am</b>		



## **January Services**



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Date	Waikanae 9.30 am	United@9 9 am	Raumati 10 am
1st	John and Diana Roberts, HC <b>9 am</b>	Rev. Robin and Heather List, HC  Raumati 10 am	
8th	Rev. Anna Gilkison Parish Combined Service, <b>Waikanae 10 am</b>		
15th	Syd Mepham Parish Combined Service, <b>Raumati 10 am</b>		
22nd	Evan and Tina Ireland	Maureen Calhaem	Rev. Doug Lendrum
29th	Desmond Corrigan and Renata Joyner	Barrie Woods	Colin Anderson