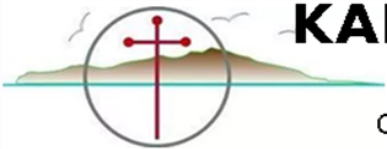


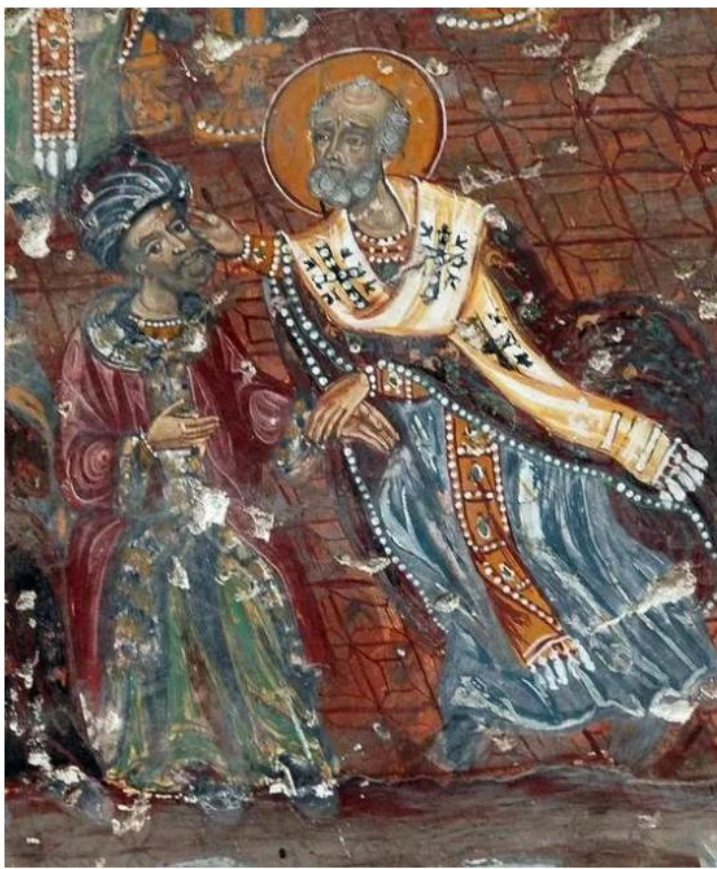
TOGETHER

KAPITI UNITING PARISH



ChristianChurchesNZ – Methodist – Presbyterian

May 2025



*Churches around the world are preparing to
commemorate an ancient Ecumenical Council
in very modern ways*

From the Minister's Desk

About the picture

What in the name of God is going on in this picture! Is one of our early saints slapping someone's face?!

Yes. That is precisely what is going on and it is going on 'in the name of God'.

1700 years ago, in May 325, St Nicholas slapped the face of Arius in an argument about Jesus Christ.

Arius and his followers believed in Jesus Christ but did not believe that he was God. The accepted version of events is that this battle over beliefs became so widespread and so divisive that the Emperor Constantine took action. He convened an Ecumenical Council representing all the churches in the empire, bringing them together at Nicaea in present day Turkiye. As a Uniting church we have more reasons than most to celebrate these ancient beginnings of an ecumenical church culture out of which the Uniting Church movement in Aotearoa NZ was born.

The Nicene Creed has been a unifying element in an otherwise fragmented universal Christian Church for all these centuries. The creed is an expansion of the earlier Apostles' Creed which in turn had its origin in the baptismal confession of new believers.

At the heart of the first Ecumenical Council in Nicaea was the question, 'do you believe this?'. Jesus himself asked this question when he was talking to Martha (John 11: 26). And the Christian communities who gathered from around the empire asked themselves something similar. At Nicaea the battered and divided Church tried to discern the truth of the Gospel message. Despite their differences they felt the urge to strengthen the ties that bound them, to deepen their sense of belonging and to live faithfully as disciples of Christ.

Dr Nicola Brady of Churches Together in Britain and Ireland described this anniversary as an opportunity to draw strength and encouragement

from the gift of our shared faith.’ She goes on to say, ‘In these troubled and turbulent times we can take heart from the endurance of that faith...Our polarized and fracturing world is in need of a new vision for peace, centred on the recognition of our interconnectedness and shared humanity. As we gather to mark this anniversary, we have an opportunity to ask questions about what may be getting in the way of our shared identity as Christians and our collective witness to the world. We are reminded of the transformative power of our faith which gives hope in suffering through the promise that all will be renewed in Christ.

Rev Anna Gilkison

1700th Anniversary of Council of Nicaea

On 20 May 2025, the Christian world will commemorate the 1700th anniversary of the opening of the Council of Nicaea, which took place in Asia Minor in the year 325. This was the first ecumenical council in history, and it produced the creed that, completed by the First Council of Constantinople in 381, has become the distinctive expression of the Church’s faith in Jesus Christ.

Responses to this anniversary from world churches:

The Lutheran Church in England has published a book: ‘Nicaea 325, the legacy of the undivided church in the 21 Century’ by the Executive Secretary for Ecumenical relations and theology. The author says: ‘the Council of Nicea went down in history because it succeeded in condensing the Christian faith in the Triune God and the miracle of the Incarnation of Jesus Christ into a common creed. Moreover it is the only creed used in both Western and Eastern churches. It has been said to provide a preliminary basis for a common understanding of the church’.

Pope Francis said: ‘in this historic moment—marked by the tragedy of war along with countless anxieties and uncertainties—what is essential, most beautiful, most attractive, and also most necessary for Christians is precisely the faith in Jesus Christ proclaimed at Nicaea. Indeed, the proclamation of this faith is the fundamental task of the Church’.

The National Council of Churches in the Netherlands has put into the hands of churchgoers a readable explanation of why they should care about an Ecumenical Council that happened 1,700 years ago. The intention was to write an approachable introduction to what happened 17 centuries ago, paying particular attention to the everyday aspects: what was the position of Christianity in society at the time, how did such a council work, and what did ordinary believers notice?

They have also commissioned a book of contemporary children's prayers based on the Creed.

Swedish church leaders are calling on their churches to celebrate at Pentecost.

The World Methodist Council has set up a working group to reflect on how best the people called Methodist might mark this anniversary.



To mark the 1700 year anniversary of the Council of Nicaea, the World Council of Churches will hold the sixth World Conference on Faith and Order, at the St Bishoy Monastery at Wadi El Natrun, near Alexandria in Egypt (founded in the 4th Century)

News from Waikanae

Lent and Easter.

Waikanae members have been richly blessed with the Lenten study series and special Holy Week and Easter services arranged for the Parish.

We warmly thank all those who put so much love, thought, work and prayer into preparing such deeply meaningful worship.



Our Palm Sunday service, planned by Desmond Corrigan, featured a very enthusiastic palm-waving crowd, an Irish Sennachie storyteller and two bike-riding pilgrims.

Waikanae members contributed to both the Maundy Thursday and Good Friday services.

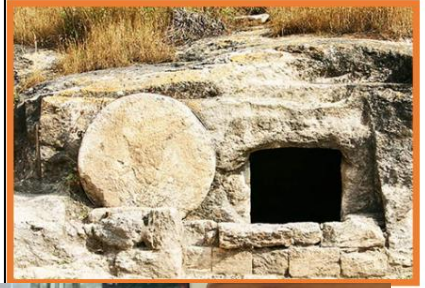
Soup Group met on the Tuesday of Holy Week to consider what Easter has meant to us through our lifetime. Some remarkable and moving insights were shared.

Easter Sunday

Rev Anna led our joyful service on Easter Day, as we pondered the wonder of the Risen Christ in her presentation of The Mystery of the Empty Tomb...



THE MYSTERY OF THE EMPTY TOMB



We shared a celebratory morning tea, discussion, and fellowship after the service

As we move into May our **Women's Fellowship** are preparing for their annual **Special Project Service**, which provides information about and seeks funds to support the CWS international and New Zealand national projects. Lunch follows the service on 18th May.

Diana Roberts

About People

A very Happy Birthday to all those celebrating Birthdays in May. We hope you enjoy your special day.

To those celebrating Anniversaries we send our very best wishes to you.

To Daphne and George Forster our Congratulations and very best wishes for your 67th Wedding Anniversary on the 10 May.

Ailsa Tanner has recently moved to an apartment in the Totara Wing at Sevenoaks,
and Jenny Latimer is now in the new wing at Kena Kena Rest Home. We send our very best wishes to Ailsa and Jenny.

Sadly we have had three deaths in the month of April:

Diana Gilberd on the 7th April,
Barbara Bolton on the 9th, and
Margaret Craig on the 21st.

We have fond memories of them all and will uphold all their family members in our prayers.

From your Pastoral Care Team:

Lyn, Merrill, Diane, Erice, Carole, Bastiana, Diana and Dianne

Wordsearch from Rosalie Sugrue - PEOPLE IN THE BOOK OF ACTS

F	E	S	T	U	S	A	C	R	O	D	p
E	T	I	J	L	I	G	P	A	U	L	U
L	I	L	U	F	J	A	R	E	C	U	B
I	M	A	D	A	O	I	I	H	A	A	L
<u>X</u>	O	S	A	P	H	U	S	D	Q	S	I
N	T	A	S	P	N	S	C	U	Y	N	S
E	H	B	P	I	O	G	I	I	P	L	U
H	Y	A	N	R	G	L	L	I	E	R	I
P	S	N	M	G	A	M	L	X	H	E	L
E	E	R	A	A	A	I	A	O	P	T	U
T	M	A	R	R	H	E	D	R	S	E	J
S	A	B	Y	P	R	A	I	E	K	P	N
C	J	N	J	E	E	C	I	N	R	E	B

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Agrippa, Apollos, Aquila, Barnabas, Bernice, Dorcas, Felix, Festus, Gaius, James, John, Judas, Julius, Lydia, Mark, Mary N (*of Nazareth*), Mary J (*of Jerusalem*), Paul, Peter, Philip, Priscilla, Publis, Rhoda, Sapphira, Saul, Silas, Stephen, Timothy

Complete the sentence below with the unused letters

Paul had a _____ on the Damascus Road.
(Acts 9:1-9)

Raumati Women's Fellowship

Raumati Women's Fellowship will meet on Thursday 8 May at 10am in the meeting room.

Our speaker will be Cathy Fisher, Regional Volunteer Coordinator for Blind Low Vision. Come and hear from Cathy about how they can help people with poor or no sight.

Contact: Lyn Martin 04 904 8361 or Merrill Baker 04 9024134 027353 2307

Fellowship Special Project Service

On Sunday 18 May we are holding our annual service at 10 am at Raumati. We will hear about the 2 Special Projects for this Year. This will be followed by our fundraising morning tea in the meeting room where you are invited to give a donation.

This year we are fundraising for the Ronald McDonald House Charities New Zealand and our Overseas Project is the CWS partner, The Department of Service to Palestinian Refugees in Jordan (DSPR).

The Ronald McDonald House Charities supports families when their child is in a hospital away from home, offering accommodation, meals, and support free of charge. Our speaker will be Gemma Sandoe.



The DSPR provides high quality medical care, psychosocial support and educational opportunities as well as offering emergency assistance and support, especially to new refugee families.

We give everyone a very warm welcome to our service and the morning tea to follow.

Extract from the 2025 Easter Day Sermon of Pope Francis:

“Mary Magdalene, seeing that the stone of the tomb had been rolled away, ran to tell Peter and John. After receiving the shocking news, the two disciples also went out and — as the Gospel says — “the two were running together” (Jn 20:4). The main figures of the Easter narratives all ran! On the one hand, “running” could express the concern that the Lord’s body had been taken away; but, on the other hand, the haste of Mary Magdalene, Peter and John expresses the desire, the yearning of the heart, the inner attitude of those who set out to search for Jesus. He, in fact, has risen from the dead and therefore is no longer in the tomb. We must look for him elsewhere.

This is the message of Easter: we must look for him elsewhere. Christ is risen, he is alive! He is no longer a prisoner of death, he is no longer wrapped in the shroud, and therefore we cannot confine him to a fairy tale, we cannot make him a hero of the ancient world, or think of him as a statue in a museum! On the contrary, we must look for him and this is why we cannot remain stationary. We must take action, set out to look for him: look for him in life, look for him in the faces of our brothers and sisters, look for him in everyday business, look for him everywhere except in the tomb.

We must look for him without ceasing. Because if he has risen from the dead, then he is present everywhere, he dwells among us, he hides himself and reveals himself even today in the sisters and brothers we meet along the way, in the most ordinary and unpredictable situations of our lives. He is alive and is with us always, shedding the tears of those who suffer and adding to the beauty of life through the small acts of love carried out by each of us.

For this reason, our Easter faith, which opens us to the encounter with the risen Lord and prepares us to welcome him into our lives, is anything but a complacent settling into some sort of “religious reassurance.” On the contrary, Easter spurs us to action, to run like Mary Magdalene and the disciples; it invites us to have eyes that can “see beyond,” to perceive

Jesus, the one who lives, as the God who reveals himself and makes himself present even today, who speaks to us, goes before us, surprises us. Like Mary Magdalene, every day we can experience losing the Lord, but every day we can also run to look for him again, with the certainty that he will allow himself to be found and will fill us with the light of his resurrection”.

Poem – “If I Must Die” by Rafaat Alaarer
(Rafaat was killed in Gaza on 6 December 2023)

If I must die,
you must live
to tell my story
to sell my things
to buy a piece of cloth
and some strings,
(make it white with a long tail)
so that a child, somewhere in Gaza
while looking heaven in the eye
awaiting his dad who left in a blaze —
and bid no one farewell
not even to his flesh
not even to himself —
sees the kite, my kite you made, flying up above,
and thinks for a moment an angel is there
bringing back love.
If I must die
let it bring hope,
let it be a story.

Every evening since the beginning of the war 18 months ago, until two days before his death, Pope Francis rang the Holy Family Church in Gaza City. Father Gabriel Romanelli, the pastor of the besieged territory’s only Catholic parish, told CNN that the call usually lasted about 15 minutes. The Pope would speak with the church leaders and some of the Palestinians sheltering at the church.

For Palestinians, it became a daily reminder that Gaza was not forgotten.

My Garden

by: Merle Stevenson

I have always been a gardener since I was four. It is not until our retirement that I realised how important a garden really was to me. So I can understand exactly why Jesus went to the Garden of Gethsemane.

It is only very recently that I discovered how far back in my ancestry that gardens were very important to my family. My Great, Great Grandfather was the gardener who came on the *Compte de Pare* French ship that arrived in Akaroa in 1840. The family owned a garden centre in France and he brought the seeds of the original fruit trees, roses etc. that are in the gardens around Akaroa still today. I knew growing up that my Grandfather's garden was very important to him. He was a Methodist Lay preacher. All his children, my Dad, Aunts and Uncles loved their gardens and they all had large vegetable plots and flower beds. Gardens were also very important on my Mother's side too. As a child visiting my Grandparents I remember a large perennial flower border in Dunedin along with the essential vegetable garden that probably fed them through the depression.



During my 31 years in Wellington gardening outside was difficult as the clay soil and wind made most things difficult to grow, so I tended to stick with natives and hardy camellias. We had a large isolation strip on one side of our property, as Churchill drive was planned at that stage to be four lanes. We cleared up this land and planted it up with plants provided by the council and

added some of our own exotic plants. I had a picking garden of iris and dahlias. Then I got into orchid growing and became quite an expert in growing many different varieties. We glassed in a balcony which was useless for sitting out on with the wind, but it provided me with a glass house. Later another shelter for growing cooler growing plants was added on the basement of the house when the collection of Australian natives grew.

I have always loved spending time learning to grow flowers and vegetables, but it was a real big challenge when we moved up to Nikau Valley fifteen years ago. We had decided to retire to the country and I wanted to garden. We purchased a property

which was five years old and the previous people had not been very successful growing plants. It had a few poplar trees and some cabbage trees with a stream which had been developed into three ponds along the front of the property. One had water lilies growing in it and a carp fish. It had another stream bed further down the back of the property which mostly only had water in it after heavy rains. The back drop to the property was the Hadfield Bush, just one paddock away. The day we arrived there to live I looked out and cried with joy at having this lovely property to develop into a garden, but didn't know where to start!! It was two acres with about half being flat and the other gently rolling slopes, pretty well all just grass, with just a small strip of garden either side of the driveway near the house and a lot of sad looking plants by the roadside grown in weed mat, and a stoney garden behind the house where it got a bit boggy with the winter rains. The weed mat soon went and so too most of the stone gardens. I went to the Paraparaumu library and read every garden book on design and plants I could get my hands on and once my father passed away I joined the Waikanae Garden Circle and I learnt so much more from the gardeners I met. When I left it was quite a big park like garden with Native boundaries and quite a lot of beautiful specimen trees, an orchard of some thirty different types of fruit, rose gardens and some perennial borders.

We had quite a roller coaster of time at the country garden. The garden gave us both something to focus on, as by the time we arrived at the property we knew Bruce's cancer had returned. He loved building the glass house for my orchids. But made it so big we had room for all sorts of melons, eggplants, chillies, peppers, basil and tomatoes. Friends and the food bank got the surplus. He then set out to build a covered in vegetable area, but I had to hire a man to come and finish that one off and build me some steps so I could get safely to the vegetable garden and glass house which were on a bank.



Then we were able to grow vegetables without the problem of rabbits and pukeko digging them up. Bruce lived long enough to see that completed, but we still had an empty place where the shed was going to house the ride on mower, when he passed away. He had created the platform for it by digging out a bank, with just a spade and making a pad for it to sit on. I ended up purchasing a shed and getting it installed.

I also needed better drive on access to the back of the property, as I was known to get stuck on the ride on occasionally, and had to request the neighbour to come and pull me out. Here again I had to call in a contractor, as we also needed to have a proper soak pit, some more steps and a pathway by the bottom pond to make it safer if I had visitors. We had a rather crude soak pit which was a hole in the ground that frogs would sometimes get trapped in. I needed this soak pit as we weren't allowed to let contaminated water into the stream when we had the roof sprayed. The overflow from the roof normally went into the pond, so a divergence system was devised.

By this time I had decided living in the country was not the best place for me, however much I liked the place, so set about finding a smaller house over the hill. I eventually found the house I am in now which had a garden about the right size for me, and it has a pleasant outlook up to the Hemi Mitanga Hills behind Waikanae. I had also discovered that a bush outlook would give me a country feel, which seems to be important for me having been brought up in the country, and looked out on bush the 33 years we were in Wellington. I arrived here a couple of days before the first Covid Lock down. Here again the garden became my sanctuary and I set about transforming it into how I wanted it to be.

There is something irresistible about growing a seed, bulb or planting a tree. It's the hope that one day it will come up and flourish into an edible plant or a most beautiful flower. I have found that my garden has been my refuge and strength particularly during stressful times in my life. I am sure that going and spending time with your plants, is a great sort of solace when times are difficult.

My garden has always been my happy place. It's the place I go when I am feeling very sad as there is something about a garden which seems to take your mind off the troubles or sadness you might be feeling at the time, and pull out a few weeds, or trim things back ready for the winter. It might be the softness of the colours of greens or it might be the cheeriness of the flowers, or the wonder of "has this seed come up yet". It provides the hope of the future. Sometimes I think it is creating a lot of work. But having a garden to tend, or a lawn to mow, gives you focus and takes your mind off troubles you might have and a reason to look forward to the next day.



I know exactly why Jesus went to the Garden of Gethsemane.

Maundy Thursday, Raumati 2025,
Last Supper
Diana and John Roberts, Waikanae
What the Last Supper Has Meant to Us

When we consider the Last Supper:

What do we see? A dimly lit room, a table set with the Passover meal, a group of friends together, with Jesus at the centre. Jesus takes the bread and pours the wine. These actions of Jesus are what I see at every celebration of the Last Supper.

What do we hear? The words of Jesus: “This is my body , which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me... This cup that is poured out for you is the new covenant in my blood.” We hear these words of Jesus at every celebration of the Last Supper.

What do we think? This is simplicity. – reality: real bread, real juice. Symbolic, yes, but not synthetic, not theoretical, not philosophical, not fanciful. This is real. This is human – food and drink are basic to life whoever and wherever we are. The last supper presents Jesus in all his humanity. And yet this is where his mystery deepens, as he offers the bread as his body – the Bread of Life; as he pours the wine as his Blood of the new covenant. This is beyond human understanding.

What do we feel? We feel connected. Connected to Jesus, to the Spirit of God. We feel connected to all who have shared in this Last Supper throughout time and throughout the world.

How do we respond? We respond with commitment to the actions and words of Jesus: “Do this in remembrance of me”. We commit to faithfulness in keeping this Last Supper which nourishes the spirit of every Christian. We commit to remembering and honouring what Jesus gave of himself in this celebration, and we renew our commitment with these words from a Charles Wesley hymn of 250 years ago:

“Jesus, we thus obey Thy last and kindest word.

Here in Thine own appointed way we come to meet Thee, Lord”.

Amen.

Easter Morning Breakfast at Raumati



We hosted a shared breakfast in Raumati Hall before the Easter Sunday service – paid for with a voucher kindly sent to us by the Presbyterian Church

Also present: Kate Foley, Mike and Lesley Copeland, Anna Gilkison



E-Prayer Requests

A group from our Parish receives requests for prayer every week. You can ring, text, or email to ask for the request to be passed on:

Merrill Baker 04 902 4134 or text 0273 532 307 or amkram.nz@gmail.com

Maureen Calhaem 04 299 1903 or text 0278 568 611 or maureen.calhaem@xtra.co.nz

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

Maureen and Merrill

Raumati Playgroup

Easter Morning Tea



We were given a \$50 New World voucher by the Presbyterian Church to spend on food for an Easter community event - so at the last Playgroup of Term One we had a special a special Easter morning tea.

Everyone really enjoyed themselves and the hot cross buns were a very big hit.

It was really nice to celebrate Easter and the end of term with some yummy treats.

A big thank you to the Presbyterian Church for the voucher!

Monica



Word-search sentence:

Paul had a LIFE CHANGING EXPERIENCE on the Damascus Road.

Poetry with Robin List

Some time ago Anna asked if I would choose poems and set them loose in Together.

Vincent O'Sullivan was one of our country's finest writers. Take some time with this poem; what book might he be referring to? So who is the girl? Or, let the autumn windy weather words get into you. If you like, you can give spiritual weight to the wind and the opening of the book, but that meaning is for you. Most of all; enjoy a fine poem.

Author's Bluff

It never stops in the famous story
does it, the wind, the wind?

It is there
when the book is shut, pelting
the house's walls, pushing the pines
the wrong way, making the girl's
skirts flounce like the edges
of the streamed clouds, her heart
riding the wind.

No wonder the sea
rings, throws salt at her lips,
the street tilts its deck
beneath the bright, flung stars.

Open the book, only that
will stop it. Open the book
to let her through.

by Vincent O'Sullivan

Parish Directory

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May: for your diary

8	10am-12pm	Raumati Women's Fellowship
12	1.30 – 4pm	Board Games, Raumati
13	10am-12pm	Pastoral Care Group, Raumati
14	10-11.30am	Property and Finance Group, Raumati
	11am	Church Service at Sevenoaks
15	10.30am-12pm	Coastal Villas Church Service
16	10am-12pm	Parish Council, Raumati
20	10.00am	Waikanae Women's Fellowship
21	10am – 12pm	Music and Worship Group, Raumati
26	1.30 – 4pm	Board Games, Raumati
30	10am-12pm	Folding June Together

May: Regular Events

Tuesdays	10am -12pm 10.30am – 4pm	Women’s craft group, Raumati Thrifty Place
Thursdays	10am -12pm 10.30am – 4pm	Raumati Playgroup (term time) Thrifty Place
Saturdays	10.30am – 1pm	Thrifty Place

May Services

	Waikanae 10am	United@9 9am	Raumati 10am
4th	Barrie Woods	Rev Anna Gilkison HC	
11th	Maureen Calhaem HC	Carole Rudings and Kate Foley	Rev Robin List
18th	Women’s Fellowship	Women’s Fellowship with Rev Anna Gilkison	
25th	Rev Anna Gilkison	Kevin and Dianne Boyce	Rev Roger Wiig



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