

Welcome to Worship

The fourth Sunday in Lent

Raumati Uniting Church

10.00 a.m. 30th March 2025

Waking up to reality

*We are welcomed and hear about coming activities in the
parish in which we could be involved*

We are called to worship

Good morning church. This is the third Sunday in Lent, the season that carries us towards Easter. By this Sunday we should know that Lent is not a time for giving up anything. It is a time to accept that life is not always a bunch of roses. It carries its troubles, its pain, its loneliness, loss, betrayals and suffering.

That's life! But there is more! There is laughter and love, families and friends, starry nights and the blue of the sea and the view of Kapiti. There is community and church and caring and kindness.

Yes, that's life. And in it there is always the possibility of living it well, living it fully, without regret, finding it good and at its best carrying something of God present in it. So, alive to what there is here and now in this place, amongst us a people of faith, let us worship God.

We sing Love will be our Lenten calling (Tune: Picardy) 684
TiS

Love will be our Lenten calling,
love to shake and shatter sin,
waking every closed, cold spirit,
stirring new life deep within,
till the quickened heart remembers
what our Easter birth can mean.

Peace will be our Lenten living
as we turn for home again,

longing for the words of pardon,
stripping off old grief and pain,
till we stand, restored and joyful,
with the Church on Easter day.

Truth will be our Lenten learning:
hear the Crucified One call!
Shadowed by the Saviour's passion,
images and idols fall,
and, in Easter's holy splendour,
God alone is all in all.

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We pray using the words of Psalm 63 (Written about 600 years before Jesus)

You are my God. I worship you. In my heart, I long for you, as I would long for a stream in a scorching desert. I have seen your power and your glory in the place of worship.

Your love means more than life to me, and I praise you. As long as I live I will pray to you. I will sing joyful praises and be filled with excitement like a guest at a banquet. I think about you before I go to sleep, and my thoughts turn to you during the night.

You have helped me, and I sing happy songs in the shadow of your wings. I stay close to you, and your powerful arm supports me.

We listen to Isaiah's conviction (800 years before the life of Jesus) about a relationship with God 55: 1 – 9

(Isaiah says:) If you are thirsty, come and drink water!
If you don't have any money, come, eat what you want!
Drink wine and milk without paying a cent.

(God says:) **Why waste your money on what really isn't food?**

Why work hard for something that doesn't satisfy?

Listen carefully to me, and you will enjoy the very best foods.

Pay close attention!

Come to me and live. I will promise you the eternal love and loyalty that I promised David. I made him the leader and ruler of the nations; he was my witness to them.

You will call out to nations you have never known and they have never known you

But they will come running because I am the Lord, the holy God of Israel, and I have honored you.

Turn to the Lord! He can still be found. Call out to God! He is near.

Give up your crooked ways and your evil thoughts. Return to the Lord our God. He will be merciful and forgive your sins.

The Lord says: "My thoughts and my ways are not like yours.

Just as the heavens are higher than the earth, my thoughts and my ways are higher than yours.

"Rain and snow fall from the sky. But they don't return

without watering the earth that produces seeds to plant and grain to eat.

That's how it is with my words. They don't return to me without doing everything I send them to do.

We listen for a word about assurance and forgiveness in the Gospel reading Luke 15: 1 – 3, 11b – 32

We reflect on what we have heard

We sing

Forgiveness is your gift,
both cleansing and renewing,
to catch us when we drift,
our base desires pursuing:
and hug us back to life
and bring s to a feast
where all will celebrate
the life your love released

Your grace goes out to meet
the sinful and the doubting,
our arms and dancing feet
speak louder than all shouting:
O God how great your love
which takes us empty in,
and with our worth unproved,
lets better life begin.

We make our offering

We know there have been times when we have wandered off on our own way and found nothing satisfying. But by giving and loving, we find that life is rich indeed. It opens up a future that is wonderfully human, connecting us to things that really are important. So here, in faith, we turn again to Jesus' way of love and make this offering for this our church and the wider community saying: Thanks be to God for the richness in giving in living. Amen

We greet one another in peace

Responding to the truth that openness builds better relationships greet one another in peace. Peace be with you

And also with you Roger

We share our prayers for others

We sing

**Where the road runs out
and the signposts end,
Where we come to the edge of today,
Be the God of Abraham for us,
Send us out upon our way.**

*Lord, you were our beginning,
the faith that gave us birth.
We look to you, our ending,
our hope for heaven and earth.*

When the coast is left and we journey on
to the rim of the sky and the sea,
be the sailor's friend,
be the dolphin Christ,
lead us on to eternity.

Lord, you were our beginning...

When the clouds are low
and the wind is strong,
When tomorrow's storm draws near,
Be the spirit bird hovering overhead
Who will take away our fear.

Lord, you were our beginning...

Colin Gibson

We acknowledge God's blessing and give thanks

Our worship in this place and at this time has drawn to a close.

We give thanks for one another, for all we have heard, all we have sung and for the depth we have found in our prayers. Now our worship takes us on to a time of fellowship and the journey home, where we share and are surrounded, by love that reveals the beauty of our humanity and the world we live in.

There is blessing in that. Go in peace and love will surround you and will be in the relationships that nourish your spirit and lead you to give thanks for the gifts you have been given in this life.

Amen!

Luke

His Gospel is itself a living creature,
a ground and glory around the throne of God,
where earth and heaven breathe through human nature
and One upon the throne sees it good.
Like is the living pillar of our healing,
A lowly ox a servant of the four,
We turn his page to find his face revealing,
the wonder and welcome of the poor.
He breathes good news to all who bear a burden,
Good news to all who turn and try again#
The meek rejoice and prodigals find pardon,
A lost thief finds paradise through pain,
The voiceless find their voice in every word
And with our Lady, magnify our Lord.

From: *Sounding the Seasons*
(Seventy Sonnets for the Christian Year)
by Malcolm Guite

Leaders in this service have been

The Rev. Roger Wiig

Readers: Kate Foley and Bill McKeich

Leading our music: Elizabeth Kerr

Leading our prayers for others: Gordon Prentice