TOGETHER

KĀPITI UNITING PARISH

ChristianChurchesNZ – Methodist – Presbyterian
10 Weka Road, Raumati Beach, Paraparaumu 5032

AUGUST 2026

Diana Roberts serving boil up to the Waikanae congregation at their Matariki celebration.

From the Minister's Desk

On this still, frozen morning I went outside and watched the birds. They seemed ecstatic with the joy of living. It made me feel better. It reminded me that God is a generous giver. When it seems that a spirit of meanness has infected our world we are shown a different truth in unexpected ways.

On the global stage a universally followed sports event brought us wonderful stories of compassion, integrity and sheer goodness. Lamine Yamal who scored the winning goal in the World Cup final repeatedly paid tribute to his family in interviews. His satisfaction came not from personal glory but from having the power to transform his family's circumstances from struggle and poverty to security and opportunity.

He also used his voice to speak up for the Palestinians. Another player talked about giving his medal to his mother who walked across the Sahara to get to Spain. The Norwegian team donated their winnings from the match against Israel to the Palestinians. And Hossam Hassan, the Egypt coach, had the following to say at his pre-match press conference: "A shame on decision makers who leave human beings behind. My message would be to use football as 'soft power'." He called for the media, all athletes world-wide, to convey a collective message "that is as follows, let the Palestinian people be, let them exist, let them live a life of their own".

Another story which has given me hope in recent weeks is about 'digital sovereignty'. I have become increasingly concerned about the way the internet is being manipulated to serve the greedy and coercive interests of the giant companies that control our digital engagement. It gave me hope to learn that France has found other alternatives for accessing the internet, ensuring that their data is stored securely outside the US and improving the safety of their online activities.

This may not be important to you but I mention it because it is about taking back control of their lives and doing it in ways that add to the sum of human happiness.

The Gospel calls us not only to critique the values of this world but also to recognize signs of God's generous goodness and rejoice in them.

Prayer for Palestine

Almighty God, our words fall short
as we witness the continuing violence and pain in Gaza.
We lift to you the people of Gaza and ask that they will find refuge
and protection in the shadow of your wing.

We cry out to you in the words of Egypt's football coach,
"Let the Palestinian people be, let them exist,
let them live a life of their own".
We pray for the return of Gaza, in its entirety, to the people of Gaza.
We pray for an end to the killing and the despoliation of the land.
We pray for an improvement of medical facilities and access to food.
We pray for shelter for the homeless.

Be a fortress for those who cannot flee
And a shield for those whose work is to heal and to hope.
We remember before you all those whose hearts
are filled with dread today.
Do not let the innocent be swept away by the decisions of the powerful.
Break the bow and shatter the spear.

Open paths for wisdom, restraint, and justice where none seem possible.
Give courage to peacemakers and clarity to those who speak truth.

Let your peace take root in scorched and fearful places.
Keep our hearts from despair and teach us to stand with those who suffer,
to pray without ceasing and to hope, even now, in your redeeming love.
Amen.

Rev Anna Gilkison

News from Waikanae

Matariki celebration.

Worship

The stars shone clear and bright on Sunday 12 July as the day dawned chilly and frosty. It was freezing! In a warm church 21 of us warmed our hearts in the beautiful service led by Rev Anna. We gave thanks to God for the wonder of creation, and acknowledged the Maori New Year with reflections on our family New Year traditions: Kiwi picnics, Hogmanay for the Scots, and oliebollen for the Nederlanders.

This year's theme for Matariki is Herenga Waka, mooring our canoes together, embodied in the Holy Communion we shared. As we lit nine candles we learned of the significance of the nine stars of Matariki, and we folded them into our prayers: hope, connection and wellbeing; remembering those dear to us who have died in the past year; thanks for water both fresh and salt and all that it nurtures; thanks for all that grows beneath and upon the earth; thanks for rain and wind. The 9th candle represented the fulfilment of our aspirations for the coming year and the multitude of opportunities ahead of us.

Kai time

For morning tea Mike and Paula worked in the kitchen, cooking up dozens of fluffy, crunchy, fruit-filled oliebollen. Mike told us that his substantial doughnut treats were a feature of the winter New Year in Holland, so it was appropriate that we too enjoyed them on one of our coldest days. Most of us ate at least two!

Talk buzzed as fellowship flourished in the leadup to lunch. The story of Mere McKaskill's Boil-up engaged and entertained us before we were served our steaming bowl of kumara, pumpkin, potato, puha and watercress cooked in the stock from pork and bacon bones, with slices of home -made rewena Maori bread.

Matariki has rapidly become a much-loved part of our Kiwi identity, bringing us together in thankfulness, remembrance and hope.

Women's Fellowship (MWF). The Waikanae Fellowship held its AGM on 21 July. Marie Smith is President of the District MWF, which held its AGM at Stokes Valley on 25 July.

People. We give thanks for Rev Robin and Heather List, who regularly lead worship for us. We offer our warmest wishes and congratulations on their 80th birthdays.

Diana Roberts

About People

We were sorry to hear of the death of Mary Mill at Parkwood Lodge on the 14 July. Mary had been cared for at Parkwood for four years, prior to which she was an active member of the Raumati Congregation and at one time held the role of Treasurer.

Mary's beloved dog, Pablo, with Bronwyn's dog Sophie

Mary's funeral was held in the Raumati Church on Tuesday 21 July led by the Rev Anna Gilkison.
Our prayers will continue to be with Mary's daughter Bronwyn and her son Robert and his family in the U.S.A.

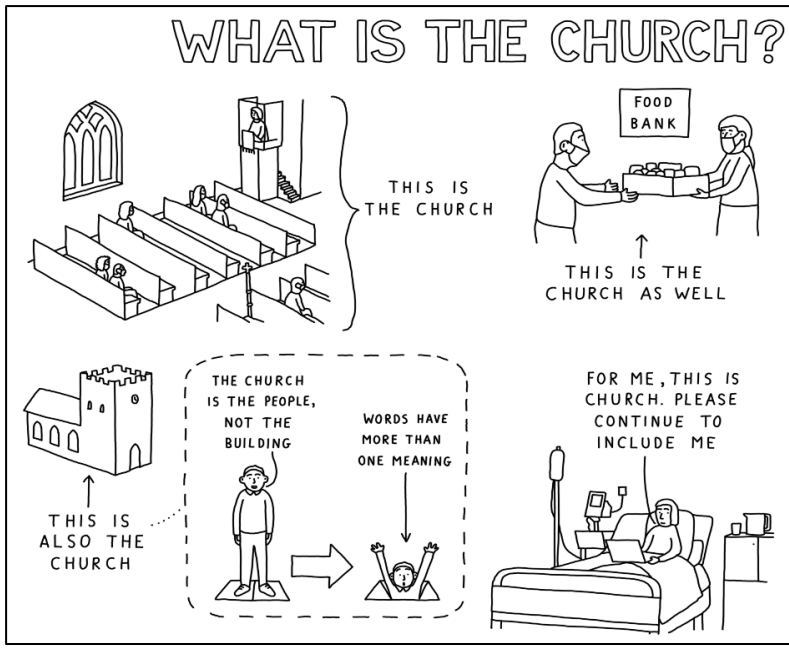
We know there are people in our parish and some who have family members who are unwell at present. We trust you will know the presence of God's love and comfort.
To those having a birthday in August we hope you have a very happy day.

For those celebrating an Anniversary, have an enjoyable time on your special day.

The Pastoral Care Team
Lyn, Carole, Diana, Bastiana, Diane, Dianne and Merrill

Rev Anna and Marie Smith attended the July Methodist Synod in Levin

Marie Smith reporting at the Synod



cartoonchurch.com

Overdoing it

Within the life of the Methodist Church here in Aotearoa New Zealand I've been invited on occasions of significant celebration to attend great feasts. Platters of chicken, bowls of salad, dishes piled with boiled vegetables, stacks of bread and butter, plates of seafood, rainbows of sweet drinks, all jostle for room on the crowded tables.

There's more: kitchen helpers walk up and down handing out trays of hot roast meat; and over at the trolleys the workers dish up portions of creamy trifle, fresh fruit salad, chocolate ice cream, pavlova and steamed pudding. When the diners have made an impression on all this, the tea-pourers carry the heavy pots up and down the tables, stopping at each chair to fill the cups.

What a banquet! What generosity! Tut tut! What extravagance! What waste! Its hard for many of us to accept such overflowing abundance. We think of our waistlines and our arteries. We think of the spendthrift providers and what else they could have used the money for – overcoming world hunger, for example. We feel uncomfortable about such magnificent largesse.

Reckless generosity is a recurring theme in scripture. Early in John's gospel, Jesus is at a wedding where the wine runs out. The host is not a poor man – he has expensive stone water jars, not cheap earthenware vessels – and he could afford to send out for more wine.

But Jesus attends to the shortage himself and the jars overflow with the finest wine. The chief steward seems to be more appalled at the waste than amazed at the transformation. Why give this top quality wine to guests who are too drunk to appreciate it?

I shared with a group who were studying this gospel passage, John 2:1-11. One of the students, who has a Pacific Island background, understood the situation perfectly, rejoicing in the plenty.

She made the connection between the astonishing generosity of the great church feasts that honour the guests with a superabundance of the very best, and the extravagant outpouring of wine offered by Jesus. Jesus presents us with the model for overdoing it! God's love is wasteful, overflowing indiscriminately; it's a love that gives without expecting anything in return; that pours out forgiveness even for enemies.

Diana Roberts

From Methodist Touchstone
March 2007

Raumati Playgroup

The start of a new term for playgroup has been going very well and our first session was very busy.

You may remember that last term I requested donations of envelopes. These were for the kids to post letters in our pretend letterbox. At the end of playgroup there was lots of mail in the letter boxes. Thank you to everyone who kindly donated envelopes. The children had so much fun with this activity.

Last week was our first playgroup back and for this we put a giant piece of paper on the floor which the kids got to decorate with crayons, stickers and stamps. The stamps were especially a big hit with the kids. I was lucky enough to receive multiple stamps and stickers on my hands from the children.

We also of course celebrated Matariki last month by creating Matariki stars to hang up. For this activity the kids had to put some chunky glitter onto contact paper. As you can imagine this one was a wee bit messy.

A massive thank you to our volunteers Maureen, Marie, Bev, my mum Lovinia, and Charlotte for making playgroup possible.

Monica Simpson

Tiny Tunes Playgroup

Term 3 Schedule

23/7/26	Floor Drawing
30/7/26	Construction Playdough
6/8/26	Straw Rockets
13/8/26	Glue and Paste
20/8/26	Painting (Bring old clothes)
27/8/26	Monster Playdough
3/9/26	Fathers Day Craft
10/9/26	Glitter Pictures
17/9/26	Colour Volcanoes (Bring old clothes)
24/9/26	Playdough

ONION SKINS 29.07.26
The Loss of Absence

Hi Guys, We live in a world of constant connection. It is incredibly difficult to "be absent" these days.....to go AWOL!

That phone in our pocket is following our every move. The little blue dot is moving across the map as we drive. It gives you instructions but there are not many alternatives. It does not think laterally and it is useless out in the wilderness.

Then there are the people who are in touch, when you don't necessarily want to be in touch. When will you be back?
What time? The delicious surprise of just turning up has gone. There will also be advice about the weather and being caught in heavy rain on your bike with minimal visibility. It has become a transgression and a lecture may follow! If there is any chance of snow you are not meant to go out. "It could be dangerous!" It is a far cry from travelling on a motorbike with Marion to Middlemarch in the middle of winter back in the early sixties and being caught in a blizzard climbing up to the Leaning Lodge hut. We had a compass and I knew the mountain well. We had told Grandma where we were going, but it meant very little to her. My climbing mates knew but they trusted my judgement.

Essentially we were "absent". It is the end of "absence". Being "absent" these days is equated with being irresponsible. Social media has become our keeper. It is writing another agenda for us. It is an agenda the fills our waking hours even though we never asked for it. AI is now it's assistant. No wonder our kids are getting
anxious being buffeted by a digital life and expectations that distort and skew reality and what is really important. Much of it is trivial. The sheer volume of time we devote to our devices means that we are carving precious hours away from our lives. The internet has become an "end in itself". You and I are in the "straddle generation" because we have experienced life in the past when the internet did not exist. We know what it felt like before.

I believe there is a profound spiritual message here and it relates to this disappearance of "absence". We can't be absent anymore, yet absence is so important. We can be alone, minus the static of our phones, with our God, in conversation with Him or simply silent. We can be alone on a motorbike carving our way around corners in the MacKenzie country or up the Paekakariki Hill. We can be

on a bicycle in the wilderness with panniers laden but with our phones turned off. We can have this secret place or time at home or at work and play, when we can seek Him out and do it with other "disconnects". Our autonomy is restored and it is a wonderful secret in a world that has lost its way of being in touch. In our absences we can also plan how we will cope with the challenges and issues that are being presented to us.

Thoreau said, " Not until we are lost, in other words, not until we have lost the world do we begin to find ourselves and realise where we are and the infinite extent and significance of our relationships".

I am a daydreaming person but there is a fear with all this change that we will be the last of the daydreamers. Absence will be lost. Children will never comprehend its quite immeasurable value.

The internet becomes the real world. It would seem that it is conspiring against the soul that chooses to be absent. The Kitkat advertisement on TV says it all. The young man walks out of the office, distressed by all his reminders and communications. He sits on the park bench and breaks into the Kitkat packet and starts to chew. All the "stuff" sticking to him slides off. Then the significant "happening" occurs. He offers the Kitkat to someone else who we can see is unusual and does not quite fit....this is a wonderful gesture but only happens because he has shed his other concerns. His concern now is for this person beside him and he is sharing with him. There is not a phone in sight. This is a profound metaphor of the Gospel.

He is waiting for us to fall into step with Him and nobody needs to know where we are. He knows because He is with us. He perceives our thoughts from afar, as it says in Psalm 139.

God bless you all

Pete Strang

PS 1] I acknowledge Michael Harris's recent book, "The End of Absence". Penguin & Claudia Hammond's "Overwhelmed ...Ways to take the Pressure off". BBC radio 4- Book of the week.

PS 2] Hi there in Coastal Unity Parish [CUP] in Dunedin. I miss you all but have been welcomed by the members of Kapiti United Parishes [KUP] Like you they are a very special group of people. We are all part of the same family! Pete.

Poetry with Robin List

Many poets have had their inspirational other half. Dante had Beatrice. I had Gemma. The theme of the lovely shepherdess was well worked over from Renaissance times; not to mention well satirised by Shakespeare in those same times, e.g. William and Audrey in As You Like It.
This will be my last poem for a while, so I thought why not give you something written in a few minutes in the literary style known as utter doggerel. Pun intended, and photo of the damsel in her later years included.

An Open and Shut Case

When Gem was just a little pup
she learned the art of leaping up
and with her paw upon the handle
charged the door like Goth or Vandal.

The door swung open with horrid din
and let our darling sheepdog in,
but our little mite came not alone;
Winter blew in with a nasty moan.

Gem had to grasp this proposition:
return the door to its first position.
Surely no problem; we felt quite airy.
This dog is smart as well as hairy.

We picked her up and turned her round
to learn to make the door rebound.
She thought, "Oh boy! I`m getting hugs.
I think I`ll string along these mugs."

And so, every time a coconut
we would play let`s hug the mutt.
No one knew who led the pack;
and I had an aching back.

Unkind thoughts began to grumble
and often one was heard to mumble:
"If we want the door to slam,
use her head as a battering ram!"

And then we had a clever wheeze!
Inside the door we stuck some cheese,
so reaching for this much loved treat
she'd shut the door with her front feet.

It worked! It worked! O frabjous day!
Now Winter`s chills would go away.
The door swung in; the door swung out.
Gem came in thin and went out stout.

But why imagine the battle`s won?
The titanic struggle`s just begun.
The door is glazed to let in light,
and thus we see a gruesome sight.

Daubed by paws and cheese marks greasey
Our door would make the strongest queasy.
There`s nothing for it, we must teach
another trick if it`s in her reach.

Now Gem's no time for shifting sheep
and we've no time to think of sleep.
Every day we work without stop;
Gem`s learning to use a squeegee mop.

Robin List

Gem was a very clever, kind-hearted dog, but it was we who cleaned the door for the three days it took to teach her to shut it. After that all she needed was praise. Just like a human.

Christians Against Poverty (CAP)

Right now, financial hardship is mounting. There is a wave of New Zealanders drowning in debt. In money chaos, parents lose sleep, as they're pressured to choose between rent, doctors' visits, or healthy food. Poverty erodes confidence, leaving New Zealanders feeling increasingly alone.

In response, CAP walks alongside people - partnering with over 100 churches across Aotearoa - bringing the love of God in practical ways to people in financial hardship.

Clients don't have to be a Christian to get CAP's help. Whoever people are, whatever they believe (or don't believe), CAP welcomes them! CAP is motivated by Jesus' example of caring for people's whole selves. CAP's free Dept Help Service focuses on loving neighbours and helping people in need in practical ways — relationally, as well as spiritually.

CAP's free help starts by *strengthening people's financial position*

- visiting peoples' homes
- listening - to see how CAP can best help a client and their whānau
- prioritising taking the pressure off - so clients always have money for food and essential bills like rent
- creating a budget to meet life's needs
- advocating with money lenders to get unfair interest written off.
- opening doors for people to start *strengthening relationships with money, self, others, and God*

It is the clients themselves who do the hard work of making repayments on their own debt, using their own income – not one dollar of unmanageable debt is paid by CAP.

CAP Debt Help is a wrap-around service that reaches into communities from Whangarei to Dunedin, in partnership with 36 local churches. This free service helps clients to form a habit of budgeting and saving - enabling sustainable change and a generational impact as parents pass on this money wisdom.

Before CAP, just *1 in 10 clients* had hope for the future, but once *with CAP,* this increases to 8 out of 10. CAP Debt Help also enhances taha wairua/spiritual health, last year**, 6 out of 10 clients said they now felt closer to God.**

CAP Money courses are also offered free across Aotearoa. These courses have empowered over 20,000 people to spend, save, and budget well. During this three-session course, clients identify exactly how they spend their money, and learn to prioritise the things that are most important to them. They also learn to live well within their means, while managing or preventing debt, and saving for the future using a simple, cash-based system that really works!

Feedback on the Debt Free Service and the Money Course:

'I'd wasted so many years. I just got over myself and said I didn't care if my family or whoever found out that I was in this much debt. I'd rather humble myself and be debt-free than be prideful and broke.'

'I can't say THANK YOU enough for the love and support you have given me during this journey of becoming debt-free.'

'Looking back, I realise how vulnerable and unsafe we were. Now, since doing CAP Money, we are in control; I know where every dollar goes'

'A trip to the supermarket was like playing roulette – is there enough at the checkout?'

'I have peace of mind now. I'm so grateful to God, we know ultimately that He provides, but we need to be wise'.

For more information, or to donate, see CAPNZ.org

Our Hirers

Aotearoa New Zealand is an internationally recognised ‘hotspot’ for biodiversity. Our long isolation from other land masses, as well as our diverse ecosystems, have allowed very special flora and fauna to develop. Today, a large number of New Zealand’s native species are classified as threatened, meaning they’re at risk of becoming extinct in the near future.

For millions of years, species like kiwi and kākāpo evolved with no threat from mammalian predators such as rats, mustelids, and possums. When these predators were introduced, our native taonga were particularly vulnerable to them.

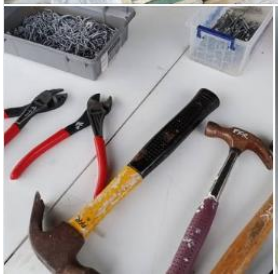
The threat of introduced predators was first identified at the beginning of the 20th century and through the efforts of scientists and experts from Wildlife Service, the Department of Conservation, TBFree, regional councils, and others, it has become increasingly better understood.

Our flora and insects are often impacted by grazing by introduced pests - and endangered plant species are very likely to have one or more rare and endangered insects relying on them.

Throughout the 20th century, government agencies invested many hundreds of millions of dollars in controlling mammalian predator populations. Their expertise is now internationally recognised.

Today, New Zealand has one of the worst extinction records of any country. To combat this, in 2015 the Government announced the Predator Free 2050 goal – to rid all of New Zealand of mustelids, rats and possums by 2050.

New Zealand-wide local community groups, hapū/iwi and private landowners are working towards this Predator Free 2050 Vision to allow our native species to thrive again as they once did. You can get involved by learning more about introduced predators, trapping in your backyard and joining a local community group such as Predator Free Raumati. They are focused on working towards being predator free as a community, eradicating local pest predators to allow our native species to thrive again.



Predator free Raumati meet regularly at venues around Raumati, including the KUP downstairs meeting room patio, to make traps from recycled fence palings. Anyone can learn to make the traps – they will provide the materials, tools and expert instruction at their workshops.

The finished traps are set by volunteers on their own properties or in public areas - like the Raumati Community Garden where Jim McIntosh (Kay's husband) sets and maintains the traps.

For details of their next workshop, check the Events section on the Predator Free Raumati Facebook page.
or email: predatorfreeraumati@gmail.com
There is also more information at: predatorfreenz.org

Common Expressions used in everyday speech with Gospel origins

from ‘Lay Preaching Basics’ by Rosalie Sugrue

The blind leading the blind	Matthew 15:14
Go a second mile	Matthew 5:41
Born again	John 3:3 — Nicodemus
Cast pearls before swine	Matthew 7:6 — words of Jesus
Chosen few	Matthew 22:14 — words of Jesus
Count the cost	Luke 4:28
At the Eleventh hour	Matthew 20:1-16 — workers in the vineyard
An Eye for an eye	Matt 5:38-39 (cf Exodus 21:22)
Kill the fatted calf	Luke 15:23 — lavish celebration [cf. 1 Sam 28:24]
The Golden rule	Matt 7:12 — do unto others…)
A sign of the times	Matthew 16:3 — red morning shepherds’ warning
The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak	Matthew 26:42 — warning to sleepy disciples
Turn the other cheek	Matthew 5:39

Originally compiled from:
‘I Never Knew that was in the Bible’ Edited by Martin H. Manser, 1999

Raumati Women's Fellowship

The Raumati Women's Fellowship will meet on Thursday 13 August at 10am in the meeting room.
A reminder that our subs are due at this meeting. ($25)

Our speaker will be Merle Stevenson, her topic is ' London to Norway on a Viking Cruise.' All women are very welcome.

Merrill 027353 2307 04 9024134
Lyn 04 9048361 022 165 7523.

*not the actual cruise ship

Why Should Christians Vote?

Whether in Government, Regional, Council, or other elections, an important consideration is that we should try to vote unselfishly, and we should try to vote for the common good of everyone.

Voting can be a way to love our neighbours (Galatians 5:14) if we vote for people or policies that will promote the common welfare. In some cases, that might mean voting against some of our own interests, if voting that way is in the best interests of everyone else (Philippians 2:3-4).

Ultimately, seeking the welfare of the whole country benefits everyone, including ourselves (Jeremiah 29:7).

We need to prayerfully consider and remember that in everything, we are to be transformed by Christ, to love like Christ - not conforming to this world, but renewing our minds so that we "may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect" (Romans 12:2).

The way we vote, and the way we engage with each other about voting issues, should always be guided by our relationship with Christ.

Raumati Maintenance Update

We have carried out a lot of deferred maintenance recently to ensure our Raumati building remains in good condition for our congregations and hirers. This includes painting, clearing out gutters, removing a tree and overhanging vegetation and patching up the driveway. This has been particularly important with all the wild weather we have been experiencing.

Thank you to all our helpers. Michael Foley has sprayed our whole church property for weeds, filled the pothole in the driveway and unblocked the drainpipe on the Raumati portico. Philip Hammond has sprayed the driveway for lichen.

Ken Milne has kindly agreed to give the steps to the hall a new coat of yellow to ensure they are safe for users and Barrie Woods will be filling in the gaps in the driveway.

We have contacted the Kapiti Coast District Council to clean the gutters outside the church and are awaiting the job to be completed.

On Thursday 13 August, new carpet tiles are being laid in the downstairs room.
We look forward to giving you an update on the cleaning of our church in the September edition of Together.

Shyam Murti and Jako Smith have recently joined our committee – it is great to have them on board and we appreciate their time, expertise, and help.

Kate Foley and the Property and Finance Committee

Not to hurt our humble animal brethren is our first duty to them, but to stop there is not enough. We have a higher mission - to be of service to them whenever they require it.

St Francis of Assisi

August: for your diary

11	10am-12pm	Pastoral Care Group, Raumati
12	11am	Church Service at Sevenoaks
13	12.30pm	Raumati Women's Fellowship
14	10-11.30	Property and Finance Group, Raumati
18	10.30am	Waikanae Soup Group
20	10.30 – 11.15am	Coastal Villas Church Service
21	10am – 12pm	Parish Council, Raumati
28	10am-12pm	Folding September Together

August: Regular Events

Tuesdays	10am -12pm	Craft group, Raumati
	10.30am – 4pm	Thrifty Place
Thursdays	10am -12pm	Raumati Playgroup
	10.30am – 4pm	Thrifty Place
Saturdays	10.30am – 1pm	Thrifty Place

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

August Services

Date	Waikanae 10 am	United@9 9 am	Raumati 10 am
2	Heather List	Rev Anna Gilkison HC	
9 *Lay Preacher's Sunday*	Rev Anna Gilkison HC with Beth Manning and Sue Hodgson	Maureen Calhaem	Robin List with Fiona Duckworth
16	Barrie Woods	Kevin Boyce	
23	Rev Anna Gilkison	Kate Foley and Carole Rudings	Rev Roger Wiig
30	Waikanae Annual Meeting Worship Rev Anna Gilkison		United @9 – Kate Foley co-ordinating

Donating to Kapiti Uniting Parish

Donations are always welcome to help us with our Parish expenses and you can make your gift in different ways:

We have cash collection boxes at our services or
In person at your bank, or online, to account:
Kapiti Uniting Parish 03 0732 0063111 00

Please put your name as reference for your payment so that we can issue a tax receipt which you can use to apply for a tax refund.

WWW.kup.org.nz

email: kapitiuniting@outlook.com Phone: 04 902 5809