



KNOX CHURCH

love faith outreach community justice

Order of Service

22 February 2026



Six stories of Jesus and the stones

LENT 1

HIGH ROCKS AND STUMBLING BLOCKS

WELCOME TO KNOX

Knox Church is a congregation within the Presbyterian Church of Aotearoa New Zealand. We aim to create Christian community in which people of all ages, sexual orientations, cultural backgrounds and socio-economic situations are included as equally valued participants in our congregational life. We cherish our diversity, offering a safe place of belonging to any who wish to explore their beliefs in an atmosphere promoting discussion, the development of healthy relationships and spiritual growth. We strive to be open to dialogue and shared experiences with people of other faiths. We enjoy worshipping the God made known in Jesus, endeavouring to do so in ways that are relevant to our daily lives, respect the integrity of creation, and make a positive difference to our wider world.

A loop system for hearing aids operates at Knox.

Toilets are available through the door on the city side of the sanctuary.

We take care to use inclusive language in our services. References to God in traditional prayers and hymns may sometimes be gender-specific. As we pray and sing together, you're invited to adapt the words we've chosen.

When we pray the Lord's Prayer, you are welcome to use the language that is most natural to you.

Introit: Lent Prose - plainsong

*Hear us O Lord, have mercy upon us, for we have sinned against thee.
To thee, Redeemer, on thy throne of glory: lift we our weeping eyes in
holy pleadings: listen, O Jesu, to our supplications.*

The Call to Worship:

We light a candle in the name of Jesus Christ, a light in the world.

**JESUS, STUMBLING BLOCK TO SOME, BUT TO US, GOD'S GIFT;
JESUS, THROUGH WHOSE EYES WE LONG TO SEE THE WORLD;
JESUS, WHOSE JOURNEY TO THE CROSS BEGINS TODAY.**

Kia noho a Ihowa ki a koutou. God be with you.

MA IHOWA KOE E MANAAKI. GOD BLESS YOU.

Hymn:

Heinlein

Nürnbergisches Gesangbuch, 1677, alt.



1. Forty days and forty nights
thou wast fasting in the wild;
forty days and forty nights
tempted, and yet undefiled.
2. Sunbeams scorching day by day;
chilly dewdrops nightly shed;
prowling beasts about thy way;
stones thy pillow; earth thy bed.
3. Shall not we thy sorrows share,
learn thy discipline of will,
and, like thee, by fast and prayer
wrestle with the powers of ill?
4. So shall we have peace divine;
holier gladness ours shall be;
round us too shall angels shine,
such as ministered to thee.
5. Keep, O keep us, Saviour dear,
ever constant at thy side;
that with thee we may appear
at the eternal Eastertide.

*George Smyttan (1822-1870)
and Francis Pott (1832-1909), alt.*

Prayer of Approach

On this first Sunday of Lent,
we begin our journey towards the momentous events
around the death and resurrection of Jesus,

**SO WE PRAY FOR THE ARMS OF GOD
AROUND ALL OUR VULNERABILITIES.**

On this first Sunday,
Jesus sets out into being noticed,
becoming a foundation stone to the faith of some,
but also a stumbling block to those who will hate him.

**SO WE PRAY FOR GOD TO HOLD US
FIRM AS THOSE WHO WELCOME THE SOLID ROCK.**

He set my feet upon a rock,
MAKING MY STEPS SECURE.

He put a new song in my mouth,
A SONG OF PRAISE TO OUR GOD.

Silence

Since this journey to Holy Week
will require us to consider the many "stones"
that were put in the way of Jesus
as he walked his road of service and faith,
we may find ourselves examining our own hearts:
how have we welcomed him, encouraged him?
How have we resisted his being,
thrown stones onto his way?

Lord have mercy.
CHRIST HAVE MERCY.
Lord have mercy.

Assurance and Response

. . . In the name of Christ, I say to you:
You are forgiven and you are free.
THANKS BE TO GOD.

The Theme Prayer:

We begin our walk to Holy Week, O God,
considering the mystery
of how opinion divided around Jesus
WHOM WE LOVE.

As the walk continues,
we will see how he deals with the resistance.
In light of this,
**GIVE US GRACE TO BE HONEST ABOUT OUR DOUBTS,
BOLDNESS TO ENTER THE WORLD OF THE DETRACTORS,
AND JOY IN SINGING HIS PRAISE.**

For we pray this in the name of the Lenten Lord,
Jesus, the Christ,
whose words we remember as together we pray

**E TO MATOU MATUA I TE RANGI,
KIA TAPU TOU INGOA.
KIA TAE MAI TOU RANGATIRATANGA.
KIA MEATIA TAU E PAI AI
KI RUNGA KI TE WHENUA
KIA RITE ANO KI TO TE RANGI.
HOMAI KI A MATOU AIANEI
HE TARO MA MATOU MO TENEI RA.**

MURUA A MATOU HARA,
ME MATOU HOKI E MURU NEI
I O TE HUNGA E HARA ANA KI A MATOU.
AUA HOKI MATOU E KAWEA KIA WHAKAWAIA;
ENGARI WHAKAORANGIA MATOU I TE KINO:
NOU HOKI TE RANGATIRATANGA,
TE KAHA, ME TE KORORIA,
AKE AKE AKE. AMINE.

The Passing of the Peace

Kia tau tonu te rangimarie o te Ariki ki a koutou.
The peace of Christ be with you all.

**A KI A KOE ANO HOKI;
AND ALSO WITH YOU.**

We exchange a sign of peace with one another.

High Rocks

The First Lesson: Psalm 40: 1-5

In this is the Word of God
THANKS BE TO GOD.

Lesson Response: Abandoned in a ditch

A Reflection on Mud

Generally, sermons are posted the sermon page of our website shortly after the service. Hard copies of the sermons are available before and after the service – ask the person at the door. A video of this sermon being practised is available from 10:00am today: <https://youtu.be/w3dxejWtSLI>

Knox Singers: Teach me, O Lord
Thomas Attwood (1765-1838)

*Teach me, O Lord, the way of thy statutes; and I shall keep it
unto the end. Psalm 119, v 33*

Three Litanies

Celebrate: One who honours our patience

Celebrate: One who opens up our view

Celebrate: One who gives a new song

Moment of Quiet

Reflection: The Big Concrete Jesus

Hymn:

Martyrdom

Hugh Wilson (1766-1824)



1. Up from the depths I cry to God:
O listen, Lord, to me;
O hear my voice in this distress,
this mire of misery.
2. If you, my God, should measure guilt
who then stands free from blame?
But true forgiveness comes from you;
we trust, and fear your name.
3. O Israel, set your hope on God,
whose mercy is supreme:
the nation mourning for its sin,
God surely will redeem.

*from Psalm 130,
Christopher Martin Idle (b. 1938)*

Stumbling Blocks

The Second Lesson: 1 Corinthians 1: 20-24

In this is the Word of God
THANKS BE TO GOD.

Reflection: Stones and Stumbling Blocks

Hymn:

Love Unknown

John Nicholson Ireland (1879-1962)



1. My song is love unknown,
my Saviour's love to me,

love to the loveless shown,
that they might lovely be.
O who am I
that for my sake
my Lord should take
frail flesh, and die?

2. He came from his blest throne
salvation to bestow:
but men made strange, and none
the longed-for Christ would know.
But O my friend!
my friend indeed,
who at my need
his life did spend.
3. In life, no house, no home
my Lord on earth might have;
in death, no friendly tomb
but what a stranger gave.
What may I say?
Heaven was his home;
but mine the tomb
wherein he lay.
4. Here might I stay and sing,
no story so divine;
never was love, dear King,
never was grief like thine.
This is my friend,
in whose sweet praise
I all my days
could gladly spend.

Samuel Crossman (1624-1684), alt.

Prayers for Others and Ourselves

led by Janet Wilson

The Offering and Dedication

We stand for the dedication of the Offering

To God we offer our patience.

MAY GOD BLESS OUR PATIENCE.

To God we offer our seeing of the world.

MAY GOD EXPAND OUR VIEW.

To God we offer our singing of praise.

MAY GOD FILL OUR SONG.

To God we offer this money and food.

MAY GOD DIRECT ITS USE,

AND BLESS THE WORLD.

AMEN.

Notices

The Lenten Litany:

O Christ,
for those to whom you made sense,
you were the great high rock upon which they safely stood.
You were to them the source of the new song of the Spirit.
You inspired them to live with faith and joy.
Along the Lenten path,
LEAD US LORD JESUS.

O Christ,
to others you became a stumbling block,
revealing the clumsiness and sin of the world.
By the simple integrity of your life,
you became the sifting of souls.
Along the Lenten path,
LEAD US LORD JESUS.

God of love,
as in Jesus Christ you gave yourself to us,
so may we give ourselves to you, living according to your will.
**KEEP OUR FEET FIRMLY IN THE WAY WHERE CHRIST LEADS US,
THIS LENT, AND ALL OUR DAYS. AMEN.**

Hymn:

Slane

Irish traditional melody



1. Be now my vision, O God of my heart,
nothing surpasses the love you impart -
you my best thought, by day or by night,
waking or sleeping, your presence my light.
2. Be now my wisdom, and be my true word;
ever within me, my soul is assured;
Mother and Father, you are both to me;
now and forever your child I will be.
3. Be my protection, my inspiring light,
giving me dignity, and great delight;

be my soul's shelter, my strong highest tower:
raising me heav'nward, O Power of my power.

4. Sovereign of heaven, my victory won,
may I reach heaven's joys, O bright heaven's Sun!
Heart of my own heart, whatever befall,
still be my vision, O ruler of all.

Irish hymn dating from c. 8th cent

Translated: Mary Elizabeth Byrne (1880-1931)

Versified: Eleanor Henrietta Hull (1860-1935), adapt.

Benediction and Sung Amen

Postlude: Toccata and Fugue in D minor, BWV 565
J.S. Bach (1685-1750)

Following the service, morning tea and coffee are served in the church.

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NOTICES

This Week:	22 February – 28 February
Sunday	10.00am Morning Worship
	11.30am Shalom
Wednesday	10.00am Bible Study

Next Week:	1 March – 7 March
Sunday	10.00am Morning Worship
	5.00pm Film Group
Wednesday	10.00am Bible Study
Thursday	11.00am Bus Trip

Shalom: Meets every 2nd and 4th Sunday of the month at 11.30am in the Knox Lounge. Len will begin a Lent series leading up to Easter beginning on Sunday 22 February on the topic “What is Spirituality?” All welcome.

Sunday 1 March: 5pm in the Chapel: Mao's Last Dancer. The true story of Li Cunxin, one of the world's greatest classical dancers. Starting in Communist China, he was taken from his childhood home and trained as a dancer. Eventually he escaped to the West where he gained international fame.

Bus Trip: You are invited to join a little bus trip up to the Sign of the Takahe on Thursday 5 March. Take the No. 1 bus from Victoria Street near Knox at 10.57am or pick it up anywhere en route. Arrive outside the Takahe on Cashmere Hill at 11.35am and enjoy a coffee or lunch together at the cafe there. A few minutes' walk will take you to a wonderful lookout over the city to the Alps. This is also the future site of the national Erebus memorial. Buses depart from the Takahe at 12.21pm, 12.51pm and 1.24pm. No need to sign up for the trip - just catch the bus on the day.

Knox Church values the support of all who are involved in our community's life. Knox Church is a charity. All charitable donations are eligible for a tax rebate of 33%. Bank account - 03 1705 0029641 00. Put your name in the reference field and email your contact details to the office. For further information or options contact:
office@knoxchurch.co.nz ph: 379 2456.

A Pride March Sunday 1 March

A probably small but hearty group from All Souls Anglican Church in Merivale is planning a walk from their church down to Aldersgate in Durham Street (ETA at Aldersgate is 1:45pm), and then on to the Commons, to join the all-comers Pride march through to Victoria Square at 2:00pm. The All Souls route takes them right past Knox (at around 1:25pm), and the Knox Council has agreed to support this march. We will be presenting the All Souls marchers with a biscuit each, so would like people to help with the distribution. We also invite interested people to join in the march from Knox. The Aldersgate people are organising a banner identifying the marchers as Inclusive Christians.

At Victoria Square there will be various celebrations until 4:00pm, but people can come and go as they wish.

Full details of the [official parade here](#)

Flowers during Lent

Assisted by some wonderful others, Rochelle and Barbara organise flowers every Sunday for Knox. Their small but wonderfully cleverly managed garden provides many of the flowers we enjoy week by week. A while back, Rochelle found a short article with some Lenten suggestions in it. It's pasted below. This is the approach that we have taken to sanctuary flowers for the last couple of years.

"Lent is a time of repentance, sacrifice and self-denial. During Lent, the physical appearance of the church reflects these aspects of the Lenten season. Decorations are minimal and the few that are used are spiritually significant. Whatever decorations are selected for the Lenten season will be used from Ash Wednesday until Holy Thursday. Decorations are changed on Good Friday, when the death of Jesus Christ is solemnly remembered and observed by the church. On Easter Sunday, decorations will change to reflect the joy of the resurrection.

Use dried arrangements instead of fresh flowers during Lent to signify the austerity of the season. Place rocks, bare tree branches and other symbols associated with the Scripture readings of the Lenten season throughout the altar.

Giving something up for Lent?

I would like to invite you to a very practical and frequently unappreciated form of abstinence: that of refraining from words that offend and hurt our neighbour. Let us begin by disarming our language, avoiding harsh words and rash judgement, refraining from slander and speaking ill of those who are not present and cannot defend themselves. Instead, let us strive to measure our words and cultivate kindness and respect in our families, among our friends, at work, on social media, in political debates, in the media and in Christian communities. In this way, words of hatred will give way to words of hope and peace.



Pope Leo XIV



The Bible reading for next week will be:

- Matthew 23: 27-36

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Keeping in Touch

Would you like to give our office your contact details so that we can send you our quarterly magazine and other Knox communications?

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