



# KNOX CHURCH

love faith outreach community justice

## Order of Service

8 March 2026



**Six stories of Jesus and the stones**

**LENT 3**

**A STONING STORY**

## 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.

The sermon and prayers in this service were written by Matthew with no styling assistance by Artificial Intelligence.

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.

### The Call to Worship:

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

**JESUS, GOD'S EMPATHY ALIVE IN THE WORLD;  
JESUS, HOLDING AND GUIDING US WHEN WE FALL;  
JESUS, WHO SAYS "NEITHER DO I CONDEMN YOU".**

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

**MA IHOWA KOE E MANAAKI. GOD BLESS YOU.**

### Hymn:

Abbots Leigh

Cyril Vincent Taylor (1907-1991)



1. God is love, the heavens adoring;  
God is love, let earth rejoice;  
let creation sing its praises,  
high rejoicing with one voice.  
God who laid the earth's foundation,  
and who spread the heavens above,  
God who breathes through all creation.  
is pure love, eternal love.
2. God is love, and is enfolding  
all the world in one embrace,  
with unfailing grasp is holding  
every child of every race.  
And when human hearts are breaking  
under sorrow's iron rod,  
then they find that selfsame aching  
deep within the heart of God.
3. God is love, and, though with blindness  
sin affects the souls of all,  
God's eternal loving-kindness  
holds and guides us when we fall.  
Sin and death and hell shall never  
o'er us final triumph gain;  
God is love, so love for ever  
o'er the universe must reign.

*Timothy Rees (1874-1939), alt.*

### **Prayer of Approach**

God of love,  
**WE SING OUR PRAISE.**

God of grace,  
**WE OFFER OUR WORSHIP.**

God of the Lenten Lord,  
**BE IN OUR PRAYER.**

*Pause*

And when human hearts are breaking  
**UNDER SORROW'S IRON ROD,**  
then they find that selfsame aching  
**DEEP WITHIN THE HEART OF GOD.**

Could you be a God of fellow feeling?  
Could you be a deep source of empathy?  
Could you be the spring of compassion?  
**COULD IT BE THAT WITH YOU  
IS FULL AND FREEING KINDNESS?**

*Pause*

In this Lenten season of Jesus and the stones,  
today's stones will be instruments of judgment.  
We will explore their harshness,  
their sharper edges.  
**IT WILL FEEL FAMILIAR.**

Then we will wait for the even more familiar voice  
that speaks, and has always spoken  
of forgiveness,  
**OF LIFE AND WHOLENESS.**

Lest the hearing of the voice  
cause us to look at what we have in our hands,  
and feel embarrassed,  
we would release from our grasp  
the stones we carry.

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:**

Calling upon the crowd  
to find one among them  
who is guiltless,  
and let them throw the first stone,  
Jesus foiled the wrong,  
saved a life,  
and illustrated your great mercy, O God.  
**GIVE US THE GIFT OF SELF AWARENESS  
AND EMPATHY FOR THE OTHER,**

**UNTIL WE ARE DOING YOUR VERY WORK,  
BEING MOST FULLY YOUR PEOPLE.**

For we pray this in the name of Jesus,  
whose words we use as together we say

**OUR FATHER IN HEAVEN  
HALLOWED BE YOUR NAME,  
YOUR KINGDOM COME,  
YOUR WILL BE DONE,  
ON EARTH AS IN HEAVEN.  
GIVE US TODAY OUR DAILY BREAD.  
FORGIVE US OUR SINS  
AS WE FORGIVE THOSE WHO SIN AGAINST US.  
SAVE US FROM THE TIME OF TRIAL  
AND DELIVER US FROM EVIL.  
FOR THE KINGDOM, THE POWER AND THE GLORY ARE YOURS  
NOW AND FOR EVER. AMEN.**

### **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.*

**A First Gospel Lesson:** John 8: 1-6

This is the gospel of Christ.  
**PRAISE TO CHRIST, THE WORD.**

**Sermon Part 1:** Why do we judge one another?

*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/3iqlfxHcpfQ>*

**Music for Reflection:** In dich hab ich gehoffet, Herr, BWV 640  
J.S. Bach (1685-1750)

**A Second Gospel Lesson:** John 8: 7-11  
This is the gospel of Christ.  
**PRAISE TO CHRIST, THE WORD.**

## Sermon Part 2: Collateral damage and empathy

### Hymn:

Corvedale

Maurice Bevan (1921-2006)



1. There's a wideness in God's mercy  
like the wideness of the sea;  
there's a kindness in God's justice  
which is more than liberty.  
There is no place where earth's sorrows  
are more felt than in God's heaven;  
there is no place where earth's failings  
have such kindly judgment given.
2. For the love of God is broader  
than the grasp of mortal mind;  
and the heart of the Eternal  
is most wonderfully kind.  
But we make God's love too narrow  
by false limits of our own;  
and we magnify God's strictness  
with a zeal too greatly grown.
3. There is grace enough for thousands  
of new worlds as great as this;  
there is room for fresh creations  
in that upper home of bliss.  
If our love were but more simple,  
we would take him at his word;  
and our lives would be all gladness  
in the joy of Christ our Lord.

*Frederick William Faber (1814-63)(alt.)*

## Prayers for Others and Ourselves

*led by Norman Wilkins*

### The Offering and Dedication

*We stand for the dedication of the Offering*

We offer our empathy,  
**PRAYING THAT IN GOD'S HANDS  
IT MIGHT BE NURTURED.**

We offer our generosity of spirit,  
**PRAYING IT MIGHT BE GROWN.**

We offer our desire to be kind to our neighbour,  
**PRAYING IT MIGHT BECOME A BLESSING.**

We offer also this money and food  
**FOR DIRECTING BY THE MERCY OF JESUS,  
AMEN.**

### Notices

#### The Lenten Litany:

O Christ,  
you have a deep understanding of the human condition.  
You know how we manage, or fail to manage  
our insecurities.  
Calling us to sin no more,  
you are wise in all your ways.  
Along the Lenten path,  
**LEAD US LORD JESUS.**

O Christ,  
having walked in our shoes when you did not need to,  
you call to our sense of empathy.  
You challenge us to drop our stones  
and be instead a people of redemptive grace.  
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:**

Rustington

Charles Hubert Hastings Parry (1848-1918)



1. God of grace and Lenten journey,  
God whose love gives liberty,  
take us back to daily living,  
with our hearts made full and free.  
May our time spent here with Jesus,  
and his call to empathy  
make us agents of compassion,  
people of forgiveness be.
2. May we walk with understanding  
in the shoes of other folk,  
see our image in their faces,  
bear with them their heavy yoke.  
May the one whose care and wisdom  
took the stones from angry hands,  
so inform our work of mercy,  
be the rock on whom we stand.
3. Then when Lent gives way to Easter,  
mercy rising high above,  
angels singing praise to Jesus  
as our judgment falls to love,  
so may seasons of compassion  
flourish in the world around,  
God's own will be celebrated,  
grace and peace through all resound!

*Matthew Jack (b. 1963)*

**Benediction and Sung Amen**

**Postlude:** Durch Adams Fall ist ganz verderbt - BWV 637  
J.S. Bach (1685-1750)

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

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## NOTICES

**This Week: 8 March – 14 March**  
Sunday 10.00am Morning Worship  
11.30am Shalom  
Wednesday 10.00am Bible Study

**Next Week: 15 March – 21 March**  
Sunday 10.00am Morning Worship  
12.00pm Lunch Outing to Urban Eatery  
Wednesday 10.00am Bible Study

**Shalom** - This week (11:30am - 1:00pm today) we begin a Lenten journey using two books by Sallie McFague, "The Body of Christ" and "Super Natural Christians". We will be in the Lounge.

**Sunday lunch 15 March** – Join us for lunch and a friendly chat after church at Urban Eatery (Oderings, Barrington). We meet at around 12pm. Please, add your name to the attendance list at the church entrance. To confirm numbers with the venue it would be appreciated if names were in by Wednesday the 11<sup>th</sup>.

**Climate action** - The Religious Diversity Centre has published a "Faith and Action Guide" on how faith communities can respond to climate change and find hope. This book provides statements about climate change and biodiversity from 7 major faiths; the basic science of climate change and its outcomes; actions that we can all take; and resource material. It will be launched in Christchurch at Knox Centre (28 Bealey Avenue) on Thursday 19 March. Each participant will receive a free copy (subject to availability). This event is open to all, from any faith or none. Refreshments are at 5.30pm and the event starts at 6pm. There is no charge, but a *koha* to cover costs would be appreciated. Hosted by *EcuAction* and the *Canterbury Interfaith Society*.

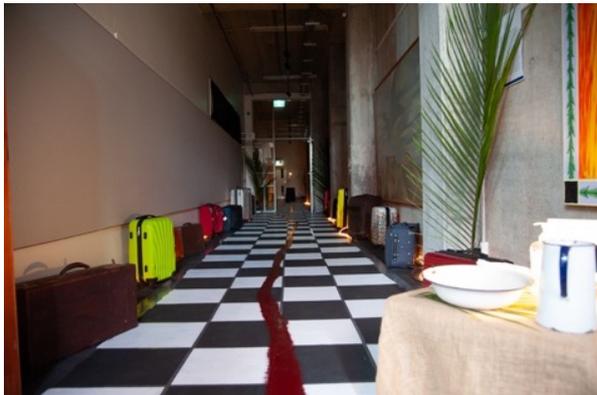
**Easter Day Breakfast** - Following on the tradition, we will be celebrating Easter Day with breakfast on Sunday 5 April to be served from 8.30am – 9.15am in the Knox Lounge. Menu: Fruit and Cereal, Scrambled Eggs with Bacon, Toast and Spreads, Tea/Coffee. Cost: \$10 per person. There are clipboards by both doors to be filled in by Sunday 29 March. We need to get an idea of numbers for food ordering however, there will be enough food for extras.

**Meditation:** Another chance to meditate – in the Chapel on Wednesday 18 March at 8am. All welcome. This is in addition to the Saturday sessions.

**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](mailto:office@knoxchurch.co.nz) ph: 379 2456.

## Holy Week

Tuesday 31 March - Thursday 2 April



## The Lenten Way Te Ara Tapu

An Installation Artwork for Holy Week  
Pete Majendie

In the Knox Centre Chapel

Open for viewing  
Tuesday 31 March - Thursday 2 April,  
9:00am - 12 noon.

The artist will be present on Tuesday and  
Wednesday, 7:00pm - 9:00pm



## Maundy Thursday Communion Service The Night of Tears

Thursday 2 April, 7:00pm  
(also in the chapel)

*Walk for the Planet presents...*

# ***The Future of Local Government in Canterbury: A public forum***



Sunday, March 15  
Cuppa from 1.30pm  
Forum from 2pm

Koha (donation)  
Tea and coffee supplied

Knox Presbyterian Church,  
28 Bealey Ave

## **Speakers:**

Former ECan chairperson Craig Pauling  
Ngāi Tahu ECan councillor Megen McKay

Please join our walks during the Walking Festival:

Saturday, March 28

The Great Opawaho Heathcote River Walk

Saturday, April 4

The Kaiapoi River Wellbeing Walk

Saturday, April 11

The Great Otakaro Avon River Walk

For more information follow Walk for the Planet 2020 on Facebook.



### The Bible readings for next week will be:

- Matthew 18: 6-7
- Matthew 14: 22-33

## Knox Directory

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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?

Name:

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Email: