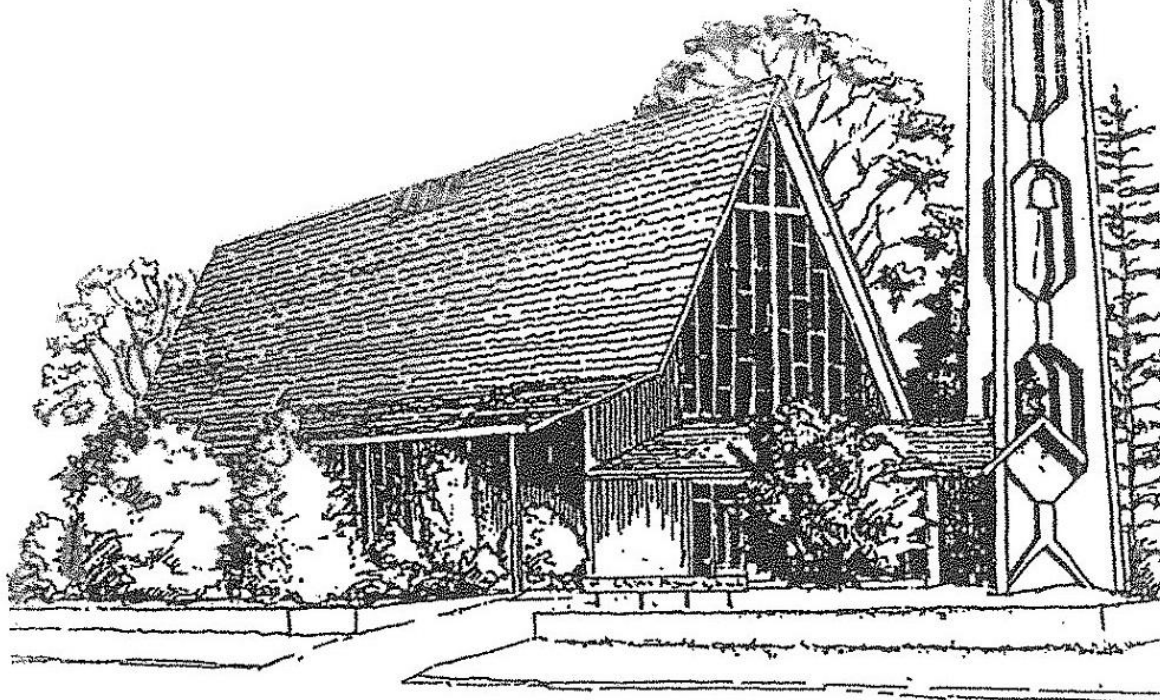


**St Columba's Havelock North
Presbyterian Church of Aotearoa New Zealand**

Columba News

DECEMBER 2025 – JANUARY 2026

Issue No. 69



R. McKend.

ST COLUMBA'S PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, HAVELOCK NORTH

SUNDAY 10.00am MORNING SERVICE

followed by morning tea in the foyer

KIDS ON SUNDAY (Children's Programme) each Sunday (except January) (crèche available)
8 AM COMMUNION - 2nd Sunday monthly except for January

Mission Statement—The people of St Columba's seek through worship and loving service to offer the good news of Jesus Christ to all people.

Minister

Rev. Wayne Toleafoa
 Phone/answerphone: 877 0244
 Mobile: 0211038144
minister@schn.org.nz
 Office: Tuesday to Friday
 9am to 1pm

Church Council Clerk

Wayne Rewcastle
 Phone 877 5754

Treasurer

Sophie Duggan
 0274804235

Office

Administrator
 Elma Pienaar
 Phone/answerphone: 877 8096
info@schn.org.nz
 Website: www.schn.org.nz
 Postal address:
 P O Box 8487
 Havelock North 4157

Hours

Monday to Friday
 9am to 1pm

Our Bank Account Number is 03-0658-0005625-000, if you wish to make a direct payment or set up an automatic payment, payable to:
 St Columba's Presbyterian Parish Havelock North.

FROM THE MINISTER

2025 AD is fast drawing to a close. The warm summer weather is here. We are fortunate in Hawke's Bay to be living in a 'sun trap' where temperatures tend to be warmer than most other parts of the country.

The return of summer each year brings back happy memories for most Kiwis. Trips to the beach, or Splash Planet, maybe to Fiji, the Cook Islands or Bali. Or maybe just local trips where we have caught up with friends and loved ones. Whatever summer means to you, I hope it will also remind you of the warmth of God's goodness. Like the sunlight, God's love is everywhere and for everyone, even when we take it for granted.

I never get tired of hearing the story of Christmas because it is a story of Hope. Against all the odds a baby is born in a stable to an unlikely couple. He is pursued by both good and evil people – Wisemen and shepherds - and an evil king who would snuff out his life. He and his parents become refugees and flee to Egypt, returning years later, when it is safe to do so.

The baby is given the name, 'Emmanuel' meaning 'God is with us'. And his life will make all the difference to billions of people, down through the ages, including a small multitude of us in Havelock North.

Every year we celebrate his life in the lovely warmth of another Kiwi summer. We recall the Hope, Joy, Peace and Love that the birth of Christ brings. These are his heavenly gifts to us.

This year, I will be going to Auckland to spend Christmas with my children and extended family, some of whom are coming from overseas. It will be only the second time in my 40 years of ministry, that I will not be taking the Christmas services. I will attend the Christmas services at my family church in Auckland. I will also be preaching on the first Sunday of 2026, in the Bay of Islands Uniting Church in Paihia. (I think it's called a 'busman's holiday').

Here in Havelock North, Mrs Anne Keown (Lay Celebrant) and the Rev Craig Kilgour will lead the Christmas services. The Rev Warren Fortune will do the last service for 2025 (Dec 28) and the first service for 2026, January 4th. I urge you to support those services as we transition into a new year.

Finally, thank you for your support of my family and my ministry. It's been a pleasure working at St Columba's with so many good people. Thank you for your support of our parish.

I wish you a merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. May this blessed season be a time of Hope, Joy, Peace and Love for you and your loved ones.

Love & Blessings

Wayne

NOURISHED FOR NIL

Thank you for your continuing support of the Food Bank through Nourished for Nil. The Food Bank closes for the year on 24 December and re-opens on 13 January. The need for food parcels rises hugely at this time of the year and it would be great to be able to add a little bit of “Christmas Cheer” to the boxes – sweet treats etc. If you’d prefer to give money, we are happy to spend it on your behalf.

Spreads like honey, jams and Marmite are very low at present. Let’s fill that basket in the foyer. Have a Blessed Christmas!

Dianne and John Taylor

TABLE TENNIS

Table tennis will finish for the year on 15 December and begin again on Monday 12 January. We will not play on 22 December, 29 December or 5 January.

We always welcome new players. We provide bats and balls and pay \$3 each Monday which includes morning tea. We rent the hall from the Orphans Club on the corner of Miller Street and Albert Rd in Hastings from 9.30am to 11.30am. Enquiries please contact Jocelyn Kirkwood.

Jocelyn Kirkwood

BIBLE STUDY GROUP

More Than Just a Meeting: Why Attend a Bible Study

Are you looking for a way to deepen your faith, connect with other women, and grow in your understanding of God's Word? Look no further than our monthly women's Bible study! This isn't just another item on your to-do list; it's a vital opportunity to nourish your soul and build meaningful relationships. Here's why it's worth making time for our Bible study:

1. A Deeper Dive into Scripture

We read the Bible on our own, but have you ever felt like you're missing something? A Bible study provides a structured environment to truly dig into the text. A Bible Study, however, explores the historical context, cultural nuances, and original meanings of passages, unlocking layers of truth that you might not discover on your own. It's an opportunity to ask questions, share insights, and see how different parts of Scripture connect to form a beautiful, cohesive story.

2. The Power of Shared Community

A Bible study is a safe and welcoming space where you can be yourself, share your struggles, and celebrate your victories with others who understand. We all face similar

challenges and joys in our lives, and there's immense comfort in knowing you're not alone. We laugh together, pray for one another, and offer encouragement and support. These are the kind of friendships that lift you up and help you walk closer with the Lord.

3. Practical Application for Everyday Life

It's one thing to read the Bible; it's another to apply its truths to your life. Our Bible study is focused on bridging that gap. We discuss how the lessons we learn from Scripture can be used in our daily lives as family members, friends, and co-workers. We learn to navigate difficult conversations, find peace in the midst of chaos, and live with purpose, all through the lens of God's Word.

4. A Time for Spiritual Refreshment

Life can be busy and draining. Attending a Bible study is a chance to pause, step away from the demands of the world, and refocus on what truly matters. It's a time to be spiritually fed, to rest in God's presence, and to be reminded of His unchanging love and faithfulness. It's a time to be filled up so that you can pour into the lives of others. We invite you to join us! Whether you're a seasoned Bible student or brand new to the faith, there is a place for you.

We meet every second Monday monthly at 2pm in the Millar Room. All are welcome!

Judith Bartlett

FAITH & REASON DISCUSSION GROUP

This small group meets on the last Sunday each month in the church foyer from 3pm. We begin with afternoon tea and finish around 4.30pm. We discuss a variety of Topics, sometimes inspired by church reflections, writings from magazines or our handbook "Hand in Hand" written by Ian Harris, whose contribution to the Otago Daily Times gave us much to think about. We feel free to raise any topic of theological interest to us and all ideas are treated with respect.

If you have something on your mind that you would like to discuss with others, do come along. All are welcome!!

Further enquiries to Jocelyn Kirkwood.

Jocelyn Kirkwood

BLOKES BREAKFAST

After a successful year Blokes Breakfast goes into recess until February 2026. One of our more recent speakers, gave us interesting information on the growth of drones and their use in a wide variety of industries. We have had an interesting array of speakers during the year and look forward to arranging people to address us next year.

John Taylor

MINI MARKET

Hasn't time flown!!! Three markets down already and five to go.

We are on budgetary track with \$2,600 for the November market and \$2,500 for October. Great effort to all!!

If we get lots of quality white elephant goods, Kevin may be able to facilitate an extra market on Easter Monday. Watch this space.

The weather has been kind so far and we are hoping for a biggie on 6 December; so, any help with saleable items, buying on the day or assisting on the day, would be much appreciated.

The committee wishes you all a very Merry Xmas; rest up and see you all for the 7 February market day.

Next Dates: 6 December, 7 February, 7 March, 4 April, 2 May.

Times: Set up at 7.30am, for 9.00am start and 12.00pm finish.

Layout: Flow from foyer through gazebos as with last year, with free coffee/tea in the foyer.

Committee & security: John Heesterman, Kevin Rose, Wayne Rewcastle, Phil Carter.

Convenors:

- Finance and Floats - John Heesterman
- Eftpos – Elma Pienaar
- Free coffee/tea – Dorothy Thawley
- Raffle – Sophie Duggan
- Jam & Pickles – Janet Browne
- Baking – Elma Pienaar, Ailsa Rewcastle
- Crafts – Annette Broadley, Lois Churchill
- White Elephant/Jewelry – Janice Hopkinson, Kevin Rose, Anne Vermunt
There is a need for good quality stuff, also jewelry and China.
- Plants – John Heesterman, Elaine Congdon
- Produce – Arthur Peake, Jos Vermunt

- Sweets – Jill Thomsen
- BBQ – Wayne Rewcastle, Mike Earle, John Heesterman

The committee (Phil Carter, Kevin Rose, Wayne Rewcastle & John Heesterman)

WOMEN'S COFFEE GROUP

A very "Happy Christmas" from the St Columba's Women's Coffee Group. We have our final gathering of the year on Wednesday 10 December at 10.00am in the foyer. We will start with a very special little Christmas service in church and follow that up with a Christmas morning tea and fellowship. To this service we invite women from all the other churches in Havelock North and we invite everyone to bring along something for the foodbank – perhaps something a little Christmassy. A perfect way to start the build up to Christmas. See you there. Come and bring a friend.

We'll meet again in February on the second Wednesday.

Dianne, Janet, Ailsa

PRAYER GROUP

Our final meeting for this year is on Wednesday 3 December at 2.00pm at Janice and Edgar's home. We will resume on Wednesday 4 February 2026, meeting every second month. Prayer requests can be made to Rev Wayne or Elma in the office. While the office is closed over the Christmas/New Year period, phone Mary with prayer requests. Wishing you and your dear ones the Blessings of Christmas and a safe, happy holiday period.

*Yours in Christ
Mary Sittauer*

MAINLY BALANCE - Stay Strong, Stay Steady!

This vibrant group continues to go from strength to strength. The final session for the year will be held on Tuesday, 16 December, and will resume again on Tuesday, 20 January next year. New participants are always welcome!

Elma Pienaar

A BIT OF HISTORY

During alterations in the 1990's to create two offices, Ivan Stewart and Sam Browne uncovered a remarkable little relic hidden within the building. Tucked away behind the wall was a piece of timber bearing handwritten inscriptions—presumably made by one of the original builders when the church was constructed in 1970–1971.

The name on the timber is Dick Clarke, who noted that he was 25 years old in June 1971. Alongside his name were glimpses into life at the time: contractors earned \$1.41 per hour, a jug of beer cost 43 cents, and petrol was 49 cents a gallon.

This simple piece of wood offers a charming window into the past and a reminder of the generations who helped shape our church home. What a delight to rediscover a small part of our story!



KNIT N NATTER

Wow! What a productive year we've had with the knitting needles creating 40 beautiful baby blankets. Thanks must go to Dorothy for crocheting all the squares together and using her wonderful eye for colour. The 'natter' part of the group is just as important – and we've solved many worldwide issues! The group will wind up on Wednesday 3 December and recommence on 18 February 2026. Happy Christmas, from all the knitters! 😊

Dianne Taylor

COLUMBA BOOKS

Sales

Over the past several weeks of October and November, the period has been marked by changes in customer behaviour, an influx of book donations, increased volunteer support, and successful marketing on Facebook.

With the arrival of summer, we have seen a significant increase in foot traffic to the shop. The pleasant weather has encouraged more people to visit, creating a lively and welcoming atmosphere. However, it is worth noting that customers have been more selective in their purchases, perhaps reflecting more discerning tastes or specific reading needs.

Despite the selectiveness, overall sales have recently lifted, especially in the last two weeks following our Facebook advertisement campaign. The promotion has noticeably boosted our visibility and sales figures, underscoring the value of community engagement through social media.

Book Donations and Stock

We are grateful for the generosity of the public, as we continue to receive a steady stream of book donations. Among these are several very recent publications, which have added fresh interest to our collection and provided more options for our customers. This ongoing support is vital to the vibrancy and variety of our shop.

Volunteer Update

We are delighted to welcome four new volunteers to our team. Their enthusiasm and contribution have helped reduce the workload for our regular volunteers, ensuring smoother operations and enhanced customer service. We extend our sincere thanks to all volunteers for their dedication and teamwork. Without you there would be no bookshop.

Looking ahead, we ask all volunteers to check the rosters for December and January once they are distributed. Please indicate your availability to assist during these months so we can ensure adequate coverage and continue our service to the community without interruption.

Recommended Reading: Top 10 Books

In the spirit of sharing the joy of reading, here is a list of ten books that we believe everyone should read. These selections span various genres and reflect both timeless classics and contemporary favourites: Have a read of our list and tell us what you think.

1. To Kill a Mockingbird by Harper Lee
2. Pride and Prejudice by Jane Austen
3. 1984 by George Orwell
4. The Book Thief by Markus Zusak
5. The Lord of the Rings by J.R.R. Tolkien
6. The Catcher in the Rye by J.D. Salinger
7. The Alchemist by Paulo Coelho
8. Jane Eyre by Charlotte Brontë
9. Educated by Tara Westover
10. The Kite Runner by Khaled Hosseini

Conclusion

Thank you to all our supporters, donors, and volunteers for contributing to a successful spring period at the Bookshop. Your efforts and generosity make our community stronger and more connected. We look forward to a busy and rewarding summer season ahead.

Judith Bartlett, Manager

OUR PEOPLE

I am well aware that for the last couple of issues there has been silence as far as Our People is concerned, due to my overseas jaunts. A number of other church members have also been on trips, both within New Zealand and overseas, and others are due to travel to be with family over the Christmas period.

Much has happened in our church over the past months. Sadly, we have lost quite a number of special members of our congregation. They will all be missed very much, and we offer our sincere condolences to their loved ones. We also think of those who have lost cherished members of their family throughout the year, and we know that Christmas is a time when they will be specially missed.

A number of people have been in hospital lately, and we wish them a speedy return to good health. Some are still recuperating at home from illness or accidents, and we wish them all well.

To all those who are not able to get to church, be assured that you are missed and remembered in our prayers. We have quite a number of parishioners living in the various rest homes and retirement villages in the area, and we ask God's blessing on them, and on the staff running these residences.

We celebrate our older members in St. Columba's, and trust that the Over '90s enjoyed their afternoon tea party. We also look forward to the forthcoming Carols on the Green on Sunday 7 December, when we join together with the families of Havelock North as we celebrate the start of the Christmas season.

In just a few weeks we will be celebrating Christmas, together with all it means. Amongst the commercialisation and presents which are so obvious at this time of year, we remember the true meaning of Christmas and what it means to be a Christian. May each member of our congregation know the love, joy and peace that Christmas holds.

Pat Burden

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY

Teach us to use wisely all the time we have

A woman once had a dream in which an angel was giving her a message: as a reward for her virtues, the sum of \$1440 would be deposited into her bank account every morning. The amount had only one condition: at the close of each business day, any balance that had not been used would be cancelled. It wouldn't carry over to the next day or accrue interest. Each morning a new \$1440 would be credited to her.

The dream was so vivid that when she woke up, she asked the Lord to explain what it meant. He led her to understand that she was receiving 1440 minutes every morning - the exact number of minutes in a 24-hour day. What she did with the deposit of time was important because 1440 minutes per day were all she would ever receive!

And you have a similar account. At the close of each day, you should be able to look back with joy and satisfaction and see that those golden minutes were invested wisely. Someone has said "Time is God's gift to you, but what you do with it, is your gift to God."

And it's true. 70 years are given to you, and for many of us a lot more but teach us to realise the brevity of life, so that we may grow in wisdom. And may the Lord our God show us his approval and make our efforts successful.

I sometimes reflect what I had done (or not done) with my 1440 minutes, and I often have very little to show for my day!! Some of you may look back on your day with the satisfaction of knowing that you have achieved a lot, but I am sure that many of you can identify with me by not having done as much as intended!

Thinking of some of the great people of the past, such as Mother Theresa and Albert Schweitzer, I know that my greatest efforts would pale into insignificance compared to these great souls and all they achieved.

When you wake up tomorrow morning and consider the balance in your account, how will you spend your day?

BIBLE READING ROSTER

7 Dec	Craig Kilgour
14 Dec	Stephen Randal
21 Dec	Kevin Rose
25 Dec	Helen Sinclair
28 Dec	Judith Bartlett
4 Jan	Val Parish
11 Jan	Rex Bartlett
18 Jan	Mary Benson
25 Jan	Ailsa Rewcastle

MORNING TEA ROSTER

DECEMBER	
7 December	Judy Bark, Jill Thomsen
	Barbara Randal, Stephen Randal
14 December	Helen Sinclair, Craig Kilgour
	Jill Rose, Kevin Rose
21 December	Pat Burden, Grayham Burden
	Elma Pienaar
28 December	Sophie Duggan, Mike Earle
	Val Parish, Olive Duggan
4 January	Shirley Hodge, Jan Jenkins
	Judith Bell, Jane McElroy
11 January	Jocelyn Kirkwood, Margaret Loughlan
	Colleen Field, Anne Keown
18 January	Jan Peake, Arthur Peake
	Elma Pienaar, Louis Pienaar
25 January	Annette Broadley, Murray Broadley
	Judith Bartlett, Rex Bartlett

FLOWER ROSTER

Dec 5	Wayne Rewcastle	No flower roster for January
Dec 12	Helen Caley	
Dec 19	Jill Rose	
Dec 23 CHRISTMAS	Cheryl Lattey	
Dec 26	Check on flowers from Christmas should be okay	



CHRISTMAS SERVICES 2025

Wed	10 December	10.00am	Women's Advent Service
Wed	24 December	4.00pm	Children's Pageant
Wed	24 December	8.30pm	Christmas Candle Service
Thu	25 December	10.00am	Christmas Day Service

CALENDAR

Sunday 30	10.00am	Sunday Service (Advent 1)
DECEMBER		
Monday 1	9.30am	Table tennis, Orphan Club Hall
Tuesday 2	1.00pm	Mainly Balance, foyer
Tuesday 2	7.00pm	Elders meeting, Millar Room
Wednesday 3	10.00am	Knit n Natter, Millar Room
Wednesday 3	2.00pm	Prayer Group
Thursday 4	9.30am	Mainly Music, foyer (Christmas celebration)
Saturday 6	9.00am	Mini market
Sunday 7	10.00am	Sunday Service (Advent 2)
Sunday 7	4.00pm	Carols on the Green
Monday 8	9.30am	Table tennis, Orphans Club Hall
Monday 8	2.00pm	Bible Study, Millar Room
Tuesday 9	1.00pm	Mainly Balance, foyer
Tuesday 9	7.30pm	Board of Managers meeting, Millar Room
Wednesday 10	10.00am	Women's Advent Service and morning tea
Sunday 14	8.00am	Communion
Sunday 14	10.00am	Sunday Service & Quarterly Communion (Advent 3)
Monday 15	9.30am	Table tennis, Orphan's Club Hall
Tuesday 16	1.00pm	Mainly Balance, foyer
Sunday 21	10.00am	Sunday Service (Advent 4)
Wednesday 24	4.00pm	Children Christmas Pageant
Wednesday 24	8.30pm	Christmas Candle Service
Thursday 25	10.00am	Christmas Day Service [Rev Craig Kilgour]
Sunday 28	10.00am	Sunday Service [Rev Warren Fortune]

JANUARY CALENDAR

Sunday service each Sunday at 10.00am [Rev Warren Fortune on 4 January].
No Children's programme, but activity sheets are available in the back of the church.

Mainly Balance resumes on Tuesday 20 January 2026 at 1.00pm in the church foyer and **Table tennis** resumes on Monday 15 January 2026 at 9.30am in the hall of the Orphans Club in Hastings.

The church office closes on Wednesday 24 December 2025 and will reopen on Wednesday 21 January 2025.

Rev Wayne Toleafoa is on leave from 23 December 2025 to 11 January 2026.

In case of an emergency, please contact the Church Council Chair, Wayne Rewcastle or leave a message on the office answerphone 06 877 8096.



**ST COLUMBA'S PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
HAVELOCK NORTH
PRESENTS**

CAROLS ON THE GREEN

A Kiwi Christmas Celebration

HAVELOCK NORTH VILLAGE GREEN

SUNDAY 7 DECEMBER 2025

4 – 6 PM

FREE ENTRY

FEATURING:

- Havelock North Primary School Choir & Ukulele Band
- Bay Citles' Symphonic Band
- Dianne Abraham
- Hawke's Bay Piper
- Men in Black Jazz Band

WHAT'S ON:

- Picnics encouraged
- Live Christmas Carolling
- Sausage Sizzle (koha)
- Santa & Free Presents for Kids!

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