

An Empty Space The post Easter space in the Christian calendar is perhaps the most potent empty space in all Creation. Anyone who has been to sea for some time or who has been in a real desert will have some idea of just how powerful an empty space can be. When there is nothing but the horizon for days on end we not only begin to sense something of the majesty of Creation but we also begin to sense something of the true place we have in it. When what is before us is too big for us to fill in any way we begin to realise the true boundaries of our humanity. This is one reason why God has always led His followers into deserts of one kind or another. In these places we must give up the prideful imaginings of our heart and begin to comprehend our limits and our needs. Furthermore, in the empty places we find it much easier to focus on one thing—the one thing, as Jesus said to Martha, “that is needful.” I wonder if you’ve been led to a desert recently? I wonder if you’ve found the usual joys of life suddenly gone because opening before you is a huge empty place—a place devoid of a loved one or close friend; a place robbed of health and vigour because of sickness or injury; a place deserted by hope because someone or something has let you down terribly or because you see a madness in the world which seems unstoppable. If so, know this one thing—in this space, in this terrible emptiness, in this barren landscape—**God is there!** This is the one key message we find in the Bible about empty places—they are not empty of God. Indeed, God is especially present there because in that place our hearts can be especially open to God. The disciples went into their empty space after Jesus finally ascended to heaven with a mixture of joy and apprehension. We too need to realise that with every desert—God will make a way though there seems to be no way!



Richard

Contacts

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Next week's team

Service Leader	Richard Dawson
Preacher	Geoff New
Worship Leader	Richard Dawson
Door & Offering	Colin & Chris Fitzpatrick
Children's Talk	Steve Christensen
Prayers	Rachel Elder
Bible Reading	Kezia Bates
Data Projector	Sandi Jull
Sound	To be confirmed
Morning Tea	Mal & Helen C, Susan J
Duty Elder	Fairlie Sim
Welcome Team	Miranda Fairmaid
Prayer Ministry	Nigel Jamieson
Offering Counter	Debbie Griffiths
Set up Team	Craig Campbell

Leith Valley Church

"Growing great community"



Sunday 24 April 2016



Service Leader and Preacher:
Richard Dawson

Worship Leader:
Kezia Bates

It's great to have you with us this morning!

A warm welcome to any visitors today, we hope you enjoy your time with us and can join us for morning tea.

There will be Kidztime after the children's talk, Junior Youth is taking a break for the next two weeks.



Today's Readings:
John 20:1-18
Romans 6:1-11

TODAY'S TEAM

Door Greet and Offering:	Satake/Roberts Family	Children's Talk:	Richard Dawson
Prayers for Others:	Fairlie Sim	Bible Reading:	Miranda Fairmaid
Data Projector:	Reuben Campbell	Sound:	
Duty Elder:	Russell Elder	Prayer Ministry:	Bruce & Pauline Geddes
Morning Tea:	Peter & Jessica Crothall	Welcome Team:	Mal & Helen Crossley
	Geoff & Ruth New,	Offering Count:	Keryn Harrex

Leith Valley at www.leithvalley.org.nz

Notices

PRAYER FOR LEITH

Wednesday 7.30am
Leith Valley Church
Sunday mornings 9.40am
Room 17 (middle downstairs classroom)

HELP

HOSPITAL CHAPEL NEXT WEEK

PLEASE SEE RACHEL TODAY!

PSO Yellow bags

Please take a bag (or two!) today and find some items to put in over the next few weeks.

Bring to church on May 8th and help Presbyterian Support! (originally May 1st note date change)

Speaking of life and death
A series of 5 forums focussing on euthanasia
St Paul's Cathedral

First session: 5.30pm 27 April

**Transplanted:
Refugee Portraits of
New Zealand**

Dunedin Community
Gallery
May 8-18th

See Flyer on noticeboard

Givealittle page:
<http://wagepeacenz.org/2016/03/15/transplanted-refugee-portraits-of-new-zealand/>

PLAYGROUND SAFETY

Remember to always know where your children are and make sure they know how to be safe.



Money Matters: For all direct payments please use account number
03-0883-0620501-00

If you would like a donation number for tax purposes please contact the office.

Thanks from Helen

My thanks to Leith Valley for last Sunday. I was immensely grateful for the farewell last Sunday as it brings some closure, in a good way, to the end of my responsibility and pastoral tie at Leith Valley.

Thank you again for all the wonderful reflections and words of encouragement whether spoken or written. I leave with a great sense of fulfilment and satisfaction that things are well and will be well. Your generosity will enable me to buy an iPad pro and some accessories when I reach the US and this is a lovely gift to me for my interactive nature and ministry in the future. You also gave me a lovely, locally crafted silver necklace which the staff picked out for me (the female ones!), representing the harakeke or flax. It speaks of weaving and is a fitting image of the weaving in our lives that God continues to do as we trust Him. Thank you.

May I reiterate my love and thanks to all of you who have walked alongside me in many roles and community relationships. I will miss the staff meetings and my little office full of sunshine and the birds feeding and singing outside. I will miss my small group and the many other groups I have led or interacted with, the young people I have mentored, the many relationships that have formed over coffee and camps and activities, and not least of all the privilege it is to lead worship and curate the space where we can experience the love of God. God will bless the future of Leith Valley and I look forward to keeping in touch.

So I leave Dunedin on Saturday. Number 2 grandchild arrived this week a little early, so it gives me the chance to go and see the family in New Plymouth before I leave for the States. Her name is Eliana and it means in Hebrew: My God has answered with joy. Watch out for some photos on fb. I leave for Ohio and our youngest daughter's graduation on the 28th April, returning to NZ on the 25th May. Meantime Wayne will be plugging away at looking for work and getting our house ready for **AirBnb**.

I will be blogging again soon so if you would like to hear the news please go to helenharray.com and click **follow** at the bottom of the page. It's a long page now so keep going right to the end. You will be asked to confirm this when they send you an email.

With love and thanks,

Helen



PCANZ would love to get some feedback on their publications. If you read SPANZ or use the PCANZ website, there is a survey at <https://www.surveymonkey/r/PCANZSurvey2016>

Our Vision:
Growing great community



Our Values:
All people matter to God
We need to grow
We need to be in community
We need to serve