



KNOX CHURCH

love faith outreach community justice

Order of Service

3 May 2026



THE STONING OF STEPHEN

A COMMUNION SERVICE

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 - use your aid's "T" setting.

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

This is a communion service. The table at Knox is an open one. Members of any church, as well as any who are seeking God sincerely, are welcome to receive communion here.

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, WHOSE DYING AND RISING CHANGED THE WORLD;
JESUS, CHERISHED BY THE COMMUNITY OF FAITH;
JESUS, WHOSE GIFT TO US IS HOPE.**

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

MA IHOWA KOE E MANAAKI. GOD BLESS YOU.

Hymn:

Michael

Herbert Howells (1892-1983)



1. All our hope on God is founded:
who else can our hope renew?
Still through change and chance God guides us,
only good and only true.
God unknown, grace alone,
calls our hearts to be God's own.
2. Well does the almighty Giver
bounteous gifts on us bestow!
With delight our souls are nourished;
pleasure leads us where we go.
At God's hand love does stand;
joy awaits each new command.
3. Human pride and earthly glory,
sword and crown betray God's trust;
what with care and toil we're building,
tower and temple, fall to dust.
But God's power,
hour by hour,
is our temple and our tower.
4. In glad hymns to God eternal
sacrifice of praise be done,
high above all praises praising
for the love in Christ made known.
Hear Christ's call, one and all;
you who follow shall not fall.

Joachim Neander (1650-1680)
tr. Robert Bridges (1844-1930), alt.

Prayer of Approach

Christ of all hope,
what shall we take from the story of Stephen?
Maybe the wonderful hope he held on his day of trouble . . .
Maybe the vision he had of you at the right hand of God . . .
Maybe the faith enabling him to die well -

**CHRIST OF ALL HOPE,
WHAT DO WE MAKE OF STEPHEN?**

Christ of all hope,
what shall we take from the story of Stephen?

Because from one particular angle
it looks like an angry mob
and a life cruelly spilled.
**CHRIST OF ALL HOPE,
WHAT DO WE MAKE OF STEPHEN?**

Christ of all hope,
what shall we take from the story of Stephen?
An remembering of your word "if this is what they did to the Master,
what will they do to the slave?"
A promise of enduring injustice in our unfolding history?

Or something else - more akin to the victory of hope.
**CHRIST OF ALL HOPE,
WHAT DO WE MAKE OF STEPHEN?**

Silence

Be in our hearts and minds, O Christ of hope,
that we may hear the scriptures today
and be fed by them.
Be in our hearts and minds also
that we might lay aside the things that burden us
and make us inclined to kill the Stephens of our days.

. . . 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:

Through the story of Stephen,
maybe you call us, O God,
to the expression of sorrow,
to commitment to change what is wrong,
to marvel at the mystery of resurrection,
and to believe in the possibility of change.

**IF THIS IS THAT TO WHICH YOU CALL US,
GIVE US EARS TO HEAR,**

**MINDS TO UNDERSTAND,
AND HEARTS TO OFFER,**

for we pray this in the name of the risen Christ,
AMEN.

The Notices

Introduction: In the community of glad hearts, who was Stephen?

The Bible Lesson: Acts 7:54 - 8:1a

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

Knox Singers: The True and Living Bread
David Blackwell (b. 1961)

*I bow before you, all my sin confessed, to hear again the words of love you said;
and at your table as your honoured guest, I take and eat the true and living bread.
So in remembrance of your life laid down, I come to praise you for your grace divine; saved by
your cross and subject to your crown, strengthened for service by this bread and wine.
- Timothy Dudley Smith (1926-2024)*

Sermon: The Four Times of Stephen

- Stephen's Time for the Community to be sad
- Stephen's Time for the Community to engage with what needs to change
- Stephen's Time for the Community to ponder resurrection
- Stephen's Time for the Community to believe in wonders
- An epilogue

Generally, sermons are posted on our website's sermon page shortly after the service. Hard copies of the sermons are available before and after the service – ask the person at the door. A video version of this sermon is available from 10:00am today: <https://youtu.be/-1Hlg8nh6CA>

Prayers for Others and Ourselves

*To the minister's words, "We pray for such communities",
you are invited to respond "**LORD JESUS, RECEIVE OUR SPIRIT**".*

**... 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 Offering and Dedication

We stand for the dedication of the Offering.

Blessed are you, O God of all creation.
Through your goodness, we bring what we have gathered,
using the talents that you have given us.
It will further the work of your kingdom.
BLESSED BE GOD FOREVER.

Blessed are you, O God of all creation.
Through your goodness we have this bread to offer,
which earth has given and human hands have made.
It will become for us the bread of life.
BLESSED BE GOD FOREVER.

Blessed are you, O God of all creation.
Through your goodness we have this wine to offer,
fruit of the vine and work of human hands.
It will become for us our spiritual drink.
**BLESSED BE GOD FOREVER,
THROUGH JESUS CHRIST OUR LORD, 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.

Communion Hymn:

Gatehouse

John Bell (b.1949)



1. Among us and before us, Lord, you stand
with arms outstretched and bread and wine at hand.
Confronting those unworthy of a crumb,
you ask that to your table we should come.
2. Who dare say No, when such is your resolve
our worst to witness, suffer and absolve,
our best to raise in lives by God forgiven,
our souls to fill on earth with food from heaven?
3. Who dare say No, when such is your intent
to love the selves we famish and resent,
to cradle our uncertainties and fear,
to kindle hope as you in faith draw near?
4. Who dare say No, when such is your request
that each around your table should be guest,
that here the ancient word should live as new,
'Take, eat and drink - all this is meant for you.'?
5. No more we hesitate and wonder why;
no more we stand indifferent, scared or shy.
Your invitation leads us to say Yes,
to meet you where you nourish, heal and bless.

John Bell (b. 1949)

We sit for

The Invitation

The Institution

The Setting Apart of the Elements

The Great Eucharistic Prayer:

May God be with you.

AND ALSO WITH YOU.

Lift up your hearts.

WE LIFT THEM TO GOD.

Let us give thanks to the world's creator.

IT IS RIGHT TO GIVE OUR THANKS AND PRAISE.

It is right indeed . . .

The Breaking of the Bread

Lamb of God:

Jesus, Bread of Heaven,
HAVE MERCY ON US.

Jesus, recreating your people where they stand,
HAVE MERCY ON US.

Jesus, foretaste of the new creation,
GRANT US YOUR PEACE.

The Communion

*For the distribution, please come forward to the table,
receive some bread, dip it in the cup, and return to your seat. If you prefer
gluten free bread, some is available on the plinth in front of the bread servers.
Non-alcoholic grape juice can be taken from the trays held by the glass servers.*

The Prayer After Communion

Eternal God,
we give you thanks and praise
that while we were still far off
you met us in your Son, and brought us home.
**MAY WE WHO SHARE HIS BREAD
LIVE HIS RISEN LIFE;
WE WHO DRINK HIS CUP
BRING LIFE TO OTHERS;
WE WHOM THE SPIRIT LIGHTS
GIVE LIGHT TO THE WORLD,
THAT ALL YOUR CHILDREN SHALL BE FREE,
AND THE WHOLE EARTH LIVE TO PRAISE YOUR NAME.
AMEN.**

Hymn:

Laudate Dominum

Charles Hubert Hastings Parry (1848-1918)



1. You servants of God,
your Sovereign proclaim,
and publish abroad
that wonderful name;
the name all-victorious

of Jesus extol;
who, sovereign and glorious,
now rules over all.

2. From worship we go,
God's call in our ears
to value, protect
and tend to the tears
of all who are needing
our care and our love,
so drawing the humble
to healing above.

3. Then let us adore,
and render God's right,
all glory and power,
all wisdom and might,
all honour and blessing
with angels above,
and thanks never-ceasing,
and infinite love.
Amen, amen!

*v.v. 1 & 3, Charles Wesley (1707-1788), alt.
v. 2, Matthew Jack (b. 1963)*

Benediction and Sung Amen

Postlude: Postlude
William Mathias (1934-1992)

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

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NOTICES

This Week:	3 May – 9 May
Sunday	10.00am Morning Worship 4.00pm Film Group in the Lounge
Wednesday	10.00am Bible Study
Next Week:	10 May – 16 May
Sunday	10.00am Morning Worship 11.30am Shalom
Wednesday	10.00am Bible Study

Film Group – Today at 4.00pm in the Lounge: Captain Phillips (2013). This film portrays a true event. In 2009 a U.S. container ship was hi-jacked by Somali pirates. It shows that dangerous situations can be solved with honour as the Captain, portrayed by Tom Hanks, surrenders himself in order to save his crew.

Knox Life - if you have any material for the next edition of Knox Life please send it to the office now.

Sunday lunch 17 May – 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.

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 (Knox Presbyterian Church). 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.



**Missouri State University Chorale
& Christchurch Youth Choir**

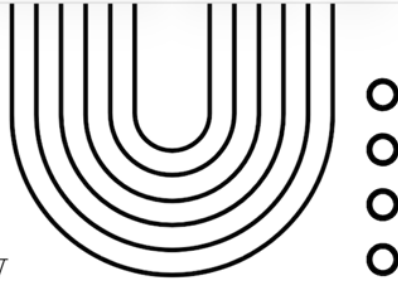
Collaboration Concert

May 18th at 7pm

Knox Presbyterian Church

Door Sales Available - Waged \$25, Unwaged \$15

PETERBOROUGH
HOUSING COOPERATIVE



Community resilience evening

THURSDAY 7 MAY, 7PM
175 PETERBOROUGH STREET
CHRISTCHURCH, 8013



**What happens if food systems come under pressure?
How would our community cope with reduced fuel?
Do we know who might need support?**

Join other local residents for a collaborative session exploring answers to these questions (and a cuppa too).

Questions? Get in touch with callumstewartward@gmail.com



Building the power to win better taxes, for better futures through effective organising conversations. Join Better Taxes and the Canterbury Tax Reform Coalition to build our skills to fight for better taxes. Thursday 7 May - 5pm for kai, 5:30pm start. Trade Union Centre, 68 Langdons Road, Northcote.



The Bible readings for next week will be:

- Psalm 66: 7-18
- John 14: 15-21

Knox Directory

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Visit our website

<http://www.knoxchurch.co.nz/>



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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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