

NAU MAI
HAERE MAI
WELCOME
TO
WORSHIP

Mauriceville West
Lutheran Church

3rd Sunday in Lent

De-consecration of the
Church Building

24th March 2019



For everything there is a season (Eccl.3:1)

NAU MAI
HAERE MAI
WELCOME

The time has come for the members of Christ's holy church, under God's leadership, to take leave of this building. Mauriceville West Lutheran Church has been dedicated for the ministry of God's Word and Sacraments since 1884, although this building dates from 1957. It has provided refuge and comfort for God's people. It has served this household of faith. It is fitting, therefore, that as we take our leave of this house, we lift up our hearts in thanksgiving.

Today we acknowledge that God has blessed the many ministries carried on in this place by the members of Mauriceville West Lutheran Church over the years. As generations have prayed their prayers and sung the Lord's praise, the Spirit has blessed countless worshippers. Here, we have celebrated the Lord's Supper and been nurtured in our journey in faith. We have rejoiced here and confessed our faith. Here we have baptised our children and grandchildren. We have celebrated the lives of those who have gone on before us. We have witnessed vows to love, honour, and cherish one another always. From within these walls, many have gone out to serve God in the wider Church and in the world.

The time has come for us to go now from this place, and to journey in faith in new and unfamiliar ways. We do so with sadness but also in hope. We do what so many faithful people have done before, walking with trust and confidence in the Lord of the Church, knowing that God does not abandon us, but leads us always with the Light of his Son, Jesus Christ.

Today we close and de-consecrate the building, with the hope and prayer that it may find new life and purpose in other ways for other people.

The cemetery remains as a place of peaceful rest, and a memorial will be erected to mark this as a location of God's blessing over the past 135 years.

For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven (Ecclesiastes 3:1)

Worship today is led by Bishop Mark Whitfield and Pastor Jim Pietsch (Pastor of St Pauls Wellington and St Francis Wairarapa)

O LORD, OPEN MY LIPS

Worship begins with God. The psalmist writes –

Lord, open my lips, so my mouth will praise you

Psalm 51:15

In Christian worship, God serves his people – *Divine Service* – with his love through Word and Sacrament and we respond with our prayers and songs of thanks and praise.

GATHERING

MIHI WHAKATAU

The Holy Spirit calls God's people together for worship

The bell rings

Bishop Mark offers his Mibi and Words of Welcome

REMEMBRANCE of BAPTISM

INVOCATION – IRIIRITANGA

We name the name of God and we declare faith in him

God is present where his name is, and he is active amongst those who have been baptised into his name

You are invited to make the sign of the cross during the Invocation as a remembrance of your baptism

The congregation stands

God spoke through the prophet, “Do not fear, for I have redeemed you.”

God calls us by name, we belong to God.

“When you pass through the waters”

God will be with us.

“When you pass through the rivers”

God will be with us.

“When you walk through the fire”

God will be with us.

God is our Saviour;

We are precious in God’s sight. Come let us worship our Saviour, who leads us into life.

In remembrance of your baptism, you may make the sign of the cross

Ki te ingoa o te Matua, o te Tamaiti, o te Wairua Tapu; in the Name of the + Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

We pray

For everything there is a season, and in every season, God of love and goodness, your steadfast love sustains us.

You have brought us here, gathered us as a community of faith, and called us to remember that we live and breathe only by the power of your grace in our lives.

Our hearts are full of gratitude for what your heart of love has so generously provided us.

On this day we look to the future with hope, opening ourselves to your Spirit at work in our lives. Be present with us this day, in this time of worship, and always, we pray.

Amen.

HYMN

HĪMENE

We sing an entrance song to express our mood of expectation; we are keyed-up for the coming King

**What a friend we have in Jesus,
All our sins and griefs to bear!
What a privilege to carry
Everything to God in prayer!
O what peace we often forfeit,
O what needless pain we bear,
All because we do not carry
Everything to God in prayer.**

Have we trials and temptations?
Is there trouble anywhere?
We should never be discouraged;
Take it to the Lord in prayer.
Can we find a friend so faithful
Who will all our sorrows share?
Jesus knows our every weakness;
Take it to the Lord in prayer.

Are we weak and heavy laden,
Cumbered with a load of care?
Precious Saviour, still our refuge;
Take it to the Lord in prayer.
Do thy friends despise, forsake thee?
Take it to the Lord in prayer!
In his arms he'll take and shield thee;
Thou wilt find a solace there.

FRIEND C.C.Converse 1832-1918
Joseph Scriven 1820-1886
LHS-426

The congregation is seated

A PRAYER for TODAY

KARAKIA

The prayers of the congregations are gathered together in a succinct way

Kia noho a Ihowa ki a koutou; the Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Blessed be the name of God, whose Word has long been proclaimed within this place. As generations have prayed their prayers and sung your praises here, your Spirit has blessed countless worshippers. We have celebrated the Lord's Supper here and been nurtured by it



through our journey in faith. We have rejoiced here and have confessed faith in Christ. Here we have baptised our children and mourned our dead. As new families have been created through marriage, we, our parents, and our children have vowed at this altar to love, honour, and cherish always. From within these walls many have gone out to serve you in the world. **As we go now from this house of worship into a further journey of faith, we give you thanks, O God, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

WORD

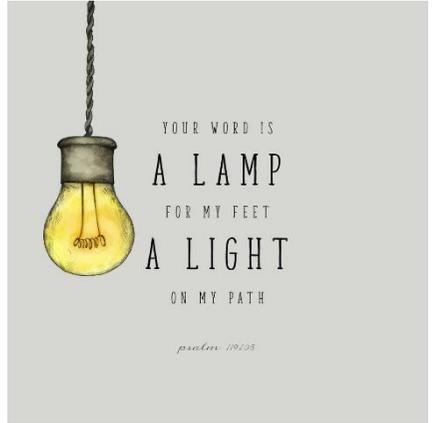
KŌRERO TARA O TE PAIPERA TAPU – THE WORD IN TEXTS

God speaks and we encounter the living Word – Jesus Christ

We enjoy from our God the great blessing of his holy Word. Why is that word so precious? The Apostle Paul tells us: “I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes.”

As we remember all the times we have gathered here in God’s house to hear his word, we join the psalmist in saying:

“O give thanks to the Lord, for he is good. His love endures forever.”



FIRST READING

POINTING FORWARD TO THE COMING OF CHRIST

ISAIAH 43:1-7

The Lord will be with his people

But now thus says the Lord,
he who created you, O Jacob,
he who formed you, O Israel:
Do not fear, for I have redeemed you;
I have called you by name, you are mine.



When you pass through the waters, I will be with you;
and through the rivers, they shall not overwhelm you;
when you walk through fire you shall not be burned,
and the flame shall not consume you.

For I am the Lord your God,
the Holy One of Israel, your Saviour.
I give Egypt as your ransom,
Ethiopia and Seba in exchange for you.

Because you are precious in my sight,
and honoured, and I love you,
I give people in return for you,
nations in exchange for your life.

Do not fear, for I am with you;
I will bring your offspring from the east,
and from the west I will gather you;

I will say to the north, "Give them up,"
and to the south, "Do not withhold;
bring my sons from far away
and my daughters from the end of the earth—
everyone who is called by my name,
whom I created for my glory,
whom I formed and made."

This is the Word of the Lord:
Thanks be to God.

We sing

PSALM 46

WAIATA

Be still and know that I am God

**A mighty fortress is our God,
And so, we will not be afraid;
The Lord of hosts is with us now.**

**'Be still and know that I am God!'
'Be still and know that I am God!'
'Be still and know that I am God!'**

BE STILL AND KNOW
Text ©David Schütz
LHS-885

SECOND READING

THE APOSTLES EXPLAIN THE MEANING OF CHRIST'S COMING

ACTS 17:22-31

God does not live in human shrines made by human hands

Then Paul stood in front of the Areopagus and said, ‘Athenians, I see how extremely religious you are in every way. For as I went through the city and looked carefully at the objects of your worship, I found among them an altar with the inscription, “To an unknown god.” What therefore you worship as unknown, this I proclaim to you. The God who made the world and everything in it, he who is Lord of heaven and earth, does not live in shrines made by human hands, nor is he served by human hands, as though he needed anything, since he himself gives to all mortals life and breath and all things. From one ancestor he made all nations to inhabit the whole earth, and he allotted the times of their existence and the boundaries of the places where they would live, so that they would search for God and perhaps grope for him and find him – though indeed he is not far from each one of us. For “In him we live and move and have our being”; as even some of your own poets have said, “For we too are his offspring.”’

Since we are God’s offspring, we ought not to think that the deity is like gold, or silver, or stone, an image formed by the art and imagination of mortals. While God has overlooked the times of human ignorance, now he commands all people everywhere to repent, because he has fixed a day on which he will have the world judged in righteousness by a man whom he has appointed, and of this he has given assurance to all by raising him from the dead.’

This is the Word of the Lord:
Thanks be to God.

CHRIST HUMBLING HIMSELF

WE PREPARE FOR THE RECEPTION OF THE GOSPEL

Christ humbled himself and became obedient unto death;
Even death on a cross.

The congregation stands

GOSPEL – RONGOPAI

THE SAVING DEEDS AND WORDS OF JESUS CHRIST

MATTHEW 6:25-34

Do not worry; God cares

Te Rongopai Tapu ki te ritenga a Matiu, kei te ono upoko, ka tīmata rua tekau mā rima; the Holy Gospel is written in the Gospel according to St Matthew, chapter 6, beginning at verse 25:

Glory to you, O Lord.

‘Therefore, I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink, or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing? Look at the birds of the air; they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they? And can any of you by worrying add a single hour to your span of life? And why do you worry about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they neither toil nor spin, yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not clothed like one of these. But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which is alive today and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will he not much more clothe you – you of little faith? Therefore, do not worry, saying, “What will we eat?” or “What will we drink?” or “What will we wear?” For it is the Gentiles who strive for all these things; and indeed, your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. But strive first for the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well. ‘So do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will bring worries of its own. Today’s trouble is enough for today.

Te Rongopai tenei a te Karaiti; this is the Gospel of Christ:

Praise to you, O Christ; Light of the world.

The congregation is seated



KŌRERO WHAKATAU – SERMON

AS A CHILD

Truly I tell you, anyone who will not receive the Kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it.

Mark 10:15



Christ and a boy
Carl Heinrich Bloch (1834-90)

Brief silence for reflection

AFFIRMATION OF BAPTISM – THE APOSTLE'S CREED

We join our heart and voice with all other Christians throughout the world and throughout all ages to declare our faith, which the Holy Spirit created in us through Holy Baptism and which has been strengthened by the Word we have just heard

I believe in God, the Father almighty, maker of heaven and earth.

**And in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, dead, and buried.
He descended into hell.**

**The third day he rose again from the dead.
He ascended into heaven,
and sits at the right hand of God, the Father almighty,
from thence he will come to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.**

HYMN / SONG of the DAY

HĪMENE

The Hymn/Song of the Day is an excellent way to sing the faith into our hearts and souls

**Guide me, O thou great Redeemer,
Pilgrim though this barren land;
I am weak, but thou art mighty;
Hold me with thy powerful hand;
Bread of heaven, Bread of heaven,
Feed me till I want no more,
Feed me till I want no more.**

Open now the crystal fountain,
Whence the healing stream doth flow;
Let the fire and cloudy pillar
Lead me all my journey through;
Strong Deliverer, strong Deliverer,
Be thou still my Strength and Shield,
Be thou still my Strength and Shield.

When I tread the verge of Jordan,
Bid my anxious fears subside;
Bear me through the swelling current,
Land me safe on Canaan's side;
Songs of praises, songs of praises,
I will ever give to thee,
I will ever give to thee.

CWM RHONDDA J.Hughes 1873-1932
Arglwydd arwain trey'r anialwch William Williams 1717-1791
LHS-347

The congregation is seated

MEAL

KAINGA TAHITANGA TAPU – HOLY COMMUNION

God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ

PRAYER - KARAKIA

SPEAKING TO GOD IN PRAYER

As a 'royal priesthood' of believers we carry the needs of the Church, our nation and all people to God

As God's dear children through holy baptism, let us pray to our loving Father in heaven, trusting that he will hear us in his mercy.

Lord, in your mercy,
Hear the prayers of your children.

Concluding Prayer

Father, you have sustained your whole church in faith by freely giving your Holy Spirit.
Keep us in the power of your Spirit, so that we may always live with the freedom that comes from trusting your Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

SHARING GOD'S PEACE

HONGI – TE RANGIMARIE

Peace is a gift from God given through the risen Christ to his people
It is also a gift from one member who has received peace with God through
the reconciling death of Jesus to another member

The peace of the Lord be with you always.
And also with you.

We share the Peace with each other

The congregation stands

THE PREFACE to the LORD'S SUPPER

We 'declare forth' our thanks to God for the salvation he offers in Jesus Christ

**Just as I am, without one plea,
But that your blood was shed for me,
And that you bid me come to you,
O Lamb of God, I come, I come.**

**Just as I am, you will receive,
Will welcome, pardon, cleanse, relieve;
Because your promise I believe,
O Lamb of God, I come, I come.**

**Just as I am, your love unknown
Has broken every barrier down;
Now, to be yours, yes, yours alone,
O Lamb of God, I come, I come.**

WOODWORTH
William B. Bradbury 1816-1868

The Lord be with you.
And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.
We lift them up to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
It is right to give our thanks and praise.

It is indeed right and good, Lord God, holy Father, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks to you, through Jesus Christ our Lord. He has taken on himself our sin, so that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. And so, with angels and archangels, and with all the company of heaven, we adore and praise your glorious name:

HOLY, HOLY, HOLY
SANCTUS – TAPU

Here heaven and earth, past and future, time and eternity, Old Testament and New all come together in a great hymn of acclamation and welcome to Christ who enters the 'temple' of our own bodies here in the Lord's Supper

We sing

**Holy, holy, holy Lord, God Almighty
Early in the morning our song shall rise to Thee
Holy, holy, holy merciful and mighty
God in three persons blessed Trinity**

**Holy, holy, holy Lord, God Almighty
All Thy works shall praise Thy name in earth and sky and sea
Holy, holy, holy merciful and mighty
God in three persons blessed Trinity**

NICAEA J.B.Dyes 1823-1876
Reginald Heber 1783-1826
LHS-140

WORDS of INSTITUTION

Christ's own words: this is my body; this is my blood

Our Lord Jesus Christ on the night when he was betrayed ...



THE LORD'S PRAYER

E TO MATOU MATUA I TE RANGI

We pray the prayer Jesus taught us as our eyes are set on the meal before us and what it means
In this prayer we recall how our Heavenly Father is among his family
which he has gathered around his table here on earth

Made bold by the Holy Spirit, we pray as Jesus taught:

Our Father in heaven,	<i>E to matou Matua i te rangi</i>
hallowed be your name,	<i>Kia tapu tou Ingoa.</i>
your kingdom come, your will	<i>Kia tae mai tou rangatiratanga.</i>
be done,	<i>Kia meatia tau e pai ai ki runga ki te whenua,</i>
on earth as in heaven.	<i>kia rite ano ki to te rangi.</i>
Give us today our daily bread.	<i>Homai ki a matou aianeia he taro ma matou mo tenei ra.</i>
Forgive us our sins as we forgive	<i>Murua o matou bara, Me matou hoki e muru nei i o te</i>
those who sin against us.	<i>hunga e bara ana ki a matou.</i>
Lead us not into temptation,	<i>Aua hoki matou e kaweia kia whakawaia;</i>
but deliver us from evil.	<i>engari whakaorangia matou i te kino.</i>
For the kingdom, the power,	<i>Nou hoki te rangitiratanga, te kaha,</i>
and the glory are yours,	<i>me te kororia,</i>
now and for ever.	<i>ake ake ake.</i>
Amen.	<i>Amine.</i>

The congregation is seated

DISTRIBUTION of the LORD'S SUPPER WHAKARATONGA

The body and blood of Jesus Christ do not remain beyond the reach of his people
As our Lord once came to his people in a human body he now comes to us in consecrated bread and wine
He enters our humanity

The Lord's Supper is God's gift to his gathered people.

We teach that Jesus' word "this is my body" and "this is my blood" mean what they say and that together with the bread and wine we receive the body and blood of our Lord for the forgiveness of sins, the strengthening of faith, for equipping for Christian living, and the gift of eternal life.

Baptised Christians who believe that God gives these gifts through Holy Communion and wish to receive them, are welcome to join us at the Lord's Supper.

AT the END of the LORD'S SUPPER

The congregation stands

The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ make you strong and keep you in his grace. Peace be with you.

Amen.

Lord God, our strength, the battle of good and evil rages within and around us.

Through this holy meal, strengthen our faith in your Son, and when we fall, raise and restore us.

We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord;

He lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

We sing

Now thank we all our God
With hearts and hands and voices,
Who wondrous things has done,
In whom the world rejoices;
Who from our mothers' arms
As blest us on our way
With countless gifts of love,
And still is ours today.

O may this bounteous God
Through all our life be near us,
With ever joyful hearts
And blessed peace to cheer us.
Lord, keep us in your grace,
And guide us when perplexed,
And free us from all harm
In this world and the next.

All praise and thanks to God
Who reigns in highest heaven,
To Father and to Son
And Spirit now be given:
The one eternal God,
Whom heaven and earth adore,
Who ever was, is now,
And shall be evermore.

NUN DANKET ALLE GOTT J. Crüger 1598-1662
Nun danket alle Gott Martin Rinckhardt 1586-1649
LHS-437

THE RITE of CLOSURE AND DE-CONSECRATION
POROPOROAKĪ

ANNOUNCEMENT

Josephine Farley (chairperson of St Francis) reads the congregation's resolution to close and de-consecrate the church building, and then says

On behalf of our congregation I ask you, Mark,
to close this church building here at Mauriceville West.

Bishop Mark says

Friends in Christ: the people of God have gathered in this place for divine service since 1884. As we now close this place of worship we remember with gratitude to God all the blessings that he has given us and those who have gone before us.

PRAYER

Let us pray. Lord God, our heavenly Father, you have been present with us in this place during the past 135 years. We thank you for your grace and favour, which you have lavished on us and on those who have gone before us. Forgive us where we have been slow to hear and unwilling to obey your word.

Watch over us as we leave this building and location. As you have watched over our coming in, watch over our going out. Comfort us in our sadness, refresh us daily on our pilgrimage, and finally gather us with all your saints to adore you eternally in your heavenly congregation.

We thank you that your word has been proclaimed and your holy sacraments have been administered in this place since 1884. Continue to provide us with your word and sacraments, and give us new opportunities to worship and serve you in other gatherings of your Church; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

REMOVAL OF FURNISHINGS AND VESSELS

*The helpers come forward to receive the worship furnishings and sacramental vessels from Mark and Jim.
The helpers take the items down the aisle and wait in a line inside the church.*

The Baptismal Font

We thank you heavenly Father, for the sacrament of baptism,
**By which you have adopted us as your children
through water and the word at this font.**

The Crucifix

We thank you heavenly Father,
For proclaiming your Son's death for our salvation through this crucifix.

The Hymn Books

We thank you heavenly Father,
**That in songs and hymns and liturgy we have been invited to praise you,
pray to you and proclaim the gospel of Jesus.**

The Offering Bowls

We thank you heavenly Father,
That you call us to offer ourselves to you – our time, our talents, and our treasures.

The Candelabra

We thank you heavenly Father,
For proclaiming Jesus as the light of the world, through these candles.

The Vases

We thank you heavenly Father,
**That we have invited to behold the beauty of your creation
through the flowers that have decorated this church.**

The Paraments

We thank you heavenly Father,
For the liturgical seasons of the year, and for your story of love for us.

The Holy Communion Vessels

We thank you heavenly Father,
**For giving us life and healing through the body and blood of your Son,
in these sacred vessels.**

The Bible

We thank you heavenly Father,
For the guidance that we have received from the reading of your word in this place.

RECESSION

We leave the church in silence

When all have gathered outside the church

Gracious God, we give you thanks for the life of the gospel in this community of Mauriceville
West through the worship life in the place.

We give thanks for the Word proclaimed in Spirit and in Truth,
the prayers prayed,
the songs sung, the singers and the musicians,
the bread and the wine,
the water and the children,
the teachers and the preachers,
the confirmations and affirmations,
the marriages and the promises,
the funerals and the comfort,

the laughter, the tears, the hopes and the fears, and the sighs too deep for words.

Such things turn a building into a house of worship.

**The Lord loved,
a people shaped,
the kingdom life lived,
bread for the world,
light in the darkness,
salt in the valleys and hills,
grace to the stranger,
hope for the world.**

Lord we give thanks that what has taken place in this house of worship
has sent ripples of hope into the community,
things we know of and much hidden from us,
yet signs nevertheless of your love that has led us out
to serve as we have been served
to love as we have been loved
to forgive as we have been forgiven
to trust that God has used us despite our shortcomings.

**Today while we acknowledge the passing of the season of this house of worship
we pray that your hand will continue to guide us
and bless us in the new season upon us.**

**Help us to be attentive to you as we seek to serve you in the communities
in which you have placed us.**

In the quiet we reflect on our time in this building
and we remember with gratitude those who we have sat with who are no longer with us ...

Silence for reflection

Lord God, you are not confined to buildings made by human hands.
In your great goodness you have blessed the many ministries carried on
by this congregation in this building, so, now and in the days and years to come,
we pray that you may greatly bless your many ministries in your ongoing Church.
Bless those who have worshiped in this building who now worship in other places.

**As disciples of the risen Christ,
may we be channels at all times of your steadfast love;
through the same Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

Mark closes the door and says

I close Mauriceville West Lutheran Church as a place for divine service, in the Name of the +
Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.
Amen.

SENDING

POROPOROAKĪ

God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world

BLESSING

BENEDICTION – MĀNAWATANGA

The blessing is more than a wish or a prayer
It is a true blessing – that is – it speaks to us and conveys to us gifts from God himself
It strengthens us for service and gives us power to bear fruit for God

The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you. The Lord look on you with kindness and give you peace.

Amen.

We sing

SENDING SONG

WAIATA

As we step from the edge of morning,
Feet can't tell where to take us.
Here's a light that will shine forever,
Here's the light that will guide us.

Jesus, please watch over us;
Jesus, please take care of us.

Trouble comes and we search for safety,
We forget that you hold us.
Fill our minds so that we remember,
Say once more that you love us.

Danger meets us at every moment,
Death is never in hiding.
You are stronger than any danger,
You are stronger than dying.

In your life is the Father's welcome,
In your death there is freedom.
Be our life and our death forever,
Be our new resurrection.

©1979 Robin Mann
LHS-862

SENDING
POROPOROAKĪ

Here we have no lasting city; but we are looking for a city that is to come. Haere i runga i te rangimārie i runga i te aroha me te ngākau hihiko ki te mahi ki te Ariki. Go now to love and serve the Lord. Go in peace.

Amen (Amine); **we go in the name of Christ.**

A HISTORY
of the MAURICEVILLE WEST LUTHERAN CHURCH
prepared by
JOSEPHINE and BRUCE FARLEY

In the 1860's the New Zealand Government under Sir Julius Vogel, introduced an immigration policy to develop the forty-mile bush section of the Wairarapa extending from Kopuaranga to Woodville where the scheme would meet the 70-mile Bush to Napier. It was originally intended that Canadians would undertake this development but when the Canadians abandoned this project Vogel was faced with securing an alternative supply of suitable immigrants to undertake the difficult task of settlement and so it was decided to obtain settlers from Scandinavia.

The first Scandinavian immigrants to the Wairarapa arrived in 1872. These consisted of 8 Norwegian, 7 Danish and 3 Norwegian Swedish families. Later in August the same year 10 Danish families and a number of young men arrived in Wellington after a long tedious journey by sailing ship. A temporary camp was established at Kopuaranga, north of Masterton, for these families to live in.

By agreement an area of 4000 acres was purchased for the settlement of the Scandinavians in the Mauriceville District, and this area was cut into 40-acre sections for which the settlers had to pay one pound per acre. Naturally the new settlers expected the area to be cleared and housed so it was a great shock to find they had to clear their own bush covered land and build their slab huts to live in.

When the Scandinavian Camp at Kopuaranga was vacated in 1873-1874 the immigrants moved out on foot to these sections of land in the bush which had been allocated to them. Roads had been surveyed but were as yet still unformed or cleared of bush. One of these roads leading from the main Masterton-Eketahuna road line led up the valley of the Mangapakihi Stream, the valley in which the Lutheran Church was to stand.

At the head of the valley this road divided into two branches, the right-hand branch climbing over the hills to the north, now known as the North Hill, led to the sections reserved for the Norwegian immigrants. While the left-hand

branch, now known as the West Road, gave access to the remainder of the settlement and was settled by a predominantly Danish population.

This road junction became a convenient spot to establish the nucleus of the settlement. As years passed a school, general store, blacksmith shop, dairy factory and church were established and became known as Mauriceville West.

In 1878, five years later, the settlement was electrified by the unexpected news “a Danish Minister has arrived.” From up and down the valley men, women and children thronged to meet him. The newcomer was Pastor George Sass, a Lutheran Minister who had been in charge of a Scandinavian congregation in Queensland and left there to seek out and minister to his countrymen in New Zealand.

The starting point for Sass’s ministry to the 7000 Lutherans dispersed over the great area between New Plymouth, Napier and Wellington had been Norsewood. From here he had travelled on foot and horseback southward through the great forest of the 70-mile bush, struggling through swollen streams and over muddy tracks, visiting and ministering in lonely camps and villages until at last he reached Mauriceville West.

Here in this tall black robed Pastor the people felt that a part of old Denmark had come to them, handsome and robust, young Sass fitted in well into a background of the rugged bush settlements. He brought with him the religious comfort of the old church and restored spiritual devotion of the people.

Sass later recorded: “the rumours of my arrival went from one settlement to the next and regardless of what day in the week it happened to be when I arrived at a place, the settlers crowded to the meeting in numbers defying the capacity of any private home. It was a strange sight toward evening to see men and women turning up, each armed with a candle in a broken bottle, so that after the service they might find their way back over the muddy track.”

The first visits of Pastor Sass so stimulated the Mauriceville West folk that their immediate thought was for a church of their own. Such was their poverty however that it was 1882 before their desires began to take form.

A meeting was then called, and sufficient money gathered from their scanty resources to justify the commencement of the building. The site was donated by Lars Neilson on rising ground opposite the school and here the church was built. Logs were donated, a waterwheel set up to drive the small sawmill, and voluntary labour did the rest.

The church with a seating capacity of 150 was dedicated by Pastor Sass on the 24 August 1884.

The interior was severely plain. There was a row of long wooden pews on either side of the aisle, the men sitting on one side, the women and children on the other. Above the altar was a framed print of the painting by Danish artist Carl Heinrich Bloch, depicting Christ standing with his hand on the head of a child – a very Nordic child with blue eyes and yellow hair. It includes an inscription in Danish, “whoever does not receive the Kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it” (Mark 10:15 and Luke 18:17).

This was presented by Niels Nielsen and the original can be seen today in the Frederiksborg Castle in Denmark.

The church became the social centre of the community, hosting the festivals such as Christmas and the Christmas tree prize giving and the great annual Lutheran celebration of Confirmation day. Pastor Sass served the Mauriceville West congregation until he was called to serve the Palmerston North settlers in 1886.

The cemetery was dedicated on the 27 November 1887, this was donated by Hedvig Christensen.

The first burial was on the 18 April 1888. There is a recording of one man who committed suicide, so he was buried after sunset and was brought over the back fence.

The Lutherans of Mauriceville West were not to be blessed with pastoral care by resident Pastors, principally being served from various parishes of the Manawatu and Wellington Districts to this day.

There were two exceptions. In 1911 Pastor D.G.M Bach was called from the United States to serve the congregation. He remained until 1916, when he departed to the mission fields of Japan, this being the end of regular weekly services at Mauriceville West.

Then in 1990 Pastor Robert Paterson, a Specific Ministry Pastor, and his wife Eunice were called from Adelaide, Australia and lived at Mauriceville West. He was a retired school principal supported by LCNZ in ministry to the area. Unfortunately, in 1992 it was deemed unsustainable in such an isolated rural location and the mission was concluded.

A 1936 meeting of the Mauriceville West Lutheran Church Committee and Congregation elected to amalgamate the Church and Cemetery under one Board of Trustees to be named the Mauriceville Lutheran Church and Burial Ground Trust Board.

This Trust Board remains the guardian of the church and burial ground today. It is worth noting here that this trust body remained separate from the Wairarapa Lutheran congregation, though it has mostly always comprised of members of the congregation.

The original church was a stately building with a steeple. However, no renovation work was done on it for years and eventually for safety reasons the bell was removed from the steeple. In many sections the timber had rotted, and the building was very draughty. In the winter of 1955 services were being held in the homes of members.

This led to discussion on whether something should be done about the church. The building was in too bad a state for repair. They decided to build a new one on the 17 February 1957. Most of the material was donated by Harold Mortensen and the work of demolition and the rebuilding was largely done on a voluntary basis. The cost of the building was fully subscribed by the opening date and the new church was dedicated on the 22 December 1957.

To maintain the link with the first church, the altar, the picture of Christ and the little child, the altar rails, organ, old sacred vessels and bell were incorporated in the new structure. The whole project was financed by the local members only 17 souls. Plaques of recognition were placed on some of the pews by descendants of pioneer families.

The Lutheran congregational members of Mauriceville West appear to have been known simply as the Lutherans of Wairarapa. In 1978 they adopted a new Congregational Constitution and named their group the "Nicholai Grundtvig Lutheran Church." Nicholai Grundtvig (1783-1872) had been a Danish pastor, author, poet, philosopher, historian, teacher and politician and his name was selected because of the link this displayed to their rich Danish heritage.

However, at the Annual General Meeting in 1980, and following advice from Lutheran Church of New Zealand, the name was changed to 'St Francis Lutheran Church', being seen as more readily identifiable with an English-speaking community.

With the passage of years, the population of Mauriceville West dwindled until hardly any of the original families remained.

By 1984, 100 years following the building of the first church, services were being conducted twice per month, with attendance maintained at an average of 16 members. A Women's Fellowship Group was still very active, and Sunday school was part of the service. Members were also engaged in the 'Religion in Schools' programme at the Mauriceville School.

By the start of 21st century, there were no Lutherans resident at Mauriceville West, and though service attendance was still in the mid-teens, members were travelling out to the church for a single Pastor led monthly service, supplemented by a second Lay led service.

Today the congregation consists of just 6 members, five of whom live in Greytown. A service has not been held at Mauriceville West for over two years and a preaching fellowship has been established with the St Andrews Union Church in Greytown, where Pastor Jim Pietsch leads a Communion Service at 3pm on the third Sunday of each month.

The Trustees of the Mauriceville Lutheran Church and Burial Ground Trust Board will continue to care and maintain the church and grounds, assisted by a local school fundraising group and their sheep, until a more sustainable arrangement has been finalised.

Acknowledgements: Forest Homes by G. C. Petersen
 Souvenir Programme from Scandinavian Settlers
 Memorial Unveiling 1974
 Mauriceville West Lutheran Church 1884-1984
 Centennial Souvenir Booklet (Editor Stuart Clausen)

LOOKING AHEAD

The St Francis Lutheran Congregation of Wairarapa continue their fellowship in partnership with St Andrews Union Church in Greytown.

Regular Service times are:

Every Sunday at 9.30am with exception of the third Sunday of the month; led by Rev Bill Ingley on the 1st and 5th Sundays, supported by alternate leaders on the 2nd and 4th Sundays

Ever third Sunday of the month at 3.00pm; a Communion Service led by Pastor Jim Pietsch from St Pauls Lutheran Church, Wellington

With the closure of the church building all internal fittings and the bell will be removed and placed initially into secure storage.

It is hoped to include the bell in a monument and information board the Trust plans to erect within the burial grounds in the future.

A proposal to gift the organ to the Norwegian Methodist Mauriceville North Church is being considered and should see it remain in the district.

Some descendants of early settlers have expressed an interest in securing other items of significance to their families. The Trust Board and congregation will work through this over the coming months.

Contact us:	St Francis:	stfrancis.wairarapa.nz@lca.org.au	06 3049088
	Pastor Jim:	jim.pietsch@lutheran.org.nz	04 3857087

PASTORS

WHO SERVED MAURICEVILLE WEST LUTHERAN CHURCH

1878-1886	Pastor George Sass
1887-1897	Pastor Mads Christensen
1911-1916	Pastor Bach. Periodic visits were made by Pastor Mads Christensen
1928-1950	Pastor Ansgar Christensen took over from his father and served from his Palmerston North parish
1933-1934	Pastor Lohe, a young minister from Australia, served the area from his base in Dannevirke
1950-1959	Pastor Eric Blaess
1959-1962	Pastor R. Schmaal visited from his Halcombe Parish
1962-1966	Pastor Maurice R.R. Heidrich, stationed at Dannevirke, served the Hawkes Bay - Wairarapa Parish
1967	Pastor Don W. Heyne served the district from Wellington
1968-1973	Pastor Robert Strelan, stationed at Marton
1974-1978	Pastor Byron G. Klein, also working from Marton
1978-1980	Pastor Robert Wiebusch, working from Wellington
1979-1983	Pastor Ken Jaworski, stationed at Lower Hutt
1980	Pastor Wiebusch and Ross Janetzki Associate Pastor, Wellington parish
1984-1989	Pastor Lionel R. Rohrlach, stationed at Lower Hutt
1989-1990	Pastor Rodney Beh, Palmerston North Parish, assisted by lay readers
1990-1992	Pastor Robert Paterson, a Specific Ministry Pastor based at Mauriceville West. He and his wife Eunice appear to be the only Pastor ever to reside at Mauriceville West.
1992-1996	Pastor Rodney Beh, Palmerston North Parish
1992-2000	Pastor Mark Lieschke, Palmerston North Parish
1996-2004	Pastor Steen Olsen, Palmerston North Parish Also supported by Pastor David Lipsys, Palmerston North Parish
2004-2014	Pastor Mark Whitfield, Wellington Parish
2014-present	Pastor Jim Pietsch, Wellington Parish



LUTHERAN CHURCH

OF NEW ZEALAND

Te Hāhi Rūtana o Aotearoa

St Francis congregation now worships in St Andrews Union Church, 63 Main St, Greytown, in cooperation with the St Andrews congregation.

A Lutheran service is held on the 3rd Sunday of the month at 3.00pm. Regular services are no longer held in the Mauriceville West church. To confirm arrangements phone 06 3049088.

Regular Sunday worship is also held at St Paul Lutheran Church in Wellington and at St Luke Lutheran Church in Palmerston North.

CONTACT

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