



Greetings

As we move toward the season of Lent, we think about living simply, and the things we might give up to allow us to better focus on our relationship with God.

Each year in late March, our parishes throughout New Zealand celebrate Neighbours Day Aoteroa, a time when we reach out the hand of welcome and friendship to our neighbours and build safe and loving communities together.

Neighbours Day offers us a wonderful opportunity to engage in the spirit of Lent. Can I ask you to please consider foregoing some Easter treats this year and pool the money saved to offer a gift to the refugees or new migrants in your area on 25-26 March?

“For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in...” Matthew 25:35

As we get to know the people who live alongside us this year, let’s make a special effort to recognise and celebrate those who have come to our country seeking safe haven and a better future. Let us reach out with a warm welcome to our refugee and migrant neighbours.

Most of them are missing family and friends who are far away— perhaps left behind in a war-torn country— and are facing huge challenges adapting to a new culture and environment. I urge you to let them feel our love and hospitality with, if you can, a gift card that allows them to purchase what they are in need of.

If a grocery voucher or a gift card isn't practical for your congregation, you could consider hosting an event: an afternoon tea, a BBQ, family fun day or simply sharing some home baking— whatever your congregation can manage — to make new families feel at home in your community.

The Church has ten \$50 grocery gift cards available to assist congregations with Neighbours Day outreach to refugee families. If you know of a refugee family in your area and would like a card to gift, please email angela@presbyterian.org.nz

Visit the Church's website www.presbyterian.org.nz/prescare/neighboursday for more information on how to apply for this grant, read stories of our churches' work with refugees, find Neighbours Day resources, and learn more about how to get involved.

In Christ

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Richard Dawson'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long vertical stroke extending downwards from the end.

Richard Dawson

Moderator of the Presbyterian Church of Aotearoa New Zealand

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