

## Rev Rose Luxford Moderator designate address to the online PCANZ General Assembly, 30 September 2021.

Tena Koutou Katoa

Greetings to you all in all parts of Aotearoa New Zealand. As I speak from my Manse in Oamaru it is hard to imagine that you are not physically all together, as we usually are at General Assembly.

Thank you Anne for your kind words of introduction, and thanks to the church which has called me to this position of Moderator Designate. It is very humbling and daunting. Thank you for your confidence. And thank you to the different parishes which nominated me.

I would like to honour the other nominees who were in for this position - Marion, Mo, Deborah, Diane and Nikki. What amazing women - what a wealth of experience, giftings and creativity. Our church is so fortunate to have the richness of these strong and competent women, and I do honour them today.

I am grateful to the Presbyterian churches which have played a part in my journey of faith. Tokomairiro Presbyterian in Milton where I was baptised, went to Sunday School and Bible Class. Andersons Bay Presbyterian, Dunedin where I went after a period away from church life - where I could ask my questions, where I became a communicant member, an elder, and the church which supported me in entering my training for ministry. Mairangi Castor Bay in Auckland where I did my summer training. Otautau in Southland where I did summer supply. Iona Presbyterian Church in Blockhouse Bay, Auckland who called me as a brand new minister - who seemed to believe that I might know what I was doing, encouraged me and gave me plenty of rope! St Paul's in Oamaru - where together we took a bit of a leap in faith when Presbytery were a bit nervous about viability of ministry....A multi-cultural congregation which I love being part of. Thank you to all of those churches.

I have always loved parish ministry, and have also enjoyed being part of the life of the wider church. As Moderator of Presbytery I so enjoyed ordination and induction services where I caught glimpses into the lives of colleagues and their congregations, when there is that sense of excitement and joy in a new partnership of ministry. And the church is at its best! There are other times where as the wider church family we gain glimpses into the pain and dislocation parishes can go through, and we grieve with them and seek to help. And there are other times we gain glimpses of innovative ministries, ideas that have taken flight, creativity explored and appreciated. There is much to value and celebrate within our wider church. I know there are areas of the church I haven't had the same glimpses into, and I know there are going to be areas I will be challenged in. Yet I also know that our church is full of people with a variety of giftings and knowledge, and I will certainly be calling on you when I need help!

The dynamics of our church are a bit like the dynamics we see in our families. It is not always plain sailing. We can have moments of real joy together. And we can have times of huge disappointments and grief. We can argue and be frustrated with each other, and wonder how we can belong together. And yet through God's grace we can also see what is of value, what can be nurtured. Our combined commitment and energy has tremendous potential...

I have recently completed the new Ministry Development Plan programme and found it to be a very positive experience. One of the areas of ministry looked at is authenticity and I believe this is so

important in the life of our churches. To be who God calls us to be in our ministries – and not to think we are to be clones of others, or be comparing ourselves with others. This is an area I would like to explore further in my lead in time to being Moderator.

Thanks to all my colleagues in ministry, my supervisor, to those in the various groups I am part of including the women ministers network in Dunedin, and to the Southern Presbytery of which I have been a part for the last 11 and a half years. Such great people. I would also like to acknowledge the faithful and creative work of the elders of our church who are the backbone of our faith communities.

I give thanks to our outgoing Moderator, Fakaofu, who has played a big part in my ministry over the years.

I wish Hamish all the best in his term as Moderator and it feels good to have some time to look around and reflect on what is happening in the church before I step up into that role.

I also thank my extended family and my friends for their support and love. They keep me grounded and we have a lot of rich times together.

To finish...

During my training a minister told me that liturgy should also support us when we are leading worship. I had this in mind when I was preparing the service when I preached for a call to Iona, Blockhouse Bay. The Psalm for the day began with 'My God, My God, why have you forsaken me'. I decided I could not have that! I opted instead for Psalm 16 which continues to be a favourite and I quote some verses from it...

'You Lord are all I have  
And you give me all I need  
My future is in your hands.  
How wonderful are your gifts to me;  
How good they are.....

'You will show me the path that leads to life;  
Your presence fills me with joy  
And brings me pleasure for ever'.

Nga mihi nui. Faafetai

- Rose Luxford