

A RURAL EASTER IN THE AWATERE

This particular Easter we had a visiting friend who is a missionary staying with us and she was keen to come along to all the services. As anyone in rural ministry knows there can be quite a few services on a Sunday

What Anne saw

When was the last time that you travelled 150 km and went to three church services all before lunch time? Well that's what it is like in the Awatere at Easter if you happen to be a mission partner (home on furlough) staying at the Awatere vicarage. I (Anne Segedin) expressed the wish to follow the rounds of the vicar on Easter morning. Awoken by the alarm clock at 5am, I get ready for our 6am departure for the first service held in a small church in Kekerengu. It is an hour long communion service complete with a children's talk I am told I'm giving. Then a quick trip back to Seddon for a service at 9am. Several families were celebrating 100 years in the Awatere so the community hall was the venue. Once finished it was down to Ward for 11am service. Before finally, we get back to the vicarage for lunch at 12:45pm. A whirl wind morning of services and people celebrating the resurrection of our Lord..

What Martin Saw

The day break highlighted the landscape which I have grown to love. It is a landscape which the people I pastor nurture and farm. Easter for me is a very busy time of celebration. I enjoy looking at the faces of the people who come. They are people whom Miriam and I have walked beside listening and encouraging in faith. Each person unique, some with deep hurts, many struggling to cope with the change happening in the rural sector. As I look into their faces, I remember afresh it is for these people Jesus died and rose from the dead. For some it is the first Easter they have experienced understanding what a Christian Easter means. I look into their eyes as I give them communion and say "Take and eat and know that Jesus died and rose from the dead for you". As I do, I thank God that he has called me to work here and that he is changing lives as His Spirit moves across this land. How true it is that the Easter Bunny died for no one!