

# CHILDREN'S DAY 2024

## Sunday 3 March



## PRAY FOR OUR CHILDREN & THEIR WHĀNAU

Every year, the first Sunday in March marks Children's Day, a time for intentionally celebrating and cherishing our tamariki.

Throughout Scripture, God's followers are reminded that the youngest amongst us are not only valued by God but are used by and spoken to by God. I am reminded of the way God speaks directly to Samuel, and that God chose David to lead the nation of Israel, not when he had proven himself as a man, but when he was still a young boy.

Christ himself came as a child, so that he might experience the reality of human life. It's funny to think about Jesus learning to walk, or losing his first tooth. But if we are to believe that Christ experienced the very fullness of life as a human, then the milestones of childhood would have been something he experienced also.

Our children are a treasure to be cherished. Unfortunately, for many of our children, this is not their reality. According to UNICEF, New Zealand has one of the worst rates of child abuse in the developed world. There are many factors that contribute, including socio-economic circumstances and substance abuse. May we be moved to find ways to support families in our own communities, and may God show us where we can make meaningful change in the lives of families who are struggling.

This Children's Day, we are invited to pray for our children and their whānau. Together, we need to pray for the protection and wellbeing of our tamariki; that families would receive the practical, financial, and emotional support needed to raise children in safe environments. We pray that our children would have the confidence and ability to navigate an ever-changing world. Above all, pray that our children would know that they matter. That they are loved and valued, not only by their whānau and community, but by a God who truly cherishes them as the taonga that they are.

-Karo Wilson, Director, Presbyterian Children and Families Ministry  
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*With Children's Day coming up 3 March, I have asked Karo Wilson, Director of Presbyterian Children and Families Ministry, to write a message about celebrating our children, and what we might pray for. Let us keep our young people in our prayers at this time, and at all times.*

- PCANZ Moderator  
Right Rev Rose Luxford

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