



FAQs



1. Why has this special place been set up?

A small Anglican church, known as St Peter's Church, was built at Jacobs River in 1931. When the Anglican congregation in the area declined, it was taken over by the Roman Catholic Church, and renamed Our Lady of the River. In early 2018, Cyclone Fehi blew the church off its foundations and the church was unable to be repaired. The vacant land, no longer required as a church facility, became a memorial site instead. This was to celebrate the three different congregations who worshiped there (Māori, Anglican and Catholic) and the sacredness of the site for the local tangata whenua, Ngati Mahaki ki Makaawhio.

Please see the Church Property Trustees information sheet for more detailed historical information.

2. **Why is it special to Māori?** Although, not the first church in the area, the first was built in the 1870's close to the old pa at the mouth of the Makaawhio River by local Maori from the Ngāti Māhaki sub-tribe of Poutini Ngāi Tahu, serving until the turn of the century, when the pa relocated nearer the new main road.

This church building project was enthusiastically supported by local Maori, with the first baptism, first wedding and first funeral all Mahaki whānau members and a review of the baptism register showing probably 95% of baptisms at St Peter's were Māhaki whānau. This connection remained even through the transition from Anglican to Catholic services, and also after the church was no longer used for regular worship but used for the occasional baptism, christening and Christmas Carols.

3. **Who will maintain it?** Local community.
4. **Who can use it?** Anyone can use it. It is set up as a wayside retreat for travellers, visitors, local and all who sojourn in this place.
5. **What does the stone symbolise?** The Mauri Kohatu/Touchstone was sourced from Mahitahi/Bruce Bay, where the local Marae, Te Tauraka Waka a Maui is situated. It was carved by Ngati Mahaki artist Fayne Robinson, who shaped it to reflect a Baptism Font and etched it with kowhaiwhai representative of local iwi, their connection to the place and the land.



Images supplied by AnglicanLife