

UNITY

Unity Week • 15–21 March

Media release for immediate use

What will U do to support Unity Week 2023?

One of New Zealand's funniest and best loved personalities, Dai Henwood is coming to Christchurch on 8 March to speak loudly in support of Unity Week, an initiative close to his heart.

Unity Week runs from 15 to 21 March and is an initiative of the Sakinah Community Trust, a not-for-profit led by seven women who lost loved ones in the tragic March 15 Christchurch Mosque attacks.

It is a coordinated approach to remember and honour the lives lost, while also promoting a socially cohesive society.

Hamimah Ahmat, one of the founding members, says it is amazing what can be achieved with communities of different backgrounds if we all follow the principles of respecting each other and accepting our similarities, as well as our differences.

"We believe that everyone, regardless of their background or community, should feel welcome, respected, and loved for who they are and where they come from.

"Our message this year is that unity begins with U; we all have a part to play, so please join in because it's sure to be an enriching experience," says Ahmat.

Dai Henwood couldn't agree more and is a huge advocate of anything that promotes understanding, kindness and compassion.

"New Zealanders are great at unifying around tragic events, but making unity a daily habit in the good times not just the bad makes for a stronger society," Henwood says.

Christchurch Mayor Phil Mauer says Unity Week is a great chance for people to reflect on the past and work towards a more unified future.

"We want Christchurch to be known as a place where everyone is valued, respected and safe and I look forward to being a part of Unity Week," Mauer says.

Hamimah Ahmat says there are many ways people can get involved in Unity Week.

“We urge people to join in this movement by coming to hear Dai speak, by attending one of our local events, or by creating their own Unity Week celebration at school, workplaces, in the community or at home. We are also happy to have the support of partners including Meta again for another year of Unity Week,” says Ahmat.

Dai is speaking at 7.30pm to 9pm on 8 March at the Christ’s College Auditorium, Rolleston Avenue, Christchurch city. Tickets are available at Eventfinda from 9am Friday 24 February. Tickets are free, but we ask people to bring along a koha to the event, with proceeds to support those affected by Cyclone Gabrielle.

Other Unity Week activities include:

- ‘Meet and Eat for Unity Week’, from 12 to 1.30pm on Thursday 16 March, outside the Riverside Market at the riverside along Oxford Terrace. People are invited to bring their lunch and connect over food. The intention is simple— join others and use our conversation starters to connect with people beyond your normal lunchtime circles.
- ‘Walk the Talk for Unity’ from 10.30am to 2.30pm on Saturday 18 March. At this flagship event, schools, workplaces and members of the public are invited to walk together from the Museum to The Commons where food trucks showcasing different ethnic foods and fun activities will await. Feel free to wear clothes from a culture you identify with.
- ‘Unity Picnic and Peace Train’ from 11.30am to 2pm on Sunday 19 March at the Botanic Gardens near the playground. There will be peace train rides. Bring your own blanket and picnic.

Details of Unity Week activities, including downloadable promotional materials and ideas are available at unityweek.co.nz

Instagram: @unityweeknz

Facebook: Sakinah Community Trust

Twitter: @unityweeknz

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