



Alpine Presbytery

resourcing the braided river

www.alpinepresbytery.org

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Newsletter 16th April 2020

Adjusting to a new reality...

Over these next few days we expect some more clarity about the immediate time ahead.

- * Our PM Jacinda Ardern will be sharing greater detail about potential life under Alert Level 3;
- * The Cabinet will be announcing whether we will move out of lockdown;
- * Our national PCANZ will be offering advice related to the above announcements.
- * We might begin to see a clearer picture of life in NZ in the short-term ahead.

Our Presbytery Council will also be giving time to considering what is important and helpful for the churches and ministries across our Presbytery. Our Scouting team (created in late March) is beginning to work and will be seeking your input and feedback as we ponder the future options and possibilities for church in a new environment.

Next week we want to issue some helpful tips and questions for Parish Councils/Sessions/Leadership Teams to ponder and consider. There will be some ideas about what you might consider as we prepare for an uncertain future. It would be good to give attention to some matters before we feel pressured by the heat of the moment. Now is a good time to start thinking about the "what ifs" and "how to's" that will prepare us for future possibilities. We're sure that many things will be filling your minds and hearts at this uncertain time. We want to assist you as you work on those things in your own contexts.

Meantime we want you to know that we are praying and trusting that God will encourage and reassure you as we all face an uncertain future. Let's also pray that kindness and all the fruit of the Spirit are shown through our attitude and actions to those in our faith communities and our wider communities.

God bless!

Worshipping Online

Some churches are already offering online worship each weekend. If your church is not in a position to do this, perhaps there is another church—either locally or nationally—that you could connect with?

You may also be interested in PCANZ Moderator Rt Rev Fakaofu Kaiō's weekly devotions, which he will lead each Sunday during the period that public worship is suspended. The devotion will be available on the [Moderator's Facebook page](#) by 9am each Sunday, and will be available on the [Church's video channel](#) shortly afterward. The devotions will last for approximately 20mins.

Resources

We have set up a Covid-19 page on our website to give you ongoing access to the various resources available to use at this time. It will include lists of resources advised in previous Newsletters. Go to:

alpinepresbytery.org/covid-19/

A central place for resources is being coordinated here (scroll to bottom of the page)

www.presbyterian.org.nz/for-parishes/coronavirus-information.

Newsletter Items

We will be continuing with the Newsletter over the lockdown period. If you have notices or resources to share, please email to gail@alpinepresbytery.org

Cut off date for next week's Newsletter is **Thursday 23rd April**.



Please be careful about signage!

A church (not sure what affiliation) was noticed by a Presbytery Council member recently with the sign out front "Church Closed"! While the intention is obvious, think about the message people might get. Actually the truth is the *building is closed* but the **church** is open!

We've noticed that so many churches have adapted in amazing ways during lockdown and are still very *present* out there. So.... while buildings might be closed please watch what *message* you send to the community during this time. Perhaps you could say *we're sorry that we need to close our building for a while, but our church is still very much open and active!* Contact us on [www.etc](#) or phone etc or tune in on etc...

The Vine newsletter

Each week during the period where public worship gatherings are prohibited PCANZ are publishing *The Vine* - a newsletter to resource and equip leaders to do church differently, which includes ideas and resources.

[Click here](#) to sign up for the *The Vine* in your email inbox each week.

Download below copies of *The Vine*

[The Vine # 1](#) (published 2 April 2020)

[The Vine #2](#) (published 9 April 2020)

[The Vine #3](#) (published 16 April 2020)

Short of Breath—Making Sense of Covid-19 Complexity

This five-part study written by Silvia Purdie is an encouragement of theological reflection on Covid-19. It has some environmental and justice components and explores complexity.

Download it here: [Short of Breath](#)

Kids Friendly name change

Kids Friendly is changing its name and expanding its focus to include a broader range of services, the new ministry will be known as ***Children and Families: a whanau-based ministry.***

The Kids Friendly accreditation process and related work that has served the church so well will continue. However, going forward it will become just one part of a broader focus with our children and families ministry.

The Children and Families ministry is now staffed by Rev Robin Humphreys and Julie Penno, who will both serve as Children and Families directors. Julie and Robin have a wealth of knowledge and experience of serving both at a local and national level in the intergenerational field.

Read more here: <https://mailchi.mp/455b189d2bd8/pcanz-children-and-families?e=149afc7311>

Other Newsletters

- [Presbyterian Church Schools' Resource Office](#)
- **Presbyterian Support South Canterbury** have sent out a special edition of their newsletter, regarding life in their residential facilities during this time in lockdown. Of particular note is the poem on page 3 – this was composed by Raewyn Mehrtens, the Nurse Manager at Wallingford Rest Home in Temuka. [Download the Newsletter here.](#)

Volunteering Canterbury—Governance Bites

Volunteering Canterbury are offering a series of 12 free events offering practical development opportunities in bite-sized pieces for 'time poor' and cash-strapped community leaders involved in non-profit boards in Canterbury. Served with pizza, they will be held from 5:15pm-7:00pm on the first Thursday of the month at Community House, 301 Tuam Street, Christchurch.

More details here: <https://mailchi.mp/volunteermatch/46gqkbc8ia-2477877?e=6e4587ec9a>

Presbytery is available!

If you have positive news to share or concerns to sort out please let us know! Our Presbytery is available online and by phone right through Easter as well, but please note that *our landline phone is under "lockdown" at Cashmere* so cannot be accessed at this stage. However you can contact us through phone or email as below:

Moderator, Anne Stewart: ph. 021 032 3329 , email anne@villagechurch.nz
Executive Officer, Barry Ayers: ph. 021 2649677; email barry@alpinepresbytery.org
Admin Support, Gail Weaver: ph. 021 161 5563, email gail@alpinepresbytery.org

Please don't hesitate to be in touch if you need to talk about something that is on your mind.

From last week

- Ideas for Easter
- A Useful Resource for People
- Decision-making
- Applying for the Government Wage Subsidy
- Introduction to Christian Meditation
- Moderator's Easter message - He is Risen
- Moderator Election
- Presbytery Directory

- **New Resource/Information Links:**

Prayer exercise for COVID time: [An Hour of Prayer for the Coronavirus Pandemic](#)

PYM Lockdown Youth Ministry: <http://pym.org.nz/lockdown-youth-ministry-vlog/>

[Alleluia Poster: Get Ready for Easter \(COVID-19 Edition\)](#)

New journal table-of-contents - Hewitson Library:

[Christianity Today, Vol 64 No 3, April 2020](#)

[Sojourners, April 2020](#)

- **Other Newsletters**

[UCANZ Newsletter](#)

[UCANZ Directory for local churches and Forums](#)

[International Rural Churches Association Newsletter](#)

Presbytery Contact Details

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Other items can be sent to Gail Weaver, Office Support, at gail@alpinepresbytery.org

Presbytery Directory

To download the Presbytery Directory, [Click here](#)

Any amendments or corrections should be advised to Gail in the Presbytery Office.

Alpine Presbytery Strategic Framework

[Click here](#) to download the Strategic Framework

Dropbox link for documents mentioned in this newsletter: control & click, or copy & paste the link to your browser: <https://www.dropbox.com/sh/5k528skz4nighg/AABDjLatKU2-C2reVHA6hVza?dl=0>

How the Virus Stole Easter

By Kristi Bothur

(with a nod to Dr. Seuss)

Twas late in '19 when the virus began
Bringing chaos and fear to all people, each land.

People were sick, hospitals full,
Doctors overwhelmed, no one in school.

As winter gave way to the promise of spring,
The virus raged on, touching peasant and king.

People hid in their homes from the enemy unseen.
They YouTubed and Zoomed,
social-distanced, and cleaned.

April approached and churches were closed.
"There won't be an Easter," the world supposed.

"There won't be church services,
and egg hunts are out.
No reason for new dresses
when we can't go about."

Holy Week started, as bleak as the rest.
The world was focused on masks and on tests.

"Easter can't happen this year," it proclaimed.
"Online and at home, it just won't be the same."

Maundy Thursday, Good Friday,
the days came and went.
The virus pressed on; it just would not relent.

The world woke Sunday and nothing had changed.
The virus still menaced, the people, estranged.

"Pooh pooh to the saints," the world was grumbling.
"They're finding out now that no Easter is coming.

"They're just waking up!
We know just what they'll do!
Their mouths will hang open a minute or two,
And then all the saints will all cry boo-hoo.

That noise," said the world,
"will be something to hear."
So it paused and the world put a hand to its ear.

And it did hear a sound coming through all the skies.
It started down low, then it started to rise.

But the sound wasn't depressed.
Why, this sound was triumphant!
It couldn't be so! But it grew with abundance!

The world stared around, popping its eyes.
Then it shook! What it saw was a shocking surprise!

Every saint in every nation, the tall and the small,
Was celebrating Jesus in spite of it all!

It hadn't stopped Easter from coming! It came!
Somehow or other, it came just the same!

And the world with its life quite stuck in quarantine
Stood puzzling and puzzling.
"Just how can it be?"

"It came without bonnets, it came without bunnies,
It came without egg hunts, cantatas, or money."

Then the world thought of something it hadn't before.
"Maybe Easter," it thought,
"doesn't come from a store.
Maybe Easter, perhaps, means a little bit more."

And what happened then?
Well...the story's not done.
What will YOU do?
Will you share with that one
Or two or more people needing hope in this night?
Will you share the source of your life in this fight?

The churches are empty - but so is the tomb,
And Jesus is victor over death, doom, and gloom.

So this year at Easter, let this be our prayer,
As the virus still rages all around, everywhere.

May the world see hope when it looks at God's people.
May the world see the church is not
a building or steeple.

May the world find Faith
in Jesus' death and resurrection,
May the world find Joy in a time of dejection.
May 2020 be known as the year of survival,

But not only that—Let it start a revival.