



Alpine Presbytery

resourcing the braided river

www.alpinepresbytery.org

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Newsletter 23rd April 2020

“Na, kia rite ki te hunga whiriwhiri a te Atua, ki te hunga tapu e arohaina ana, kakahuria iho hoki te ngakau tohu tangata, te ngawari, te ngakau papaku, te ngakau mahaki, te manawanui; / Therefore, as God’s chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience.”

Colossians 3:12

As our PM Jacinda Adhern continually says: it's time to show **kindness to one another** as we battle COVID-19. Kindness is actually referred to as a *fruit of the Spirit* (Galatians 5 v 22 - 23). It could be timely for our faith communities to ask: *how can we show the fruit of the Spirit in these days?*

COVID-19 Guidelines

On Monday this week the Government announced the country would move from Level 4 to Level 3 at midnight on 27 April. Full compliance with all government directives issued relating to this level are expected.

For details, please see <https://covid19.govt.nz/alert-system/alert-level-3/>

As was previously announced on 23 March, all physical gathering for public services of worship in the Presbyterian Church remain suspended until further notice.

National PCANZ staff will continue to work from home at Level 3 and can be contacted via email or mobile. Contact details are noted on the PCANZ website.

Communique

Last week we referred to a note to all Parish Councils/Sessions/Leadership Teams that we would send out to you all to ponder and consider matters as we think through options and possibilities for our future as church. We will be sending this to you soon. We would graciously ask that you include this in your next leadership meeting and give some time to think and discuss the matters together and then get back to us with your thoughts and reflections.

We do realise that some of your teams might have some challenges communicating at this time when we can't physically meet together so we just ask that you please do your best and let us know, as suggested, in the next month or two. We look forward to hearing from you!

Please Note: Payment of Stipends and salary

Anecdotal evidence is being received of situations around NZ where employees, and ministers on stipends, are being encouraged to accept reduced income from their parish. There are also instances of ministers voluntarily offering to forgo part of their stipend and allowances for a time. Our Assembly Executive Secretary, Wayne Matheson, is concerned that employees and ministers may come under undue pressure in relation to this.

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 30th April**.



Parishes that have applied for the Government Wage Subsidy (where they qualify), should help alleviate concerns in this area. If a parish does not qualify for the wage subsidy, it would suggest that there should be no consideration of reductions in wages or stipends.

Wayne draws attention to our Book of Order Chapter 16.9(3) and notes the requirement of congregations to seek presbytery approval before varying the stipend of allowances paid for ministry support. If a congregation cannot pay the stipend previously approved it must inform the Presbytery along with reasons why it cannot make the payments.

So, please talk to Presbytery if you have *any concerns* in this matter. We are here to help.

Moderator's Anzac Day Message

Greetings

“Love one another as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this, that he lay down his life for his friends. You are my friends.” (John 15:12-14)

The words of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ ring and echo loudly in our situation today.

In fact, as we all attest to this truth in life, it is the sound of Jesus’ words that permeate our being as we move from Easter toward Anzac Day. Easter was very different this year, with the crowds and gatherings, worship and fellowship, meals of fish and bread, communion - all carried out using digital communication. This is an unprecedented situation due to unusual times affecting the whole world. What stands out for me each and every year is: “Jesus died on the Cross, for you and I”.

ANZAC Day appropriately follows Easter on our calendar. The underlying theme of the Cross is echoed by the soldiers that died for “God, King and country”. Their lives, their commitments, their sacrifices were for you and I, which is commemorated on ANZAC. It is poignant, significant and sacred.

Many lives were lost. We are forever indebted to the brave men and women who died on the frontier of the battlefields for our freedom, for all that we have. We will never forget them. We remember and recall ANZAC every year, and we educate our children about this alliance. We will remember them: they are our heroes, our champions, our “game-changers”.

Today, in our world and in our country, we have new heroes, champions and “game-changers”. These new heroes are the many men, women and children who have stepped up, arisen, “taken the bull by the horns” and made a difference in the lives of many during the Covid-19 crisis. To all the essential workers (police, nurses, doctors, firefighters, rest home carers, orderlies, supermarket workers, chaplains... the list is long), thank you. Bless you.

Your service for the masses, for our country, is both courageous and brave. You are valued and loved, appreciated and cherished. You risk your lives every day against an unseen enemy - Covid-19. Your work is in the same order of sacrifice as our Lord Jesus on the Cross and the soldiers on the battlefields. Your lives are on the line every time you step up and step out. We salute you and keep you and your loved ones in our prayers. We will not forget you.

Jesus said, “I came that you may have life, life in all its fullness”. (John 10:10)

Blessings,

Right Reverend Fakaofa Kaio, Moderator of the Presbyterian Church of Aotearoa New Zealand

[Download the Moderator’s Anzac Day message](#)

Communication from Council of Assembly re COVID-19 – Financial response

Among recent happenings, the Council has established a Covid-19 Crisis Financial Response Workgroup to consider what steps the Council could take to assist parishes, presbyteries and Assembly Office deal with the Covid-19 situation. The Workgroup has also produced its first report to Council on 9 April 2020, which contained recommendations under two headings.:

- Assembly Assessment
- The ability of Church Property Trustees to release funds from property sales to congregations for the purposes of maintaining ministry and mission – Use of Capital Funds

A memo updating parishes on these matters was sent out last week, but can also be downloaded here: [CoA Covid-19 Financial Response](#)

Resourcing Our People

The Alpine Presbytery Resource Team met today. A story was heard about an older gentleman in a congregation who was supplied with a tablet to connect him with others in our current lockdown period. When the gentleman connected with others he couldn't stop smiling. Being able to connect with others brought him life. We wonder how many others' lives might be impacted similarly if the resources were available.

The Team's understanding is that, for those who remain vulnerable to the Covid-19 virus, their 'lockdown' period may remain longer than those of us who are healthier.

With this in mind we discussed the possibility of a nationwide project to help source a supply of technology (tablets) for those people in faith communities/congregations who currently have none. This will enable them to participate with their church family members, as well as connect them to their families and the wider outside world.

The process required to see this happen would require the following:

1. Ascertaining numbers of tablets required
2. Sourcing a supplier
3. Arranging login/emails for people
4. Install required software i.e. Zoom, Messenger, Skype etc.
5. Arrange distribution channels
6. Have local people on the ground to train people in the use of the tablets

As you can see, this is a pretty big project but if the Ministry of Education can do it what is stopping us?

We are asking congregations to give us an indication of their interest in participating in this project. Please visit this form <https://forms.gle/gT7NpDUxGskEBPKe6> to let us know whether you have people who may want to acquire a tablet, and also whether you have people available to set-up/distribute/train.

The Vine Newsletter

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

From last week

- **Adjusting to a new reality...**
- **Worshipping Online**
- **Please be careful about signage!**
- **The Vine newsletter**
- **Short of Breath—Making Sense of Covid-19 Complexity**
- **Kids Friendly name change**
- **Other Newsletters**
[Presbyterian Church Schools' Resource Office](#)
[Presbyterian Support South Canterbury Newsletter](#)
- **Volunteering Canterbury—Governance Bites**

Dropbox link for documents mentioned in this newsletter: control & click, or copy & paste the link to your browser: <https://www.dropbox.com/sh/5k528skz4niqhg/AABDjLatKU2-C2reVHA6hVza?dl=0>

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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