



Alpine Presbytery

resourcing the braided river

www.alpinepresbytery.org

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Newsletter 30th April 2020

On Leave

Rev Barry Ayers will be on leave next week, from Monday 4th through to Sunday 10th May. Emails will be redirected, but queries can also be addressed to our Moderator, Rev Anne Stewart, or to Gail Weaver, our Office Support person.

Scouting team

We are looking for people to join our scouting team, those who love thinking and talking about what the future could hold. Check out the video promo here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V6-uuz5VOGU&t=3s>, and let Darryl Tempero know if you are interested, darryl@alpinepresbytery.org

Moderator's Appeal for Vanuatu—Cyclone Harold

It is with great sadness that I write to you. Tropical Cyclone Harold has taken a great toll on the people of Vanuatu. Those on affected islands have lost homes, livelihoods and the means to sustain their families.

Category Five Cyclone Harold hit Vanuatu's northern islands on Monday, 6 April. The damage was severe, including on islands where the Presbyterian Church of Vanuatu (PCV) is actively involved in ministry and where many of our congregations have supported projects over the years. These islands include the Banks, Santo, Ambrym, Malekula, Paama and Epi.

Talua Theological Training Institute is located on Santo. Our Church regularly has personnel on staff at Talua and we have responsibility for a staff house there, which fortunately survived the cyclone, but several other buildings were badly damaged. The adjacent Navota Farm and Tata School were also impacted, as was the Santo Bush Mission outreach which Global Mission has supported for many years and where Presbyterian teams have participated.

The PCV has sustained damage to churches, pastors' homes, schools and other facilities in several islands. Many of these communities are remote and will take a long time to recover.

The PCV has mobilised their membership and is integrally involved in caring for affected communities through the distribution of emergency food packages throughout the country. This includes the island of Tanna, which has simultaneously been affected by ashfall from the Mt Yasur volcano which is destroying crops across a wide area on the island.

The cost of recovery will be beyond the Presbyterian Church of Vanuatu's capacity to manage alone and as one of their key partners, we will once again stand alongside and offer assistance.

I'm aware that many people in New Zealand are currently facing difficult economic constraints. However, several congregations and individuals with links to Vanuatu

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 7th May**.



have already enquired about an appeal or have donated funds, which reveals the deep support for the Presbyterian Church of Vanuatu embedded within our Church. Even in the light of our current economic circumstances, our members and congregations are reaching out in support.

Last year Ruth and I visited Vanuatu, together with the Rev Phil King, to attend the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Vanuatu held on Ambrym island. It was an exceptional and an incredible experience. The folks of Vanuatu are steeped in Presbyterianism, the biggest denomination by far of all the churches. We were welcomed and were treated like dear family members returned home. Christianity on Vanuatu is a major influence on her people. The mixture of many cultures and traditions - French, English, Samoan (LMS) - with the indigenous people, is bound together in the faith that Jesus Christ is Lord and Saviour.

The Bible urges us to bear one another's burdens. And so, we are inviting those of you who are able to support our cyclone recovery appeal for our brothers and sisters in Vanuatu.

This can be done by donating online to the PCANZ Global Mission account number: 02 0500 0086963 010 with the reference *Cyclone Appeal*. Cheques can be mailed to the PCANZ Assembly Office, PO Box 9049, Wellington 6141.

Rt Rev Fakaofa Kaio—Moderator, Presbyterian Church of Aotearoa New Zealand

Images and Video

View and download [images of the devastation in Vanuatu](#) and [watch Brian and Ally Mackay](#), who recently returned from mission with the Presbyterian Church of Vanuatu, speak about Cyclone Harold-affected Vanuatu. See updates and images from Vanuatu on [the Global Mission Facebook](#).

Bubble courses - a unique online Level 3 training resource from KCML

Bubble courses offer input for leaders, elders, ministers and whole people of God. Meet leaders from other Presbyteries seeking to preach, lead and engage in these unprecedented times.

KCML faculty will offer timely, conversational, engaging and thought-provoking training.

- Geoff New The Practice of Preaching in a Pandemic – Thursday 30th April and Thursday May 7th
- Nikki Watkin Leading in change: conversations and creativity – Monday 4th May and Monday 11th May
- Steve Taylor - Building community and increasing participation online – Tuesday 5th May and Tuesday 12th May

7:30-8:30 pm evenings. To register and get a zoom link, contact registrar@knoxcentre.ac.nz.

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.

Update from Presbytery Council Meeting –Thursday 23rd April

(held online via Zoom)

Devotions: *The Emmaus Road & COVID-19*

(Anne Stewart shared an article penned by Murray Rae)

"As they were walking, Jesus himself came near and began to walk with them on the road. Strangely, however, "their eyes were kept from recognising him".

It's a telling phrase. In the colloquial language of our own day, we might say that the disciples simply couldn't get their heads around the idea that the one they saw crucified had now been raised from the dead. Of course, they couldn't!

They were confronted by a reality that simply couldn't be accommodated within their prior estimations of what is and is not possible in this world. It took time for their blindness to be overcome. It took time for the disciples to discover that the world had changed and that the forces of death that nailed Jesus to the cross no longer had the last word.

I wonder whether our current struggle against Covid-19 might help us to see reality in a new light, to imagine a different way of ordering our world? Our eyes are being opened, for instance, to how essential the "lowly" workers among us—the shelf-stackers, the checkout operators, the fruit pickers—really are.

We recognise now how vital they are to the wellbeing of all. Might we imagine a new reality in which they are paid what they are really worth? A living wage would be a good place to start.

Reports are coming in from around the world about the lockdown giving our environment a reprieve. People in the smog-filled cities of China are beginning to see and breathe clear air.

Dramatic reductions in the level of pollution have enabled people in northern India to see the Himalayas for the first time in 30 years. Can we imagine a new reality in which the smoke stops belching from polluting factories, fossil fuels are left in the ground, and we learn to live more responsibly, more sustainably, in our world?

In cities around New Zealand, the homeless have been gathered up and given places to stay that are warm and comfortable and offer relief from the suffering of life on the street. We have found the resources to ensure that those normally excluded get to share in the common good. Can we picture a reality in which that resourcefulness becomes the norm?

Covid-19 provides us with an opportunity to think afresh about what the world should look like once the threat of the virus has been subdued. Is a new reality possible? Can we take stock, and muster a new determination to tackle those other features of our life together that threaten the common good?

The two disciples walking toward Emmaus could not imagine a world in which the powers of death no longer held sway. And so, to begin with, their eyes were kept from seeing the new reality that lay before them. It was not until the evening when Jesus broke bread and blessed it and gave it to them that their eyes were opened and they recognised the risen Lord.

Ever since that first Easter encounter, Jesus has been inviting us to share in a new reality, a new way of being human. In this new reality the poor hear good news, the blind see, and sinners are forgiven.

In this new way of ordering the world, swords are beaten into ploughshares, the hungry are fed, the homeless are given shelter, and fruit harvesters are sent home each night with a wage sufficient for their needs. Is it too good to be true?

Our inclination to think so is not a sign of the impossibility of such a world but rather of our lack of imagination and of faith.

Anne opened and constituted our meeting in prayer.

COVID-19:

Council spent some time discussing the current crisis.

Barry reported that updates from PCANZ were being regularly shared. The coming move to Alert Level 3 would not make any substantive difference to church activities. Most churches had adapted well over the lockdown and there appeared to be plenty of resources available for people. The Resource Team was continuing to connect with churches and ministries. Most Ministers were coping with the changes. Some were pondering the future options for *being* and *doing* church in a new way. The COVID-19 space was allowing for some re-thinking. However, for some, especially those with families at home, life could be more stressful.

The Scouting Team (currently Darryl Tempero, Martin Stewart & Barry Ayers) were getting underway and looking at ways in which people both in and beyond the Presbytery could be involved as we think about what the future might look like. A communique would go out to all churches soon.

In terms of Risk Management in this current phase of the crisis the greatest concerns include the well-being of our Ministers and key leaders and the ability of our churches to function and to maintain a mission-focus in their respective communities. We are aware that some churches, who were likely struggling anyway, could find this time difficult.

Financial Matters

Christine reported on a range of financial matters.

Financial support in a time of emergency:

After discussion it was agreed:

That if funds are required for emergency responses they could be drawn from one of the Presbytery Funds into the Emergency relief Fund.

Presbytery Levies:

After discussion it was agreed:

That we advise parishes that if they find they are unable to pay the outstanding amounts of this year's Presbytery levy by 30th June 2020 then they do not need to pay those amounts.

It was noted that Presbytery would express appreciation for those who have already paid their annual levy and also those who could still afford to pay their levy.

Budget:

After discussion it was agreed:

That we adopt "scenario 2" for the expenditure side of the July 2020 – June 2021 Presbytery Budget.

Scenario 2 includes:

Council meetings – 6 face to face down from 11;

One Presbytery Gathering rather than 2;

No General Assembly;

Still allows for full travel by Executive Officer and Moderator, National Assessment students, one retreat.

It was agreed:

That Presbytery invoice for the same rate for the 2020/2021 financial year as we have for the past 2019/2020 year i.e. no 5% increase this coming year.

Christine will bring a fully revised Budget for our next meeting before it is sent out to parishes.

The Moderator noted our sincere appreciation to Christine for all the work she has put into the revised Budget and the implications for Presbytery in the time ahead.

Vote of Thanks

It was reported that the Very Rev Bruce Hansen has completed his role of pastoral care for former members of St James Church in Spreydon, which was closed. Residual funds provided for pastoral care work has been distributed on a pro-rata basis to churches to which members have relocated.

It was agreed:

That Presbytery formally conclude this arrangement with the Very Rev Bruce Hansen and note its sincere appreciation for the manner in which he has fulfilled this role over the past few years.

Strategic Framework

Council discussed the most recent revision of this important document. There remains a little more work to bring the document to its final form for the wider Presbytery to adopt. Dugald Wilson and Martin Stewart were asked to attend to this work and report back to Presbytery Council.

Constitution

Council discussed the latest revised version of the Mackenzie Community Church Constitution. It was felt there are still some matters to review further and it was determined that advice will be sought from PCANZ and further review by Christine Arnold and Rev Henry Mbambo.

Presbytery Retreat

Given the current COVID situation it was determined that the scheduled Presbytery Retreat planned for June in Hanmer will be cancelled. An alternate event is being considered by the Presbytery Resourcing Team.

Mission Fund

The Board had a special meeting earlier in the week to consider its activities under the current crisis. At this stage the Board intends to continue to offer the opportunity for churches/ministries to apply for funding however there will be additional scrutiny over the relevance of projects in this changing context.

Business Section of our meeting:

Decisions made:

1. Apologies from our meeting – none received.
2. Minutes of the 31st March 2020 Presbytery Council meeting and the 9th April 2020 special meeting of Council be approved.
3. Ratification of Email Decision issued 3rd April re:
A contracting of two members of the Resource Team (Clare Ayers & Gene Lawrence) reimbursing their time used in the current crisis for contact/resourcing time with churches/ministries. The Resource Team has

sufficient budget to cover the cost of this time.

4. The approval of the agenda along with any late items;
5. Correspondence report, plus any late correspondence;
6. The Moderator's report;
7. The Executive Officer's report;
8. HR Committee report: No written report this month...
9. Property & Finance report:
 - 1) That the report be received
 - 2) That Presbytery approves the Alpine Financial Statements for the period ended 31st March 2020

Future Meetings

Our next scheduled meeting is on Thursday 28th May. However, depending on the Government's advice due on the 11th May about the possibility of moving to Level 2, we will remain flexible to scheduling an additional meeting at that time of the month to consider any implications about that change of Level status.

Next monthly Council meeting is scheduled for **Thursday 28th May 2020 at 9.30am on Zoom.**

The meeting was closed with the Benediction at 12.15pm

A full copy of the Minutes of this meeting can be [accessed here](#).

From last week

- COVID-19 Guidelines
- Communique
- Please Note: Payment of Stipends and salary
- Moderator's Anzac Day Message
- Communication from Council of Assembly re COVID-19 – Financial response
- Resourcing Our People
- The Vine Newsletter

Presbytery Contact Details

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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

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-C2revVHA6hVza?dl=0>