



Alpine Presbytery

resourcing the braided river

www.alpinepresbytery.org

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Newsletter 21st May 2020

The Garage Series

Here are this weeks episodes of "The Garage Series." This is where we go out and about and find out what questions people are asking.

#5 - Lyn from Greymouth, <https://youtu.be/SJcRMQwcou8> - Apologies for the audio issues near the end of this clip, keep listening and do not adjust your sets!

#6 - Phyllis from Lincoln, <https://youtu.be/g92krMRO9J4>

You may want to subscribe to the Alpine Presbytery Youtube channel while you are there. Maybe you have the same questions? Maybe you can talk about them in your congregation leadership meetings? Please share with us what solutions and ideas, and maybe further questions you come up with.

Last week: **Episode 3** <https://youtu.be/2Wvt7TMsQEM>

Episode 4 <https://youtu.be/TMSKdN1h90>

Alpine Mission Fund

The next round of applications to the Alpine Mission Fund closes on **Friday 29th May** for processing during June. Anyone wishing to apply should download and complete an Expression of Interest form, which can be downloaded from our website: <https://alpinepresbytery.org/alpine-mission-fund-putea-missioni/>

Resource for Funerals

Rev Dugald Wilson has compiled another resource for funerals—a short service to commend the deceased into the care of God, and it can be downloaded here: [Service at home for funerals](#)

Covid-19 Health & Safety Plans

Thank you to all those who have send in your church's Health & Safety Plan for the activities of your church and the use of your building as we work our way into Level 2 and ultimately level 1. We are cautiously optimistic that next week the Government will revise the numbers that can gather in faith communities so it might be possible for some churches to begin to physically gather once again. It is *essential* that you have a plan in place for this. Please let Presbytery know your plan as soon as possible.

If you want a starting point, [Here is an example of what one of our churches has already done.](#) Please feel free to contact us if you need help!

Please note - for Cooperative Ventures we realise that both/all your church Partners may be asking you for similar information. Just feel free to cc us the plan that you are preparing for whichever is your Convening Partner. You don't have to write a new one for each Partner!

Update on the Moderator's Appeal for Vanuatu

This appeal was launched three weeks ago. Read the latest update here: <https://www.presbyterian.org.nz/update-moderators-appeal-for-vanuatu-0>

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 28th May.**



Applying Christian ethics in a time of pandemic

Many of us will have our own instincts in responding to the pandemic, with varying appetites for social controls and government guidelines. So, as well as assessing the risks of the virus, how do we assess how we do 'the right thing'?

Rev Allister Lane addresses this question in his article, which can be accessed here: [Applying Christian ethics in a time of pandemic](#)

The Hospital Chaplains are here to support you at this time

A message from Rev Sandra Wright-Taylor, South Island Regional Manager—InterChurch Council for Hospital Chaplaincy, and Chaplain to Older Persons Mental Health—Burwood Hospital

We are back in the hospital, and working a little differently at the moment. Our Chaplains are rostered on for half days until further notice and we visit where we are called to. This means we are not moving as freely around the wards as we usually are able to do.

WE WELCOME YOUR REFERRALS (and at any other time) and are happy to visit on your behalf.

The contacts for Chaplains are as follows:

- Christchurch Hospital - 03 3640 640 Ext 89555 or 86358
- Christchurch Women's 03 3640 640 Ext 85722
- Burwood Hospital 03 383 6836 (can also use Christchurch Hospital) Ext 99762
- Hillmorton/The Princess Margaret Hospitals 03 337 7969 and ask to be put through to the Chaplain.

Our After Hours/Weekends/Public Holidays On-Call roster continues and we are happy to receive urgent/emergency referrals. To access this service please ring Christchurch Hospital and ask for the on-call Chaplain.

I am very happy to answer any questions you might have. I would welcome your prayers for staff at this time, especially for those who worked on the ward at Burwood caring for the Rosewood residents, for those who made decisions and monitored what was happening in the community re: Covid -19, for patients and families who were separated over the past few weeks when major decisions were being made, for those whose surgery was cancelled and now wait to see where to from here, for those with heightened anxiety and fear at this time, for families who are grieving and unable to be with dying relatives due to lockdown and living in different regions.

During the time of lockdown the Chaplains have been there. It has been a privilege to be alongside staff, patients, whanau listening to stories whether by phone, Zoom, or face to face. It's lovely to be back on the wards where we have been warmly welcomed, stories have flowed, as we have listened to staff, patients and whanau.

Financial Consolidation

Thank you to all the parishes who have already made available the information needed to enable the team in Wellington to prepare Consolidated accounts. The aim at the moment is to do a "trial run" with information from the last completed financial year, before going on to the real thing at the end of this financial year - and as that is only a little over 5 weeks ago, we would be grateful to receive the information (recently requested by email) as soon as you are able.

A gentle reminder that the Consolidation process applies to all Presbyterian, Cooperating and Uniting congregations.

We know that the initial reaction to this has sometimes been to step back in horror, but the requirements on parishes are not onerous, and you do not cede any control of your finances or accounts to PCANZ in this process.

To recap, what is needed at the moment is:

- For those not using Xero: a copy of the Trial Balance for *your last completed Financial Year*, preferably in excel format. Usually this is an easy download from your accounting programme, or is already in excel if you use that for your accounts.
- Xero users: giving the Wellington team login access to your Xero accounts enables them to download the required information in a matter of seconds – and as they have over 400 parishes and entities to consolidate you can understand why this is the preferred option.
- Bank Audit Certificates for the end of *this current Financial Year*. We are aware that many bank branches have not been open and, in any case, getting the required number of signatories on letters has not always been possible at this time, so know that there may be a delay in you being able to request these.

If you have questions or queries, please feel free to contact Gail at gail@alpinepresbytery.org

The Vine Newsletter

Download this week's [Vine Newsletter](#)

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

Studying Theology at the University of Otago

The Theology Programme at the University of Otago offers many opportunities for the study of the Bible, the Biblical Languages, Church History, Ministry, Christian Thought and Pastoral Theology, both on-campus and to many students across Aotearoa New Zealand through our successful distance study programme. We are committed to serving Christian communities throughout the country. Semester 2 starts on July 6th and new enrolments are due by June 25th. For details of papers go to: <https://www.otago.ac.nz/theology/study/papers/> and click on Semester 2 papers. Or see their poster: [Theology Semester 2](#).

To enrol go to <https://www.otago.ac.nz/study/enrolment/>

Wanted—Submissions for a new Spiritual Anthology of Writing

Pleasant Point writer Karalyn Reid (Joyce) is seeking submissions of spirit-filled poetry and testimonies of hope and purpose for people in this time of Covid-19 and as we move into a new way of living with significant changes socially and economically, here in New Zealand and around the world.

She feels called to produce a fourth anthology of faith-based writing, following *Fuel for the Soul*, *I Saw Love Today*, and *The Journey*. This new anthology will be based on Isaiah 6:8—about the Church rising up and offering peace and love, meaning and purpose.

Her vision is to have these books ultimately available free at various places such as hospices, hospitals and doctors' waiting rooms.

To make an enquiry, or to request a submission form, please contact Karalyn Reid on karalynjoyce@xtra.co.nz

The deadline for submissions is 31 May 2020.

New journal table-of-contents - Hewitson Library

Here are the links to the contents pages from the most recent issues of:

[Christianity Today, Vol 64 No 2, March 2020](#)

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

[Christianity Today, Vol 64 No 4, May/June 2020](#)

[Sojourners, Vol 49 No 4, April 2020](#)

[Sojourners, Vol 49 No 5, May 2020](#)

Email hewitson@prcknox.org.nz if you would like copies of any of the articles scanned and sent to you

From last week

- **Keep Calm & Stay Alert**
- **The Garage Series**
- **Moderator's Covid-19 Pastoral Message**
- **Updated Presbytery Directory**
- **A Resource for Funerals**
- **Where is God in a Pandemic?**
- **The Vine Newsletter**

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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

Musings & Thoughts from Lockdown

We have received some feedback from individuals and churches as they have pondered and reflected during lockdown. A while back we invited churches to reflect and discern what God might be saying in this unusual time. What are we finding helpful? What is hard? What *new learnings* and *possible new ways of being and doing church* might we take into the future?

When our Government lifts the restrictions on numbers that can gather it will be tempting to get quickly back to 'business as usual'. But what changes might God be calling us towards?

These two pages contain some snippets from feedback that we have already received. Keep them coming in, and we will bring you more next week.

Online Worship

Moving to this way of worship has called for some steep learning curves, but has been a great way to explore new ways of connecting:

- We would hate.... to lose skills with doing the services on-line
- It has allowed people to link with family in other centres, with friends in other parishes and to gain a sense of the church being brought together.
- A strong sense that this has been nourishing.
- Some people's gifts have been coming to the fore during this time

Contact & Pastoral Care:

- The level of contact between members is more regular than what we've done before; Prior Covid-19, inclined to not contact people so readily because we would see them on Sunday morning
- Greater connection between people through technology
- The interaction between people in our current Sunday format is greater – more sharing of thoughts and opinions
- The fuller pastoral aspect in regular care of members will be further developed and we will be stronger for that. Keeping people connected has been something that can underpin our pastoral development.
- Continue phone connections - not necessarily weekly, but on some regular basis.
- Will our current contacting system become an obligation or a case of ongoing growing relationship?
- We need to reconnect with people beyond the church and not judge or label them.
- How do we hold relationships at the centre of our church life so that things like kindness and caring dictate our structures rather than the other way around.

Things we've appreciated during lockdown:

- Seeing families walking out and about together
- Seeing teddies in windows
- We have got on and done something and done it well
- Building up relationships in families
- Learning new technology
- Connecting with people we don't know so well
- Sense of less pressure, trying out new things.

Things that have been tough:

- Missing out on meeting people
- Missing Church and group gatherings
- Not seeing people face to face
- Missing out on the closeness of people
- Being in the same physical space for 6 weeks

Things we're looking forward to getting back into:

- Church
- Gathering with others
- Getting together with grandchildren and parents
- Going back to work
- Going anywhere!
- Shopping
- Sunday lunch with others
- Freedom of choice
- Spiritual element – just do it.

Negatives:

- Congregation members without technology are missing out
- Puts stress on relationships not being face to face and especially families/children
- By the time we hit Level 1, some may have decided they don't need to return to church (decrease in numbers)
- The connection of physical presence is missed – the importance of physical presence over faces on a screen; spiritual connection with one another
- Sense of a lack of presence of God not being in physical community; Hard to understand where God is in all of this

A Letter From Two Very Grateful Over Seventies

As we move into Alert Level 2 we can't help thinking of the huge sacrifices that people in the younger age groups and therefore the less vulnerable to this nasty virus have made. For over seven weeks they did what was asked of them. Like all of us they stayed home, and they washed and re-washed their hands. In addition they worked at home, sometimes in very difficult situations, they did older peoples' shopping etc, and as school pupils they studied at home, well away from their friends and without all the familiarity of their schools and tertiary environs. But they did it. They did it because they wanted all New Zealanders to be well, not victims of this nasty virus.

And it was us; those of us in the 70 plus age group who benefitted most from these sacrifices. We are the most vulnerable. Some of us took time (quite a bit of time in some instances!) to accept that we are vulnerable. We are vulnerable because our immune systems (and everything else) has had over 70 years of use. Like it or not we over-Seventies are not as good as we used to be!!

We look to all of you who have done this for us. We are so grateful. We have observed the huge sacrifices and thank you all from the bottom of our hearts. To live in a country where life and good health (even of the over-Seventies) is valued so highly, humbles us.

We, as over-Seventies, realize it is up to us now to honour your gift to us. We must now go forward "Playing it safe" so that all has not been in vain.

Our hope for all of you is that the rest of this year lets all your dreams come true with lots of fun now that your bubbles have increased a bit.

Take care and our love to you all.

L. and M.

"We can see things in a new way. We now have a You-tube worship channel. It has been fruitful. We have an excuse to connect with people. We have stopped and can see what our deeper values are."

"What is Sunday morning going to look like when we get back together? Will folk want the same old – same old?"

"Have we grasped the concept of being church beyond Sunday morning?"

"Focus on why we do things as opposed to what we do. With this there is the recognition that simply repeating things can be counter productive. Being alert to these observations is one of the challenges we must remain aware of."

"How do we continue with the positive changes? How do we manage the negative changes, if they need managing at all?"