



PLAINS PRESBYTERIAN

14TH JUNE 2020



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It works both ways

The nation is now able to move freely once again after being cleared of covid19 and we did this together, the government leading and the support of the nation behind it. This could not have happened if we did not work together. It works both ways.

The work of Plains parish continues because of the leaders you have elected and entrusted to fulfil the task to the fellowship and worship life to be ongoing. You trust their guiding wisdom and decision making as to what is best for the church which is no easy task. Our task as leaders, is to listen and consider your thoughts and concerns as well as and most importantly, to hear what God's Spirit is saying, test it, trust, and put into action what we believe is God led. And although you have chosen leaders to envision a way forward, this envisioning is not theirs alone to carry but each and every one of us who connects ourselves to this faith community. Each of us have a task of responsibility, accountability, and missional focus to the ethos we believe in, that is, salvation in Jesus Christ alone. It works both ways. Leaders believe they do not run on their own accord, but with the hope that you are with them not only watching from a distance to see things unfold, but actively involved in the ongoing maintenance and mission. It works both ways. Jesus in his ministry here on earth put great importance in the function of body although different, parts are significant to perform its role for the whole to work.

This is the body of Christ that every part is joined and held together for it to grow and build up.

Ephesians 4:16

"From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work."

Your ongoing support for your leaders are important to keep the work of the church alive and active but they cannot do this alone. Everyone has something to offer whether big or small and whatever it is, helps us build and grow. You might be wondering, "what can I offer?" Maybe start with this, examine what your strengths or giftings are and pray, ask God to show you where in his work could you help the leaders build and grow the ministry. Speak to your leader/s as to how you would like to help.

We are all in this together, but we are not doing church life alone! We do it with God's help and the leading of his Spirit. It works both ways, the leaders need your help and we need leaders. We need each other in the "Body of Christ".

1 Thessalonians 5:11

"Therefore encourage one another and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing."

Encourage and strengthen your leaders as they continue to serve. Support them in the work they do. Lend a hand if you are able. Lighten the load if you see the struggle and most importantly, constantly pray for one another and our mission and faith in Jesus Christ not to be swayed but steadfast.

COVID-19 LEVEL 1 GUIDANCE

New Zealand moved to Alert Level 1 at midnight 8th June 2020. There is no longer a limit the size of gatherings. There is no longer any need for churches to use a contact tracing register, although the government has encouraged individuals to track their movements.

The purpose of this document is to summarise the recent changes and answer frequently asked questions.

9th June 2020 Changes

1. The only remaining restrictions relate to entering New Zealand.
2. There is no limit to the size of gatherings, no requirement to physically distance, no requirement for businesses or services including churches to use a contact tracing register. There are no restrictions on serving food or drink.
3. The government has encouraged individuals to keep a record of locations they visit where other people are present. This is an individual responsibility and churches are not required to use a contact tracing register. The church may choose to assist individuals to track their movements by providing a QR code for them to scan when they visit a church location.

Although restrictions have eased, churches do not have to start activities again if they do not wish. Decisions should continue to be made at the local level.

COVID-19 Level 1 Guidance ~ Frequently Asked Questions

1. Do we need to physically distance when meeting for church activities? No.
2. What about singing? Singing was an activity that was used by the government as an example of an activity with heightened risk. There has never been a ban on singing. As with all activities, churches may decide whether to include singing in worship.
3. Can I serve food and drink at services? Yes. As always, you should consider how to do this safely.
4. Do I still need a safety plan? No, but you can choose to have one if you wish.
5. Are there still hygiene rules and rules for at-risk people? There are no specific rules. A common sense approach should be taken with regards to the separate issues of at-risk people and hygiene measures. Basic hygiene measures include washing your hands and coughing or sneezing into your elbow. People who feel unwell should stay at home.
6. Can our church offer communion? Yes, if you choose to do so. As with providing food and drink, consider how you can offer communion hygienically. Those preparing the elements should wash their hands thoroughly and regularly. You may consider pre-cut bread pieces and the use of tongs and individual cups. Some retailers are selling individually packaged communion cups with wafers for use at communion services.
7. Who decides when we go ahead with services and other church activities? Decisions should be made locally.
8. Could there be further changes? Maybe, it is up to government. Guidance is provided based on the information available at the time. If this information changes, the guidance may change.
9. I am having trouble obtaining a QR code for my church. Can you help? Many people have had trouble obtaining a QR code for a church. This is because at the time of writing, the application requires a NZ Business Number (NZBN) which most churches do not have. This is something outside of our control. More information, including contact details for giving feedback about this issue is at this link.
10. What is this guidance based on? The COVID-19 Public Health Response (Alert Level 2) Order 2020 has been revoked. The government guidance outlining Alert Level 1 is here.
11. Who can I speak to if I have any questions? Speak to your local health and safety representative in the first instance. If you still have questions, contact Matthew Hague (matthew@presbyterian.org.nz).

Matthew Hague
Compliance Director

Life at Alert Level 1

The Government announced yesterday that we would move to Alert Level 1 from today, Tuesday 9th June. As life returns to normal within our borders, we are grateful that we live in a country that has worked hard together to achieve such gains against COVID-19. Thank you to all of our PCANZ family for your contribution towards this end.

I am aware that there has been an increased workload for many in our congregations as they have worked hard to make our facilities, ministries and activities safe places for church and community members to gather. Safety Plans have been written and re-written, amended and updated, as various changes have been made to the requirements under the different alert levels. There are still a few requirements under Level 1, however for the most part we can now focus our time and energy more fully on being the Church in Aotearoa New Zealand and serving the mission of God in our local contexts.

Some of us are looking forward to returning to "life as normal", and some of us have been challenged to embrace a "new normal" that is different to our previous reality. In discerning what the Spirit is saying to local churches, for some it will be doing what you already were doing, and for others it will be stepping into new opportunities that have opened up. May our gracious God guide, lead and bless you as you resume activities and re-engage with our wider communities after a time of limited interaction.

Above you will find our Level 1, together with a number of frequently asked questions and answers.

These updates have regularly drawn from the words of Psalm 46 for encouragement: "God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble. Therefore, we will not fear..." (Ps. 46: 1-2). Today we consider verse 10 as well, "Be still and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth". We praise God for being in a position to move to Level 1, and we ask God to keep the virus at bay and to keep our people and country healthy and safe, and we pray for the countries of the world who are still being ravaged by this virus.

Richard McLean
Convenor
Council of Assembly

Serving in Change.

God of light, who in Jesus made love real: help us live each day in joyful service. Renew our congregation. Enable us to change to live, and live to change, through Jesus Christ, Lord of every age.

Help to Fellow Christians. 2 Corinthians 9. Versus 6 - 9.

Remember that the person who sows few seeds will have a small crop; the one who sows many seeds will have a large crop. Each one should give, then, as they have decided, not with regret or out of a sense of duty; for God loves the one who gives gladly. And God is able to give you more than you need for yourselves and more than enough for every good cause. As the scripture says;

"He gives generously to the needy; his kindness last forever" Good News Bible.

Can we reflect on this bible reading and give thought to the well-being of our Rakaia Community. Just lately I have been in discussion with the Rakaia School, Sina from St Marks Parish and other folk regarding a Community Kindness Food Bank. St Marks are planning to have one in one of their containers, the school is looking at a Wellness Programme and would welcome a housing of a Food Bank and, Clothing give away place centred at the school. Until something is decided we at St Andrews would welcome and appreciate, if able to, donations of nonperishable groceries. Isobell has placed a community box in the foyer, giving you the opportunity to donate groceries at each church service Sunday. This Sunday 14th June all supplies will be donated to Presbyterian Support Ashburton.. Harvest Thanksgiving didn't happen, because of Lockdown, so let us have a delayed Harvest giving, we know the need is great as well in Ashburton and this is one way of supporting our partner social support group. From then on through the coming months, groceries and maybe children's clothing will go to the school. Appreciation and grateful thanks. - Dorothy

St. Andrew's Rakaia

Tuesday 16th June

10:30 am Rakaia Fit Kids | Music and movement for preschoolers, friendship for adults.

1:00 pm Steady as You Go | Balance, strengthening and gentle exercises for senior folk's health and well-being.

2:00 pm Mission Meeting | St. Andrew's Mission Meeting in the church lounge.

Back on the agenda! | "Plants 4 U @ Rakaia" Saturday 3rd October.

Picture sent by Joan Wright from first Sunday back at worship after lockdown.
Thankful to be back together again!



Sunday Services for June

14 th	9:30 am 10:30 am	St. Andrew's Rakaia St. John's Methven	Rev. John Titlow Rev. Arii Taimataora
21 st	9:30 am 10:30 am	St. Andrew's Rakaia St. John's Methven	Rev. Arii Taimataora Rev. Neville Burns
28 th	9:30 am 10:00 am 10:30 am	St. Andrew's Rakaia Trinity Mayfield St. John's Methven	Rev. Neville Burns Rev. Arii Taimataora Tai Taimataora

PRAYER

Loving God.

You have kept our nation from being overwhelmed from the terror of the virus during the lockdown.

Our hearts are filled with gratitude and praise because of your protection goodness upon us and because of your goodness, we have the freedom to move openly once again. Help us as we reconnect back into society to recover and rebuild. Guard our hearts and minds. Encourage anyone feeling anxious, afraid, or helpless. Continue to heal those who are sick and protect those who are not. Restore communities for the glory of your name, and rescue people from depression and loneliness. Strengthen and encourage our church as we work together with one another. Strengthen our bonds and open our hearts to your Spirit's leading. Continue to transform us. Let the spiritual renewal we've experienced strengthen our resolve to share your hope. We believe we will see your goodness in our lives.

Calm our fears as we trust in You and come and do what only you can do.

In Jesus name, Amen.