



# PLAINS PRESBYTERIAN

22<sup>ND</sup> AUGUST 2021



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**We are companions on a journey and we are called by the Word of the Lord.**

## Alpine Presbytery

Well here we are in lockdown again! Hopefully it is not for too long!

I'm aware that there will be a lot of disruption, not least ahead of Sunday because of the relatively late notice the Friday briefing will provide in terms of whether the Level 4 status is continued or decreased. In case you cannot remember, Level 3 only allows for gathering of up to 10 people, and Level 2 for gatherings of up to 100, but social distancing measures need to be in place. Already St David's Union in Ashburton have postponed their planned jubilee celebrations—we feel for them as their planning was well in place.



For me, I was due to travel back today from an enjoyable two and a half weeks on the West Coast where I helped out with services, looked, and listened, and did my day job from a warm motel room.

However, I did a hurried pack-up and set off from Greymouth after the lockdown announcement and safely drove through a snow blizzard to get home. It was an act of faith (I prefer to call it that than an act of madness!) I had to trust the witness of those who had travelled before me. That they were just in front of me on a road covered with snow was kind of scary. I'm very grateful for their carefulness and the wonderful work by the road maintenance crew who kept Porters Pass open for us for as long as they did!

Maybe that is a message for our people at this time - to trust the witness of those who go before us - whether they be government and health officials operating to attend to this latest Covid-19 breakout, or the great cloud of witnesses who have found that their faith prospered in adversity. May this be so for us as well!

My best wishes as you make your way in this short or longer lockdown season!

Martin Stewart

## GOD'S PROMISES ABOUT *being with us*

Hold onto these promises that God is with you in your individual situation. Remember the time in the Bible when God gave Noah a rainbow as a sign that God keeps his promises. As He was faithful to Noah, He will be faithful to you.

Isaiah 40:29 "He gives strength to the weary and increases the power of the weak."

Deuteronomy 31:8 "The LORD himself goes before you and will be with you; he will never leave you nor forsake you. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged."

Isaiah 40:31 "But those who hope in the LORD will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint."

Joshua 1:9 "Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go."

Isaiah 43:2 "When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and when you pass through the rivers, they will not sweep over you. When you walk through the fire, you will not be burned; the flames will not set you ablaze."

Psalms 23:4 "Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me."

Jeremiah 29:11 "For I know the plans I have for you", declares the LORD, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future."

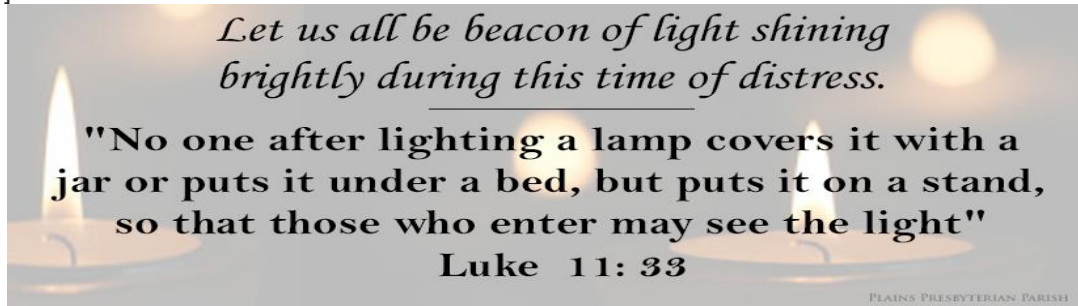
Philippians 4:6-7 "Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus."

Bible Reflection. John 14: 27 - 29

"Peace is what I leave with you; it is my own peace that I give you. I do not give it as the world does. Do not be worried and upset; do not be afraid. You heard me say to you, " I am leaving, but I will come back to you" If you loved me, you would be glad that I am going to my Father; for he is greater than I. I have told you this now it all happens; so that when it does happen, you will believe.

### Keep Stepping

Sometimes we need to take a step, That's very hard to do, But going forward steadily, one step turns into two. And sometimes when we look ahead, the future's looking bleak, but going forward steadily, we find the path we seek. So take a step, a little step, and tiptoe if you must, but never look too far ahead and learn to hope and trust. Leave yesterday behind you now, this day has all you need. So keep on stepping steadily and know you will succeed. [Iris Hesselden]



### St. Andrew's Rakaia

Rakaia Fit Kids & Steady as you go will hopefully continue on the 31<sup>st</sup> of August if we are in Level 2.

### St. John's Methven

Family Quiz Night! **POSTPONED TO A LATER DATE.** Will update when a replacement date has been confirmed!

Friday 27<sup>th</sup> August (Keeping in mind Lockdown Levels) St Johns Brick Club 3:15-5:00 pm on Fridays after school during the term 'Exploring God with Lego'. Contact Jayne 0274678105

**Also from St John's** that we were going to farewell Heather Mellish on Friday. Heather was a much loved and loyal member at St John's before she moved to Ashburton recently. We miss her cheerful and positive outlook on life. Our thoughts and prayers are with her family.

### Contacts for the Parish

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**\* PLEASE MAKE NOTE \* All Services held this Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> August ARE CANCELLED Due to Lockdown.**

Sunday Worship Services			
29 <sup>th</sup> Aug	9:30 am	St. Andrew's Rakaia   Movie in the lounge	"A Man Called Peter"
	10:00 am	St. John's @ All Saints	Methven
5 <sup>th</sup> Sept.	10:30 am	St. John's Methven   Communion	Rev. Silvia Purdie

### Prayer

God of hope, our lives have been disrupted by recent events. Some of us have already borne the brunt of this Delta invasion. We are tempted to blame you God, for what has happened, for these things are sometimes beyond our understanding, despite all our scientific and governmental knowledge. Yet you are a loving, caring God. In life, death, and resurrection of Jesus you offer us a way forward, of new possibilities and opportunities, a chance to begin again, Help us to understand what is going on in the world today with this virus.

.Help us to understand your grand plan, God of hope. Bring peace and harmony to our families and to our communities. Bring healing to those whose livelihoods have been shattered. Bring compassion, hope and kindness to those who live in fear of this virus. Restore in us a vision of your purpose through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.