

NOTICE FOR PLAINS PARISH BULLETIN – this Sunday.

Parish Council met on Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> March. An item on the agenda was looking ahead at creating a positive future for our parish. A proposal had been circulated to all parish council members, asking them to reflect and pray on the proposal in order for wise decision-making to be undertaken.

As a result, the following was agreed to unanimously:

“Parish Council agree to support the process of determining the minds of the wider congregation to closing Plains Presbyterian Parish in order for new growth possibilities to emerge”.

It is important to understand that we are not stopping worship opportunities - closing the current entity is what enables a future model to begin.

The proposal which has been discussed and agreed to by Parish Council is now available in all four churches to be shared with members – copies will be available from this Sunday. This also contains a possible time line for handing over to Alpine Presbytery the affairs of the parish.

While this may be seen as a bold move, it is also an opportunity for Alpine Presbytery to:

- Attend to the ‘too many buildings’ issues rather than us having to do this and carry the weight of having to do the inevitable closures.
- Provide sufficient money to work with the locals to provide ***an initial 5 years of half-time ministry*** to the remnant Plains congregants.
- This ministry leader would work with a team of elders and others in the area - not to simply be a chaplain but to look for opportunities to grow and prosper the church and serve the community.

*One possibility is that an effective full-time position could be achieved by linking this person with another half-time ministry position in Ashburton.*

- Follow through on the parallel dream that has emerged in our conversations, namely, ***to actively pursue crafting a new mission seedling based in Methven.***

A copy of the full proposal is available at your church, or by contacting one of the Parish Councillors who represent your area. A reminder that these are:

- Methven – Brian Blackwell, Janet Cuttle, Elsa Hyde
- Mayfield/Staveley – Annette Syme, Kay King, Kevin Taylor
- Rakaia – Fay Cuttriss, Jenny Logan, Liz Depree.

Initial conversation opportunities will be held in the three areas on the following dates:

- Rakaia – 16<sup>th</sup> April
- Mayfield – 18<sup>th</sup> April
- Methven – 21<sup>st</sup> April.
- Next Parish Council meeting for reporting back from these conversations – 23<sup>rd</sup> April.
- Tentative date for our first Congregational Meeting – Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> May after the 10.30 am church service at Methven. (To be confirmed).

Times and venues will be advertised in the weekly Bulletins leading up to those dates. If members cannot attend a meeting, but would like to give feedback, just contact one of your local people.

We have a choice here -. **To honour the faithful witness of many over the years who have sown seeds of faith in our communities by building on their legacy of faithfulness..... or let the flame extinguish.**