

## PARISH COUNCIL UPDATE:

In the past week, local “Reimagining Plains Parish” meetings have been held in Rakaia and Mayfield, with Methven holding theirs after church this Sunday.

These have been an opportunity to share the Reimagining document, listen to the voices of our communities, and discuss as a group: if this proposal were to go ahead to the next stage, what are the things about the mission of the church in Plains Parish that you value and would want to retain?

A vision of something different is being offered at Plains - that has not been the case in some of the other recent church closures where there simply is not any energy for trying something new. The fact that we are considering trying something new is to be acknowledged and celebrated.

Somebody has shared with us recently that “I recall an older minister saying one time when one of the churches in my first parish was being closed - 'A lot of people want a church in their community to stay away from.'”

The next step is to hold the parish-wide **CONGREGATIONAL MEETING** on Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> May, after the 10.30 am service at St John’s Methven. The discussions have happened, we now need to vote on the motion: “That Alpine Presbytery be asked to close Plains Presbyterian Parish in order to pursue new ventures in the region.” It will need 2/3rds of the members (including associates) **present at the Congregational Meeting** to be in favour to take this further. Under the PCANZ Book of Order proxy votes are not counted.

Rev Dan Spragg from Christchurch will be moderating the Congregational Meeting. Part of his work with Presbytery involves overseeing the pioneer ministries and working with churches as they develop appropriate ways to do and be church in their communities in these changing times. Dan served in The Village Church in Christchurch for over 10 years.

We are hoping for a great turn-out to this meeting – as one of our worship leaders, Paul Eden, reminded us recently: This is a big step in faith; but we need to remember that our God is indeed faithful.

Liz and Annette  
Co-Parish Clerks.