



Hibiscus Coast Presbyterian Church

CC Number 51548

MINISTER

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TREASURER

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Good afternoon

Over the last week the nation has been responding to the threat that the COVID-19 virus poses. As you are probably aware, the situation is changing at a rapid rate and as of Friday, March 20 at 13:00, Presbytery has advised all PCANZ churches to suspend worship services after this Sunday.

Please note the following from Parish Council:

1. We give notice that we will continue with our usual worship service this Sunday, March 22 **after which all worship services are suspended until further notice.**
2. This is a **temporary measure** that is to be reviewed as we know more in 3 to 4 weeks regarding the community spread and associated level of risk
3. We are in the process of organising **alternative ways to provide worship and pastoral care.** Please ensure we have your email address and that you regularly visit our website.

As church leadership, the Elders and I have been prayerfully considering how we are to respond to this situation. 2 Timothy 1:7 tells us that God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind. We do not wish to react in fear, but at the same time recognise that we need to exercise a sound mind as to how we gather, especially as we have a number of vulnerable people in our church family. We have a responsibility to look after each other in love.

Covid 19 is an unprecedented situation and poses a huge threat. The risk to individuals is low, at this stage in NZ, with priority focus on preventative measures. It is likely, based on what's happened in other countries, that there is already some community spread. The advice, and therefore our decision is to be conservative; prevent the spread of Covid 19! Take heed, it is a time to be informed (refer to Ministry of Health website), take rapid, preventative action, whilst not engendering fear.

I wish to encourage you at this time to stay connected to one another. Although we do not have a small group ministry at HCPC, please stay in contact with those you are close to; calling or even considering to gather for prayer and worship.

We also affirm that our building and Church office is to remain open and people may enter freely for small gatherings, prayer and meditation, to see our minister or to spend a few moments with our administrator Ruth (as long as health and safety provisions are upheld).

We hope to post weekly devotional video's to our website and send out prayer guidelines, scripture readings and devotionals via email. Please share those freely amongst loved ones.

We are also exploring at how we care pastorally for those within our church, as well as those outside of our church who are in need.

Church and office: 107 Centreway Road, Orewa, 0931 Telephone: 09 426 4052

There will be those within our parish who will need assistance, especially with shopping. Please let us know if you require such assistance. Likewise if you have time available to help with this sacrifice of love, we would be interested in hearing from you. We also expect that the foodbank will be in high demand over the next six months, so we will appreciate any contributions to this ministry.

If you would like to continue your offerings to the church during this period you could set up automatic payments. Email Allan Knight at treasurer@hibiscuscoastpresbyterian.org.nz for information about how to do this.

Finally, we ask that you see this as a call to earnest prayer. I have always held the conviction that great opportunity comes where people are facing great challenges. Keep praying, both for our nation and for our church, that God would pour His mercy over us and help us in this challenging time to discern His guidance. May we learn new ways of being church amidst a crisis such as Covid-19.

So be encouraged, and remember to be an encouragement to others. God is with us, He is the One our hope is in, and because of this we have no reason to fear.

God bless,

On behalf of Parish Council,

Rev. Werner Schroeder