

Dear Friends,

It was a bit of shock on Saturday night to be back into COVID alert level 2 (and Auckland into alert level 3) at 6am on Sunday morning. I hadn't heard the alert on my phone so it was only at the end of the Blues Hurricanes game that I heard one of the commentator's talk of going back into lockdown.

I do want to commend our staff and council for quickly jumping into action and messaging and discussing what we needed to do for the Sunday. Karen was amazing and as our Health and Safety office worked us through all the changes we had to make. Because Enosa and Felicity were already up here they took the service at HopeOnerahi. We were able to make arrangements to still have communion at Central and planned if we had more than 100 people to send the overflow up to Tikipunga. Ushers were really great at HopeCentral changing how we did communion. Plus we already had our zoom service all in place. Kris told me there were thirty connections that morning. Including some from Auckland, who couldn't go to church there?

Enosa and Felicity drove down to Auckland on Sunday afternoon. He isn't preaching this coming Sunday so there will be no worries about coming back up through any roadblock. He joined us for our staff meeting via Zoom, he has organised to have his connect group via zoom tonight and will be making some pastoral phone calls during the week.

The rest of us battle on whether we stay in level 2 go up a level or, hopefully, move back down to level 1.

Here are the notices.

COVID alert level 2

We are currently under COVID alert level 2. Please if you are not well Please stay home and join us via zoom. If you have COVID symptoms please get tested. Make sure you use the hand sanitizer when you come into the church and sign in using the QR code and Tracer app on your phone. If you do not have a smart phone we have some COVID tracer dairies at the church for you to write where you have been. PLEASE GRAB ONE if you need it. We cannot have gatherings of over 100 people so at Central if we are still at Level 2 on March 7th we will be asking people over the 100 mark to whip up to HopeTikipunga for the service there. Please respect people's choice about greetings by bumping elbows with those who choose to be refrain from handshakes and hugs.

Services this Sunday

We are continuing with our series *New Life in Dying Words: Jesus seven Sayings from the Cross*. I hope people are finding the series as engaging and inspiring as I know our preaching team are in preparing the talks.

10:00am HopeTikipunga. Chris Garland will be speaking on 'into your hands I commend my Spirit'

9:30am HopeCentral. Lorne Campbell will be speaking on 'I Thirst'

9:30am Onerahi (communion). Howard Carter will be speaking on 'My God, My God why have you forsaken me'

Zoom service

We will be having a Zoom component to our services on Sunday. The **9:30am** Service at HOPECENTRAL will be streamed on zoom

The link to the service is <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89285364673>

If you are using the zoom app on your mobile device then the meeting ID is: 89285364673

If you are going to dial in using a landline the phone number is 09 884 6780

And when prompted put in the **meeting ID: 89285364673**

Evening worship 6:30pm-8pm Sunday March 14th

March evening worship is happening on March 14th. The theme this month is *Fruit of the Holy Spirit: Joy (Hua o te Wairua Tapu: Hari)*. So come and join us as we have a time of joyous sung worship reflection and prayer.

Connect Group Leaders gathering: This Saturday 9am-11:15 am at Central.

We look forward this week to our connect group leaders meeting on Saturday morning to hear from one another, learn about new resources, and be up skilled in leadership.

Connect groups are an essential ministry in our lives together here at Hope where we can be part of a more intimate community learning, growing and caring for one another.

Connect groups are also a gateway into the community of faith and we are encouraged to always have “an empty chair” – for others to join.

Please pray for your leaders!

MainlyMusic Volunteers

MainlyMusic is a music and movement group for mums and preschools. It's been running for ten years out at HopeOnerahi. We are looking for volunteers to help our intrepid team with the Wednesday morning Programme. If you can help out behind the scenes in the kitchen and welcoming people and collecting the money, just getting alongside Mum's and kids or even in helping lead a session then we'd love to hear from you. Why not just come and see if this could be for you! CONTACT Nancy 0212085220.

Children's programme in the morning service at Central

There will be a children's programme run at HopeCentral during the sermon time. We have a small team for at least up until Easter. AS our vision is to be an intergenerational church we do value the Children being involved in the worship and taking part in the service. However we are listening to those who look for a Christian education programme during the service.

Preaching workshop - Preaching the parables with Geoff New march 20th

Just a reminder to people on our preaching team that we have rev Dr Geoff New coming to run a day seminar on preaching at HopeWhangarei on March 20th (9am -3:30pm). Please register at info@hopewhangarei.nz by Monday March 15th. Koha \$10 (lunch provided).

Tenants: An Information Session. Tues March 30th 7pm-8:30pm Thurs April 8th 10am-11:30am

In [partnership with Citizens Advice Bureau and the Community Law Office there will be two tenant: Free Information Sessions run at HopeCentral, so that people will know their rights and responsibilities under the new tenancy laws. If you rent or know people who rent please let them know about this great opportunity.

Blessing

I guess as we yo-yo through the COVID alert levels at the moment and there is that constant COVID stress and concern as we hear about this outbreak and that community transmission it is important

that we do not lose heart or grow weary. We need to keep on showing our love for each other and for our community by doing what we have been asked to do by the government. I've also noticed that people's sense of kindness seems to have run rather thin particularly with people who have not followed the Health department guidelines. However as followers of Christ we are in a good place to remind people and show people that kindness is something that we show to others, because it is how God has treated us, rather than simply if we feel they deserve it.

So I want to finish with the last line of Psalm 31, which itself is a yoyo psalm, where the author oscillates between focusing on his many troubles and how they make him feel and profound assertions of trust and faith in God. In the end he exhorts his readers to

Be strong and take heart, all you who hope in LORD.

Kia māia, kia kaha ō koutou ngākau, e te hunga katoa e tūmanako ana ki a Ihowā.

-Psalm/Nga Waiata 31:24

Howard Carter
SENIOR MINISTER
HOPEWHANGĀREI

2nd March 2021