

Dear Friends,

During our staff devotions we have been working our way through the letters of Peter and John.

One passage that I felt was very important to us at this time (well, at all times) is John's encouragement to love one another. While there is some conjecture over whether the dear lady in 2 John is a metaphor for the whole church, or John is writing to a specific woman in church leadership, his words need to be heard afresh today...

*"And now, dear lady, I am not writing you a new command but one we have had from the beginning. I ask that we love one another. And this is love: that we walk in obedience to his commands. As you have heard from the beginning, his command is that you walk in love."*

*(2 John v5,6)*

In this you hear the echo of Jesus words that John would have heard reclining by his side at the last supper: *"If you love me keep my commandments"* (John 14: 15), *"A new commandment I give unto you that you love one another as I have loved you."* (John 13:34). Even John's play on the words this is not a new commandment make me think these words of Jesus were indelibly etched on John's memory. You can't help but think of the sermon on the mount and Jesus teaching about how we treat one another finishing with the parable of the two builders, and Jesus saying that one who builds on the solid foundation is the one who, *"hears my words and obeys them"*.

In our increasing fractured world how we love one another, our commitment to each other and treatment of each other is going to be a vital witness to Christ in our community. How we deal with differences of opinion, and the actions and consequences of those differing views, and how we deal with conflict.

I guess this passage has stuck with me because COVID has and will continue to throw up challenges to our commitment to love one another. I've had a letter sent to me that said if Pastors promote vaccines to their congregation, they are guilty of genocide and crimes against humanity. I also know people who for sincere reasons are resisting being vaccinated. Some questions ahead will be...How as a church do we welcome everyone and still protect the vulnerable? How do we balance individual rights with corporate responsibility... Maybe I'm borrowing some of tomorrows worries for today, but the basis for how we go forward is the commandment to love one another.

Here are the notices...

## COVID alert level 2

As of 11:59pm Tuesday October 19<sup>th</sup> we will be in alert level 2.

The church office will be open from 9:0am-2:00pm from Wednesday. Staff will wear masks when dealing with public. Signing in for contact tracing is mandatory, either by QR or manually. We still have some COVID diaries in the church foyer for people if they do not have a smart phone and want to keep a record of where they have been.

Connect groups can meet. We would ask that leaders send a list of those who attended to Karen at the church office. [karen@hopewhangarei.nz](mailto:karen@hopewhangarei.nz)

We can have worship services. The limit for gatherings is 100 people. Mask wearing is strongly encouraged, and we ask people to respect those who wish to keep physically distanced. Please also use the hand sanitiser.

Physical distancing of 2m is recommended from those you do not know.

**If you are unwell please stay at home.** If you are experiencing COVID symptoms, we would encourage you to go and get tested, and self-isolate till you get a result.

The governments health advice is that people should get fully vaccinated.

In October we will not be having food after services, we will simply have a cup of tea or coffee.

### Sunday Worship October 24<sup>th</sup>

As we will be at alert level 2 we will be having services at all three sites. We will be continuing through our series on Revelation looking at the letters to the churches in Asia Minor.

10:00am @ HopeTikipunga - Lorne Campbell (Revelation 2: 12-17)

9:30am @ HopeCentral - Howard Carter (Revelation 2:8-11)

9:30am @ HopeOnerahi - Enosa Auva'a (Revelation 2:18-29) by video

As there is a limit of 100 people at a gathering, can we ask people who live in Tikipunga to sleep in for an extra half hour and attend the Service at HopeTikipunga. If we reach the 100-person capacity at HopeCentral we will be encouraging the over flow to go to the 10am service at Tikipunga.

### Zoom service 9:30am Sunday October 24<sup>th</sup>

There will be a zoom service on Sunday. It will be a live streaming of the 9:30am service from HopeCentral.

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

if you are using the ap on a mobile device the **meeting ID is: 89285364673**

if you are using a landline then the phone number is 09 8846780 and the meeting ID is:  
89285364673

If you can, please stick around after the service for a catch up with people in small groups.

### Church AGM 7pm Tuesday October 26<sup>th</sup> 2021

The Churches AGM will be held face to face on October 21<sup>st</sup>. It was originally planned to be a meal and meeting, however with COVID level 2 we will just be meeting in the Hall at HopeCentral for the meeting. As we are in COVID level 2 and have a limit of 100 can we ask **that people please register their interest in the event. Either by phone to the office 438 1667 or via email to [karen@hopewhangarei.nz](mailto:karen@hopewhangarei.nz)**

The reports are available online

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1brEicsRphLJGuHQwkRgs-8uaLp-5Fe5U/view?usp=sharing>

Printed copies will be available at our three sites on Sunday morning.

## Gospel and Healing Services - October 31st @ Hope Onerahi and Tikipunga

We are planning to go ahead with our Gospel and Healing services on Sunday October 31<sup>st</sup> (it's the fifth Sunday in the month). Fliers will be sent out to Tikipunga and Onerahi this Sunday for people to invite their friends and neighbours along.

10:00am @ HopeTikipunga - Lorne Campbell will be preaching

9:30am @ HopeOnerahi - Dennis Thorne will be preaching.

There will be a normal morning worship service at HopeCentral.

## Job: Carer wanted

24hr live-in carer needed for elderly gentleman in his own home 3-4 consecutive days a week. Uses walker, enjoys outings. Supportive family. Would have use of car. Start November. Please call 0274978176 if interested to discuss further - can leave a voice message.

## Parish Clerk

We are in the unusual position of looking for someone to serve as our parish Clerk. We are very much indebted to Dennis Thorne who has served in this capacity for the past two years, but is wanting to dial back his commitment. The church council has the power to co-opt people (or at least come to the congregation and ask them to add a member to the council. We are looking for a person who is willing to serve on our Church Council as our parish clerk. There is a job description available. It really requires someone with a good administrative mind and working knowledge of things Presbyterian. If there are expressions of interest please contact Howard Carter 027 7508602 or by Email: [howard@hopewhangarei.nz](mailto:howard@hopewhangarei.nz)

## Blessing

John gives a wonderful blessing at the start of his second letter, where he makes the powerful affirmation that the grace mercy and peace of God the father and God the Son will be with us in truth and love. It is the definiteness of the "*will be with us*" that sticks out. The blessing is trinitarian as well as the Holy Spirit is also known in scripture as the Spirit of truth.

May you know the reality of this blessing from 2 John 3 in your life this week.

Grace, mercy and peace from God the Father and from Jesus Christ, the Father's Son, will be with us in truth and love.

Kia tau ki a koutou te aroha noa, te mahi tohu, me te rangimarie, he mea nā te Atua Matua, nā te Ariki hoki, nā Īhu Karaiti, nā te Tama a te Matua, i runga ano i te pono, i te aroha.

Blessings

*Howard Carter*  
SENIOR MINISTER  
HOPEWHANGĀREI

*PS: bird image this week is a Tūturiwhatu or New Zealand Dotterel on a sand bar at the Ruakaka estuary mouth.*

