



Pastoral Letter #29

Once more around the mulberry bush. As the writer of Ecclesiastes says, there is nothing new under the sun. But at least this time, we have policies and procedures in place to deal with the restrictions placed on all of us. It is inconvenient but thinking of the greater good, we will work with the restrictions to ensure that everyone can be safe.

For those who choose not to come to gathered worship on Sunday mornings during this level, the sermon will be on the Website by Sunday morning.

Most of our volunteers for 305 have decided because of their age or vulnerable health not to come in in levels over level 1. Pauline and I can cope.

Think of those under more severe restrictions in Auckland and encourage them that this is just for a time and that this too will pass (if they obey the rules)

Of course, there has been some changes in scheduled events because of this new outbreak.

The general election is now 4 weeks later on 17 October.

The FamilyFirst KnowNoLimits Tour event at Paeroa has been postponed.

The Open Homes meeting with Paul and Barbie Windsor at Elizabeth Jones' has been postponed until 28 September

The Family Life marriage event in Tauranga has been postponed.

Remember to keep praying for people affected by this pandemic, including those in business, as well as those directly affected. Pray against the feeling of fear that many still have.

From a meeting for the Eastern Waikato Local Welfare Committee on Friday that I attended (by Zoom):

Civil Defence has not been activated at this level but is in contingency planning mode. Many agencies have food parcels and PPE ready should things escalate, and MSD is sorting out emergency housing should that be required at higher levels.

There were no positive COVID results in the Coromandel or Hauraki at that time.

More COVID stuff:

COVID testing stations - All GPs are able to provide assessment and testing – please phone your practice before attending.

The number of designated GP practices (which will provide COVID-19 assessment for people who are not registered with the practice) and our local one is **Te Korowai O Hauora Thames, 210 Richmond Street, Thames 9-12, 1-4 weekdays, 9-3 weekends**. They are testing only symptomatic people at present.

All businesses are now required to post the QR code on their doors. I have downloaded the free Covid19 QR reader onto my phone. It is easier to use rather than signing in to every place I visit. I recommend it. Then if you have been at a place when/where a person who tests positive has been, it will automatically let you know. I know it Big-Brotherly.

Living Well Trust is looking at offering a surrogate grandparent service to children in our area. Keri says that 3 people have offered. If you are interested in learning more, see Keri. The more the merrier, and the better the service we can be to the schools.

CAPS Hauraki are running their Incredible Years parenting course from our church for the next 3 months on Tuesday evenings.

Also, whilst on the Trust, Mike and Bethany are continuing the ResKids program with 4 schools during lockdown but if it goes to a level 3 they will go to a modified online forum.

The theology in worship songs:

My sermon on Sunday was about the theology of what we sing as worship songs at church. The sermon also garnered a lot of feedback during the post service cuppa and via email and messaging about some of the issues I raised. Thank you to all of those who commented. A hearty discussion which should be ongoing. It is good to think you did not sleep through the sermon LOL. There is saying which says that an unexamined faith is not worth having (Elton Trueblood and others), so it is good to consider these things.

Interestingly, we were considering bringing a couple of new songs to the church, one being "No Longer Slaves" but at the meeting with the full worship team after church on Sunday, a line in that song caused some to question its biblical truth. The line is "Your blood flows through my veins". Does Jesus' blood flow through our veins? An interesting discussion around Galatians 2:20 *I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me* and other verses about We have been redeemed through the shedding of His precious blood. Ephesians 1:7 We are sanctified Hebrews 13:12, justified Romans 5:9, cleansed 1 John 1:7, brought close to Him Ephesians 2:13, freed from sin through His blood Revelation 1:5; and Leviticus 17 which says the life is in the blood maybe figuratively saying Jesus' blood is in our veins is saying His life is in us.

What a great conversation. It really got the old grey matter working. And we have not resolved it yet.

The other song which we will introduce is called Goodness Love and Mercy, by Chris Tomlin which is based on Psalm 23.

An interesting quote from the latest edition of Worship Musician (Aug 2020):

“Our worship is a response to God’s revelation in our lives. Everything begins and ends with God. Reading through Scripture you find countless acts of worship that started through healing, miracles or revelation of the Father, Son or Holy Spirit. Worship is caught more than it is taught, and we have to be spending time with Jesus in order to see healing, miracles or gain revelations that lead to worshipping authentically.”

Christy Colmenares “Shaping Worship Culture”

Congratulations to Rose. The two public forums you ran over the last two Sunday evenings on the two referenda were marvellously researched and impartial. You gave us a clear understanding of the issues we need to consider once polling day arrives. Well done.

Richard Geoffrey Hunt 21.7.1942 – 14.8.2020

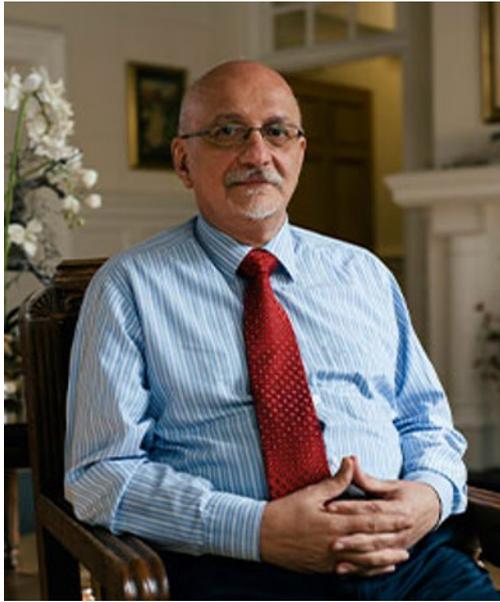
We announce the passing of Richard Hunt who died suddenly on Friday the 14th of August. Richard Hunt was the Baptist Union Associate Secretary from 1995 – 2002.

Richard immigrated from England to Wellington, moving to Christchurch for work reasons in the 1980s. He was an elder at Spreydon Baptist Church for many years before moving to Auckland to take up the position of Associate Secretary in 1995 and retiring in 2002. He then moved back to Wellington to be with family, attending Wellington Central Baptist Church before transferring to a church closer to home. Our thoughts and prayers are with the family at this time.

Funeral to be held on Friday 21st August in Whitby, Porirua.

Sad news from Syria

Dr Jany Haddad, the well known surgeon and Baptist church leader from Aleppo, has gone to his heavenly Home this morning, after struggling for some weeks against the coronavirus. Dr Jany was greatly used of the Lord in Syria, Armenia and many countries of the world. He was Barnabas Fund’s Middle East coordinator, and many Barnabas Fund supporters will have heard him speak at Barnabas Fund meetings. Please join with us in praying for his wife Sonig, their son, two daughters and other family and friends. Many other church leaders in Syria also have Covid-19 right now. Please pray for them.



This is Shane and Bronwyn's first grandchild, born this week in Japan. Congratulations Grannies and Uncle Levi. Congratulations to the parents Samuel and Mayu.
