



Friday 20 March 2020

The Covid-19 situation is changing very quickly

Hi to all our church family and friends,

Yesterday afternoon the government decided there were to be no indoor events of 100 or more people - they have been banned indefinitely.

The following was advised by Health Minister Dr David Clark:

“Making sure we put in place social distancing rules is one of the most important things we can do to protect the public”. He also explained for people who are not complying that “You are putting the health of your family, friends and your country at risk, it is up to all of us to unite to play our part for COVID 19.” “Sanctions will be applied to those breaking the law,” said Dr David Clark.

At this stage, they do not have a planned end date for this.

It is most important that we at Ranui Baptist comply with the government and the Ministry of Health.

This Sunday 22nd March and all future services at this point in time are cancelled. Please inform people who may not have email.

Pastor Matthew and the Elders are having a series of discussions and meetings to discuss viable alternative options for the church to meet over the next weeks and months which may include a combination of service options over the course of a week e.g. mid-week, Sunday morning, Sunday afternoon, etc. where each service will be limited to say 50-80 people.

We are also looking at the possibility and feasibility of having some form of video/web / live streamed service option.

Discussions are in very early days regarding our options as you will appreciate and may take a few weeks to arrange and finalise and so we will keep you updated on progress and outcomes.

However, in the meantime all Sunday services are cancelled so please don't come to the church on Sunday mornings.

Some small groups and home groups are still functioning and so we encourage you to go along to one of them for fellowship and Bible study.

Remember in these most challenging of times, Jesus is the same yesterday, today and forever and our Lord and God promises to never leave us or forsake us.

Blessings on you all in the name of Jesus.

Pastor Matthew and the Elders

From Pastor Matthew

As a church we declare that the Lord is our refuge. Please meditate upon these verses from Psalm 91, and then join me in praying for this nation and for our community.

'If you say, "The Lord is my refuge," and you make the Most High your dwelling, no harm will overtake you, no disaster will come near your tent. For he will command his angels concerning you to guard you in all your ways; they will lift you up in their hands, so that you will not strike your foot against a stone. You will tread on the lion and the cobra; you will trample the great lion and the serpent.

"Because he loves me," says the Lord, "I will rescue him; I will protect him, for he acknowledges my name. He will call on me, and I will answer him; I will be with him in trouble, I will deliver him and honour him. With long life I will satisfy him and show him my salvation" (Psalm 91:9-16).

Dear Heavenly Father,

We ask for your grace, mercy and love to be renewed in our hearts. We seek you for divine intervention, both internationally and nationally, regarding this issue with the coronavirus. We pray for protection against a widespread outbreak in New Zealand. Lord God, you are our Healer. Please arise with your healing power.

While we pray for New Zealand as a nation, we also pray specifically for the protection of Ranui and the nearby areas of West Auckland. We pray for the safety of our neighbourhoods, schools, hospitals and homes; especially protect the very young, the elderly and those who are unwell. We pray for our leaders and for our Prime Minister, Jacinda Ardern, that they will have God's wisdom and that they will find God at this time.

While thinking about the preciousness of life, we also pray for our leaders that their eyes will be opened regarding the current Abortion Bill. We pray against the spirit of death and look to you, Lord Jesus, as the one who has come to give all people the fullness of life. We pray that our nation will turn to you and be saved.

Lord God Almighty, grant us a wonderful move of your Holy Spirit. We reject

the spirit of fear, while seeking to walk in your wisdom. We pray for Ranui Revival, and no matter what happens we will draw closer to you. God bless your people. In Jesus' name I pray, amen.

I encourage you to be strong in prayer at this time and to walk in God's peace. God bless, Pastor Matthew.

Groups and few points to remember

The Covid-19 situation continues to evolve and with that our Ranui Baptist church response needs to as well.

We have also cancelled Sonshine Club, Mainly Music, the Op-shop, Allie's Thursday Group, Men's Group and Sonshine Club until further notice.

Some small groups may still be meeting at church; check with your group leader before coming to church.

A few points to remember:

Last Sunday in church, we talked about the importance of hygiene;

- washing hands regularly with soap and water for a minimum 20 seconds (the time to sing the happy birthday song to yourself twice over)
- using the hand sanitiser situated at one of the three entrances to the church EVERY TIME you enter the building and if for medical reasons you can't, then go directly to the bathroom to wash your hands.
- staying away from church if your unwell - it is unfair and un-Christlike to come to church when sick and expose other people, particularly the elderly, to infection.
- if you do need to sneeze or cough, use the crook of your elbow/sleeve or a tissue to cover your mouth and nose.

Please Note:

If we find people not willing to use the hand sanitiser or washing their hands or coming to the church unwell we will be asking you to leave for the benefit and protection of everyone else - so please don't put anyone, including yourself in that awkward position.

Travellers and Self Isolation:

During the weekend you may have heard the government announcement requiring everyone returning to NZ from overseas from 1am Sunday 15th March onwards to go into 14 days of self-isolation.

On Wednesday they extended that, requesting everyone who has returned between 4th March to 15th March to do the same.

So we ask that if you, a family member or anyone you have been in close contact with, has returned to NZ in that time frame, please go into self-isolation and stay away from the church until you and they have completed their 14 day self-isolation.

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