



**The Reverend Sue Beverly
Vicar**

☎ (07) 576 9923

✉ sue.beverly@waiapu.com

St John's Anglican Church

94 Bureta Road, Otumoetai

Tauranga 3110

www.stjohns-tga.org.nz

29 September 2021

Dear Friends

I am writing to advise you of changes in our arrangements for worship during Delta Level 2. I hope that, by reading to the end of this letter, you will appreciate the considerations involved. Much as I wish we could worship without restrictions, the health and safety of our community is of paramount importance.

For the well-being of worshippers and the wider community, our Diocese, and consequently our Parish, is maintaining a cautious approach. This means that there continues to be no Eucharist / Holy Communion until further notice, masks are mandatory at all gatherings for worship, we must maintain 2-metre physical distancing and singing is not permitted. The layout of our church is such that, to maintain the 2-metre distance, we can only use every third pew and seat 2 people (possibly 2 couples) per pew. This gives a capacity of around 25. Morning tea after services is not permitted. It is for these reasons that, up to now, we have not been holding services in church.

Whilst the 10.00 Service of the Word via Zoom has been very popular, I recognise that this is not an option for some people as they do not have appropriate technology or they find the Zoom medium unhelpful. After some considerable thought, I presented various options to Vestry last evening (28th September). We agreed the following service pattern:

8.30 Sunday Service of the Word in church
10.00 Sunday Service of the Word via Zoom
10.00 Wednesday Service of the Word in church

The 10.00 Service of the Word via Zoom has been well attended. Feedback from those present at our worship on 26th September suggests that the vast majority wish this service to continue while we are in Level 2.

Please read important details below for services that will be held in church.

8.30 Sunday Service of the Word and Wednesday 10.00 Service of the Word in church

The priority for these services is for people who do not Zoom. We hope others understand that, with a constraint on numbers, there may be more demand than we have space.

If you wish to attend on either Sunday or Wednesday, please kindly contact the Parish Office by Friday midday (details below) so we may ensure that the numbers limit is not likely to be exceeded by people turning up unexpectedly.

So you know what to expect:

- **Please arrive early** so there is no rush and people can keep 2 metres apart outside the church and get into the building safely.
- Please try always to **keep 2 metres distance from other worshippers not in your household group.**

continued...

- **Masks are mandatory** – please put your mask on before coming into church and do not remove it until after you leave.
- **Please sign in using the Covid Tracer App** or write your details on the contact sheet.
- Your attendance will be noted on a parish register so you do not need to wear your badge.
- You will be invited to **sanitise your hands**.
- Place any foodbank donation in a basket in the foyer.
- If you are not able to make your financial donation any other way, please put your cash in a collection plate. However, we prefer online banking – it is the safest method for all of us.
- As you enter the church itself, the seating arrangements will be explained. **Please go straight to your seat and remain there until the end of worship** (except in case of emergency).
- The liturgy on Sunday will be the same as for the Zoom service and will be projected on screen.
- The priests will lead the service. There will be no liturgist, readers or musician.
- There will be recorded hymns but **please do not ‘sing along’**.
- **After worship**, please leave the building maintaining physical distancing and without gathering inside to chat.

Whilst all this may seem rather onerous, we must remember that COVID-19 has not gone away and it remains a serious threat to health. If we all follow these procedures, we are expressing our love for our neighbour and keeping everyone as safe as possible.

If you have any questions, please feel free to ask.

With every blessing

Sue