

**Church...
Traffic
Lights...
and...
Covid19**



As a church in Kaiapoi we have faithfully lived out the gospel in our corner of the world since 1899. Throughout that time the church has faced many challenges.



Over the last 18 months we have experienced a roller coaster of challenges in how we could function as a church. Each time we have met those challenges by keeping our focus on God and having the reassurance of our faith in Jesus Christ.

As we enter a new phase of church life and expression of **faith under the Governments proposed 'Traffic Light System'** it is important that we continue to focus on Jesus.

This resource is designed to help us as a community of faith to discern what it means to be the church. We are encouraging a 40 hour focus on prayer from Friday evening. The details are included in this resource.

Our hope is that as we gather as the Body of Christ to discern the mind of Christ that God will be honoured. We desire to maintain unity in the Body and have unity in the Spirit .

May God bless you richly as you seek Him and His direction for His Church in this season.



Unity

“I appeal to you, brothers and sisters, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all of you agree with one another in what you say and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be perfectly united in mind and thought.”

1st Corinthians 1:10

As we face these challenging times it is important that in all that we do, we seek unity. One of the foundations of this process that we are undertaking as a church is unity through Christ.

For us at Kalapoi Baptist this is a growing strength in our community of faith. Our Sunday worship gatherings reflect that it is Christ that unites us. We come from many different places and spaces but when we gather and God is lifted up, we do this as community - we do this in unity through Christ.

“There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.” *Galatians 3:28*

In the Church we do not make distinctions that the wider community still uses to separate and critique. As we discern our corporate life in this season what does it mean to be 'one in Christ Jesus?

Today's Reading - Psalm 133

Read this short Psalm, pause, pray and read it again.

- Why is unity good and pleasant?
 - * Where do you see the good and pleasant fruit of unity in our church?
- What connection does “life forevermore” have with unity?
 - * How does our earthly gathering reflect our eternal destiny?

Memorise Psalm 133:1



Grace

Today's Readings

Ephesians 2:4-9, 2 Timothy 2:1, Colossians 3:12-14

Grace, we sing about and we would be wretched without it.
Why is it so important in our decision making process?

We are all human beings, yes saved by grace, (Jump over and read Ephesians 2:8-9 again) **but still learning to be 'strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus.'** We are called to forgive one another Ephesians 4:32 defines the real rugged kindness that we need to extend to one another at this time.

As we walk through this season it is important that treat each other with grace. **Paul encourages Timothy to be "strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus.**

We are called to live as a Christ centred community. In Colossians 3, Paul outlines how the church is to live. How followers of Christ saved by grace should live. It reads:

¹² Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. ¹³ Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. ¹⁴ And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity. Colossians 3:12-14

Because we live under grace, freely received empowered by the Holy Spirit we can live this way.

From this reading underline the parts that:

- Encourage you
- Challenge you



Death

Today's Readings

**1 Corinthians 15:55, Isaiah 25:8-9,
Matthew 16:25-26, Philippians 1:21**

COvid19/Sars2 has pulled back the curtain and exposed the mortality of humanity in a way that has not occurred in living memory for most in the developed world. The unspoken secular humanistic social construct of good health and long life is being challenged and shattered.

The victory of Christ gives Christians a different perspective on death and suffering. We have an eternal perspective, not just a temporal one. We do not rush to death or act unwisely but we also should not fear death.

How as a church do we live out and communicate this radical reality in our communities? How do we balance this perspective with the immediate need to care for the least and vulnerable?

Martin Luther said to his followers: “Even in the best of health we should have death always before our eyes [so that] we will not expect to remain on this earth forever, but will have one foot in the air, so to speak.” In the modern world we seem to live with both feet planted stubbornly on the ground.

For the Christian “to die is gain” Paul says this because to be eternally in Christ presence is better than not only the worst day on earth but also the most joyous day on earth you can imagine!

This season challenges us to examine our view on death. Our view of death **must be based on the truthfulness of God’s revelation to us in His Word, not on the speculations of people devoid of God’s Word.**

Read and rest on the words of Psalm 91



Discernment

Baptist ecclesiology (our understanding of what happens when we gather) is rooted in the principle of the priesthood of all believers from 1 Peter 2:4-5. When we gather, we gather as the Body of Christ to discern the mind of Christ it is as faith community that we discern.

In Scripture we see this embodied in Acts 15:28 when the believers where meeting in Jerusalem their agreed decision was based on a discernment process and the outcome described as: **"It seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us..."**

Discernment is a weaving together of ourselves as individuals, as community and the activity the Holy Spirit. It is first and foremost a spiritual practice.

Paul in his letter to the Philippians writes:

9 And this is my prayer: that your love may abound more and more in knowledge and depth of insight, 10 so that you may be able to discern what is best and may be pure and blameless for the day of Christ, 11 filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ—to the glory and praise of God.
Philippians 1:9-11

As we gather and discern our focus is on a decision or process that we consider the best and gives God glory. This can seem overwhelming but we are to trust that as we gather God is working amongst us.

⁵ Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; ⁶in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight. *Proverbs 3:5-6*

Reflection - Psalm 63

- When are you most aware of Gods presence?
 - * How does that feel?
- How has God lead you in the past?
 - * Which verse stands out and why?

Memorise a verse from Psalm 63



Theocracy not Democracy

Biblical decision making is not democratic. Throughout the Old Testament we see the Prophets and Kings seeking God for direction. IN the life of King David we hear the phrase: “David inquired of the Lord”. David didn’t take a poll or ask the nation to vote, he inquired of the Lord.

1 Samuel 23:4, 1 Samuel 30:8, 2 Samuel 2:1, 2 Samuel 5:19, 2 Samuel 5:23

Although we have membership, and we vote on decisions in our meetings (Korero) the process is not one of democracy. We do not have proxy votes, and our decision making reflects the nature of our gathering. We believe God to be present through His Holy Spirit in our meetings. Our conduct should at all times not only be God honouring but also honouring of each other as image bearers of God.

In Proverbs 11:14 it says:

**“Where there is no guidance, a people falls,
but in an abundance of counsellors there is safety.”**

We gather as a community, one that is submitted to God and one another as we make decisions.

Read Psalm 51 - that comes in the aftermath of King David not inquiring of God.

Reflection - Psalm 51

- How are you in need of Gods mercy?
 - * What area of your life needs restoration?
- How is your heart coping as we live in challenging times?
 - * Do you need to hear joy and gladness in this difficult time?



Jesus...

Ultimately it is all about Jesus. It seems a rather cliché statement, but the cliché is true. It really is all about Jesus.

Jesus left us with the Great Commandment and the Great Commission. Each of these essential statements are vital in this COvid19/Sars2 season.

Greatest Commandment: In Matthew 22 Jesus replied: **“Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.....Love your neighbour as yourself.”** *(See Matt 22:36-40)*

What does it mean to love God today?

What does it mean to love your neighbour today?

Great Commission: In Matthew 28 Jesus said:

“All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. ¹⁹Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”

How do we make disciples today?

How do we teach?

How does Jesus declaration that he will be with us change everything?

Reflection - Colossians 1:15-20

This is a powerful description of the cosmological Christ—the Alpha and Omega as it says in Revelation 1:8. We can take assurance that HE is present as we grapple with the complexities of Covid19/Sars2.



40 HOUR FOCUS



From 6:30 pm on Friday evening we are asking the church to pray specifically for our Korero following our Worship Gathering on Sunday morning.

Our goal is that whenever Holy Spirit prompts us throughout the 40 hours leading up to Sunday morning we pray, focussed on the points below, or as Holy Spirit leads.

Points of Focus













- * Direction - that God would be present, and that He would guide our discussion, discernment and decisions.
- * Unity - that as we gather to discuss and discern that we would seek unity at all times.
- * Love - that our discernment, discussion and decision making will be bathed in love for one another and for our community.
- * Peace - that when we come to a decision that we will have a peace, given by God that our decision 'seemed good to us and the Holy Spirit.'

Reflection - Ephesians 4:1-6

"I urge you to live a life worthy of the calling you have received. ² Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love. ³ Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace. ⁴ There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to one hope when you were called; ⁵ one Lord, one faith, one baptism; ⁶ one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all. "



COVID 19 Protection Framework

	CHURCH (INDOORS)	STAFF
RED	<p>WITH VACCINATION CERTIFICATES  100 MAX  100 people allowed based on 1m distancing</p> <p>WITHOUT VACCINATION CERTIFICATES  10 MAX 10 people allowed</p>	<p> working at home (if possible) working at Windsor Park allowed as an exception</p>
ORANGE	<p>WITH VACCINATION CERTIFICATES  unlimited number of people</p> <p>WITHOUT VACCINATION CERTIFICATES  50 MAX  50 people allowed based on 1m distancing</p>	<p> working at Windsor Park</p>
GREEN	<p>WITH VACCINATION CERTIFICATES  unlimited number of people</p> <p>WITHOUT VACCINATION CERTIFICATES  100 MAX  100 people allowed based on 1m distancing</p>	<p> working at Windsor Park</p>

At all levels Contact Tracing systems are mandatory
Face coverings are recommended at all levels.



Shout out to Windsor Park Creative for the simplified Framework.