

During an early response to Covid-19 virus, Kia Ora Knox Community!

At our meeting tonight, the Knox Church Council (the body governing our community) spent time discussing issues around the Covid-19 pandemic. We understand that this is a time of heightened anxiety - and not something we need.

Overseas, communities are dealing with bereavements and prohibitions on public gatherings. At home, while we've had no bereavements, and infections so far are assessed as being "contained to overseas transmission", people here seem to have given up gathering locally. Local businesses, consequently, particularly in the hospitality industry, are feeling extreme pressure. Some are "going under". Please support your local businesses. Don't let them fail for reasons totally beyond their control.

We see our role, amid this, as trying to keep our own community life as normal and connected as possible - keeping calm and carrying on. Committed to that, we've judged it sensible to make a few operational adjustments.

Our Simple Changes:

- During our services, we no longer shake hands during the "sign of peace". We deploy other non-contact expressions of love and goodwill. The minister no longer shakes hands at the door as people leave.
- At morning tea, we have no more biscuits on open trays, and ask our servers to pour your milk for you, and to spoon in your sugar. We welcome you bringing your own cup or mug. We're cleaning all our crockery in the dishwasher, rather than by hand.
- For the moment, we're not serving communion. Before Easter, when communion next would be served, we'll assess the situation.
- Our welcoming teams on Sunday morning door duty are encouraging people to sit in the church pews at 2 metre distances from those with whom they do not live. This may require people moving a wee bit from established places of occupation! We have enough space in our building for this to work.
- We're placing paper towels in our toilet rooms, since hand dryers are seen, during current times, as sub-optimal.

What we ask of you:

- Please keep an eye on your physical state and feelings. If you begin to display symptoms of Covid-19, please stay at home. The symptoms are included in the notices section of all orders of service printed and posted from 22 March.
- If you are feeling lonely or frightened, during any time of isolation of suspended community gatherings, ring the church office (379 2456) and talk to Jane. She

will organize for someone living close to you to give you a call. It's important that we keep in touch - but it may have to be by telephone.

- Please look out for your neighbours. People beyond Knox are bound to have vulnerabilities and needs.

Our church services:

Unless we are instructed to curtail public gathering, we intend to continue to gather for Sunday worship - with appropriate bio-security measures in place. If we are required to cease meeting, we're well prepared to broadcast our services online, via you-tube, and to post transcripts to those who have no internet connection.

-ooOoo-

Christchurch people are really good at taking care of our neighbours during times of difficulty. We will rise to this one!

Arohanui,

Matthew Jack

19 March, 2020.