



# Alpine Presbytery

resourcing the braided river

[www.alpinepresbytery.org](http://www.alpinepresbytery.org)

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## Newsletter 28th January 2021

### Presbytery Moderator's Message

Greetings to everyone across the Presbytery in this New Year! I hope you have had (or maybe are still having!) a refreshing break over the Summer. There will, of course, be a number of people who have worked through and their life-situation (for example our farming community) means there is no break, so I hope you do get the chance to have a rest in the not-too-distant future!

As I write this I am in the sun-soaked Wairarapa region parked up on a vineyard just north of Masterton. The relatively new owners (18 months) have an interesting back-story for their Vineyard named "Le Gra" (Celtic for "with love" – read here: <https://waveagency.co.nz/work/le-gra/>)

We will be back in Christchurch for the first Presbytery Council meeting for 2021 on the 25<sup>th</sup> February.

Prior to that Clare & I spent almost 6 weeks with the St Andrew's church family in Takaka. What a wonderful group and a beautiful part of the country. Golden Bay has many wonderful attractions and fascinating people! The church family at St Andrew's meets for worship weekly in person and also with some "Zoomers" from around NZ & the wider world. The Zoomers are well-connected and included in church life. This small church's technical expertise is impressive and there are good learnings here especially for our smaller, rural churches. Feel free to contact them!

As we enter 2021 we are still uncertain of how the year will play out ahead of us. The wider world in many places is still firmly in the grip of COVID-19. The tension around maintaining our country's borders to keep people safe is very much before us. The vaccination programme is likely still a few months away. We cannot predict the future however it is also clear that some expectations of 'doom & gloom' have not come to pass! Not everything the media portrays is entirely accurate.

As churches and ministries across the Presbytery we are encouraged to bring the Good News of Jesus to our various communities. A part of that is to work through the *Culture & Strategic Framework* as we sharpen our life as churches in these fascinating days. I am also aware that the 'bombshell' of the Royal Commission on Historic Abuse mail-out that Martin sent to everyone last week has added pressure what with its scope and short time-frame. I encourage you to address this as well as you can. Martin has gleaned some notes from Matthew Hague (PCANZ HR Advisor) which may be of help. As you work through this matter please feel free to contact Gail, Martin, myself or PCANZ directly for assistance. Whatever you do... please don't avoid the matter!

In March we gather as a Presbytery for worship, connection, some business matters and resourcing with invited guests. I look forward to seeing as many of you as possible in Ashburton!

Warm greetings,  
Barry

### COMING UP

**Prayer Retreat at Staveley Camp:**  
14–16 February

**Next Presbytery Gathering:**  
19–21 March at St David's in Ashburton

**Crossway Community Church Dedication:** 21 March

**Coracle—weekend for explorers:**  
30 April—2 May

**Presbytery Retreat at Hanmer Springs:** 2—4 May

### Newsletter Items

Please share this Newsletter around your Parish, especially with members of Session/Parish Council and all office bearers.

Details of events, or requests to be added to the distribution list, should be emailed to [gail@alpinepresbytery.org](mailto:gail@alpinepresbytery.org)

Cut off for items for next week's Newsletter is **Thursday 4 February**



## Royal Commission on Abuse in Care

### Additional Notes re the Royal Commission from Matthew Hague

The Inquiry's terms of reference are [at this link](#). This document outlines the purpose of the Inquiry and what they will do with the data. Beyond that, we do not know the details of the Inquiry's work. The point about privacy and the confidentiality of those affected is a relevant one, but privacy is subject to law and in this case the Inquiry has a legal basis to require the information. If there are special reasons beyond the sensitivity of the information that may be relevant, these should be communicated along with the information so the national office can make a decision.

It is critical that information is not held back at the local level, because however well-intentioned that decision may be, there is a high risk that this failure to disclose information may be perceived as an attempt to "cover up" information. This perception alone, as we have seen for other churches, is very damaging and will harm the good work we do based on the trust of the community. Bottom line – there is a legal obligation to disclose the information

The request is for information held by the church. You do not have to investigate and create information. If you hold "historical written data" this should be reviewed to see if there is anything relevant to the request. If any office holders (ministers, members of the parish council, administration or support staff etc) are aware of a relevant issue, even just from memory, this should be disclosed. You do not have to question members of the congregation who are not office holders, what is in their mind is not "held" by the parish

You are only asked to look at information that your parish holds. If you hold information relating to another parish, past or present, it should be disclosed. We cannot disclose information that we do not hold.

*Matthew Hague, Legal & Compliance Director, PCANZ*

### Searching your Parish Records—Guidance from Presbyterian Archives in Dunedin

Here is a checklist for searching your parish records.

1. **Talk to members of your congregation** (especially older members). Do they remember any instances of abuse in the parish?
2. **Locate your records.** Your records might be held in your parish, or they could be held at the Presbyterian Archives in Dunedin or at a Regional Repository (a local museum which holds the records of local Presbyterian congregations). A list of regional repositories can be found on our website here; [Regional Repositories for Parish and Presbytery records | Presbyterian Research Centre \(recollect.co.nz\)](#).

If you are in Otago, Southland, or Canterbury your records are very likely to be held at the Presbyterian Archives.

If you are in Wellington your records will be held at the Alexander Turnbull Library.

If you are still unsure where your records are, please contact the Presbyterian Archives. Phone 03 473 0777 or email [pcanzarchives@prcknox.org.nz](mailto:pcanzarchives@prcknox.org.nz) .

3. **Search your records.** You will need to look at the **Session Minutes** and any **Session Correspondence** from 1950 until the present. Concentrate particularly on any period that you have been told that there might have been abuse.

If you know that abuse took place within a parish group such as Bible Class, Choir, Sunday School etc. you will also need to search the records of this group, if they are available.

If the Session Minutes are handwritten and difficult to read, just do your best. It can help to use a magnifying glass to read particularly difficult sections.

4. **What if some of our records are not held in the parish?**

If your records are held at the Presbyterian Archives they will be searched on your behalf. Please tell us if there are periods that we should be concentrating on because there are known instances of abuse.

If your records are held at a Regional Repository you will probably need to arrange for someone to go and look at them at the museum or library where they are held.

### Presbytery Contact Details

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## 5. Fill in the Forms.

Fill in the “**Allegations of Abuse**” form if you find any instances of abuse.

When you have completed your search fill in the “**Description of Search**” form.

Send all forms back to Presbytery by **12<sup>th</sup> February**.

## Dedication of Crossway Church

The Dedication service for the new Crossway Community Church building will take place on the service on **Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> March, 2.30pm** at 101 North Avon Road, Richmond, Christchurch.

**A Request from Parish Clerk Anne Delaney:** During the earthquakes our Oamaru Stone font was damaged. We have kept it and hope to get it repaired. After one of our services after the earthquakes, I was approached by a lady, whose face I can picture, but name I can not remember, whose family member made the font. (She wore glasses, had dark hair, and a lovely smile). If she reads the Alpine news could she please contact me 027 2838557.

We hope to get this repaired before the Dedication takes place.

## Prayer Retreat—14th—16th February

Registrations for our upcoming Prayer Retreat are now open. We hope that this will be a space that will allow us to find consolation (deep peace) rather than desolation (fear and anxiety) and help us to build our spiritual resilience.

The retreat will be led by Rev Heather Simpson and held at **Raincliff Anglican Youth Camp** in South-Canterbury (find a map here: <http://www.raincliff.freeservers.com/custom2.html>) and will run from the **14th - 16th February**. (From 7pm Sunday evening to approximately 11am on Tuesday morning.) The cost for the weekend is \$75 which includes food and accommodation.

Heather is trained in spiritual direction by Spiritual Growth Ministries and has been leading spiritual direction for the past 3 years. There will be some opportunities for those attending to have a 30-45 minute one on one spiritual direction session with her.

Anyone who is serving in a leadership capacity in your church is welcome to attend and you can register by filling in the form here: <https://alpine.infoodle.com/f/PrayerRetreat2021Registrations>

## From the last Newsletter

- **Coracle—A weekend for explorers**
- **Ministry Conference 2021**
- **Christchurch Camino Group**
- **Understanding Self-Harm Workshop**
- **New journal table-of-contents - Hewitson Library**

## Presbytery Directory

If you need to obtain information from the Presbytery Directory, please initially ask your Parish Office, as most of these have been given a log-on to Infoodle.

If you do need for your own logon access, send your request to Gail at [gail@alpinepresbytery.org](mailto:gail@alpinepresbytery.org).

Please do bear in mind, though, that we need to be aware of our obligations under the Privacy Act.

## Resources

A selection of resources and links to resources to assist you with your work and outreach can be found on our website here: [alpinepresbytery.org/resources/](http://alpinepresbytery.org/resources/)

## Alpine Presbytery Culture & Strategic Framework

[Click here](#) to download this document, updated September 2020

Dropbox link for documents mentioned in this newsletter can be accessed via this link: control & click, or copy & paste the link to your browser:

<https://www.dropbox.com/sh/5k528skz4niqgg/AABDjLatKU2-C2reVHA6hVza?dl=0>