

Golden Grove Uniting Church
Pastoral Letter
16/05/20

...neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord. (Ro 8:39)

Dear Friends,

As you continue to look to Jesus Christ in faith, I pray and trust that you know that you are held firmly in His grace through the ongoing difficulties of the COVID-19 pandemic. We are grateful to Him as our Good Shepherd that He continues to guide us, and provide and care for us. We are also very thankful for one another, that we are able to look out for each other and offer love, support and help.

As you will be aware, the government recently commenced a staged process of relaxing some of the social restrictions that have been in place during the recent months. Stage 1. commenced this week. This stage has some small implications for the church, but won't affect much what we have been doing. In addition, the SA Synod of the Uniting Church has requirements as to how this stage is to be implemented.

We can note the following changes:

1. The government now allow activities on church properties of groups of up to 10 people (or 20 for a funeral service), practicing social distancing.
2. The Synod have determined that congregations are required to keep records of attendance, including names and contact details, with people signing in and out of the building. These lists need to be kept in a private but accessible place.
3. Active, healthy retirees 70+ years of age that want to participate in church activities, have to consult with their GP and have to assure the church that they have permission from their GP to attend. It is also requested for these individuals that the attendance record shows that permission has been given.
4. Vulnerable groups, such as people with chronic health conditions or over 80s, are not permitted to attend face-to-face church activities at this time.

The Church Council will continue to meet regularly to assess the activities of the congregation in light of the ongoing changes in government restrictions and UCA policy. We look forward with you to when we can safely recommence the activities that remain suspended.

We will continue to record and stream worship services, that can be viewed from 10am on Sunday mornings, and anytime after that, via the church website, Youtube channel, or Facebook:

<https://www.goldengroveuniting.org.au>

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCrn0JqYOdM3n3zxp2yUVj-A>

<https://www.facebook.com/goldengroveuniting/>

If you would like a DVD copy of the service, please advise us, and we can arrange that for you. (8251 4298; office@goldengroveuniting.org.au)

If you need help, or would like to speak or pray with anyone, please feel free to contact your Pastoral Carer, or one of the Elders or Church Council members, or myself (0467 683 333).

If a specific group within the congregation wished to explore the possibility of a face-to-face meeting at the church, practicing social distancing, you can apply to the Church Council. Otherwise...

The following activities of the church remain suspended at this time:

- Sunday services
- Sunday evening services
- Kidz Connect & Creche
- Café Church
- Bible Study Groups meeting face-to-face (*most are continuing via Zoom video conferencing – speak to the leaders)
- Men's Breakfast (currently meeting by via Zoom video conferencing – speak to Trevor Walker)
- KYB
- The Dinner Table
- Mainly Music
- Estia Worship Services
- Mission & Wider Work Lunches
- Working Bees (Maintenance undertaken by Property Committee as required)
- Any group gatherings (including hall hire) on the church property

I continue to encourage you to seek Jesus Christ in faith and prayer every day, and to trust Him with your life entirely. He promises to be the faithful Good Shepherd to us, and to all who will trust Him, going with us every step of the way, surrounding and upholding us in His mighty grace.

Pray for and help one another, and to pray for the wider community to know the love and grace of Christ at this time, and to reach out to them.

Grace in Christ,
Jonathan.