



SEACLIFF UNITING CHURCH
5-9 Wheatland Street,
Seacliff 5049

Pastoral Note

19th March 2020

Dear Friends,

I hope this pastoral note finds you and those closest to you well and healthy.

Earlier this week you should have received a pastoral letter outlining some of the actions Seacliff UC was taking in response to the coronavirus. A further letter was received from our Moderator, Mr. Bronte Wilson, this week with additional guidelines for churches. The letter addressed the question of what is 'essential' in terms of what a church undertakes. Broadly speaking there were two areas identified; worship and pastoral care. This note will address those areas.

Many of you may have heard of churches which have decided to not hold worship services, or indeed most of their groups, for the foreseeable future. These churches are generally larger than Seacliff and have had to take that action in line with the government's requirement that groups of more than 100 may not gather indoors. This is not the case with Seacliff so at this stage Sunday worship will continue as usual. However, if you do not feel comfortable attending where a group of people has gathered you should feel free to not come along. In this strange time in which we find ourselves this is perfectly understandable. Also, if you are exhibiting any flu like symptoms or have been in contact with anyone who is, out of care for others we would ask that you do not attend until such time as you are well again.

Other groups will at this stage make their own decisions about whether or not their activities will go ahead. Members of those groups will be notified accordingly.

Pastoral care takes on a particular significance at a time like this. We are in uncertain times and many are feeling the anxiety that comes with that. Seacliff UC is addressing the matter of how to offer pastoral care during this period. At this time we remind ourselves that our being a church, a community, of God's people, is not dependant on the building. It is nice that we can gather there, but with it or without it we are still the church. As such, we endeavour to offer care, support and where possible practical help in these times. If you are feeling anxious or concerned and would like to talk with someone about it, please do not hesitate to call me, a member of the Church Council or a valued friend. You do not have to carry this alone.

The nature of our gathering together will change for the next few months, perhaps longer. We are accustomed to seeing one another at worship or some other church activity. In that situation being aware of one another, especially those who are not there, is easier. If we are not meeting together this becomes a little more difficult. This is one area in which we can really help one another out. If you are aware of anyone who is in pastoral need I, and the Church Council, would be grateful if you could pass that information on - provided the person concerned is agreeable to that. It could be very easy for people to 'fall through the cracks' at this time and we certainly do not want this to happen. The Church council will be working further on how to attend to the pastoral needs at Seacliff. We will let you know of any decision made.

Most of us can probably not remember a time such as this which has had such a sudden and significant impact on our lives. But let us also remember that as we go through these times we do not do so alone for we have the promise that God is with us in all things.

I continue to hold you in my prayer.

Peace,

Gary Stuckey (Rev)
Minister, Seacliff Uniting Church