



Presbyterian Church
of Aotearoa New Zealand

Pastoral email

9 March 2023

Dear Church

A couple of weeks ago I wrote to you and asked that you hold in your hearts those in the North Island impacted by flooding and the devastating Cyclone Gabrielle, which particularly affected the East Coast.

Please continue to remember those who have lost lives, family and friends, homes and livelihoods. Continue to pray for strength and resilience for the people and churches and church leaders in the most impacted areas; they are being called upon to give so much, often while contending with their own difficult situations.

When I wrote previously, we were in the process of contacting our presbyteries and reaching out to affected parishes. They continue to face very difficult and challenging circumstances. And a few of our parishes remain isolated.

So that we can share information as we receive it, we have created a [PCANZ Cyclone and Floods updates](#) page on the Church website. I encourage you to read there what our parishes and presbyteries are sharing on how they are working with their communities, what help they might need, and which relief funds they support.

You will see that our churches have responded amazingly well given the conditions and limitations they are under. Some are better resourced than others, yet all are responding as much as they can, in ways that they can. And warmth and hospitality are to the fore.

Mangapapa Union Church are dealing with terrible flood conditions, their foodbank has been overwhelmed with requests for assistance, yet they persevere overcoming numerous obstacles to make deliveries to isolated homes.

Wairoa Union Parish also face terrible flood conditions in an isolated community. Their halls have sheltered rest home residents and a play centre. They are supporting many in their community who have no insurance.

St John's Presbyterian Church in Hastings is currently without a minister but continue their commitment to their community care ministry; buying groceries and cooking them to provide frozen meals to those in the community who need them most.

St Columba's Presbyterian Church in Taradale continues to provide a warm welcoming space to talk and have a free cup of tea and coffee. Those without power can cook their food at the church, and they have also provided free meat and hot meals including dietary options.

St Columba's Church, Havelock North have also provided a warm welcoming space, a place to talk, and for those without power a place to charge devices. They gathered blankets, clothing and other

necessities on behalf of Civil Defence who distributed the goods within the first few days of the cyclone. Over the coming weeks, the church is donating to the Hawkes Bay Cyclone Relief Fund. The church will host a performance by Lindisfarne College, Hastings, on Thursday 16 March, 12.30-1.20pm. If you can attend, please go. It will be koha only with proceeds to Cyclone Relief Fund.

On the topic of our Church Schools, we have seen an excellent fundraising initiative from St Andrew's College, Christchurch. They fundraised \$34,000 for those affected by Cyclone Gabrielle, with funds going to the New Zealand Red Cross Disaster Fund. Additionally, a \$1,000 was given at their Middle School Chapel Service for St Andrew's Church, Hastings (who are going from strength to strength with their GenLend initiative).

As we receive further news from our parishes and presbyteries, we will update the Church website page <https://www.presbyterian.org.nz/about-us/contact-us/pcanz-floods-cyclone-gabrielle>. Keep checking it and keep in your thoughts and prayers all those on the hard road to recovery.

Yours in Christ
Hamish

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