

25 November 2020

Dear Friends and Colleagues,

Kia Ora, Talofa lava, Kia Orana, Fakaalofa lahi atu, Anyoung haseyo, Malo e lelei, Taloha ni,

Warm greetings in Christ's name.

At the end of March, as we entered into a COVID-19 lockdown as a nation, we wrote advising the decision to postpone our General Assembly until September-October 2021 "to be held within the bounds of Central Presbytery".

We spoke about the words used by our Prime Minister regarding these being "unprecedented times".

Our original intent was to continue to hope General Assembly would be held at Lindisfarne College in Hastings. As the months have gone by, we have become more aware of the challenges we face in pursuing this option. One of the major issues is air travel to and from Napier Airport, the limited options we face currently, and most likely, moving forward. There have been conversations with the Local Arrangements Team around this and other matters.

An approach was made to Central Presbytery to determine if the Assembly was relocated from Hawke's Bay could it be hosted in the Wellington region. They advised they were not able to accommodate this change. Subsequently, we have been in conversation with Alpine Presbytery and they have warmly and graciously responded and accepted the invitation to host General Assembly 2021.

Therefore, in the light of this, we as the Moderator and the Assembly Clerk, using the provisions of the Book of Order Section 14.29(2) have made the decision to transfer the General Assembly, now to be held within the bounds of Alpine Presbytery.

St Andrew's College have been approached and they confirm they can once again accommodate us and are grateful for the opportunity.

The dates for the Assembly will be Wednesday 29 September to Sunday 3 October 2021.

We want to give surety to the time and place of Assembly to enable planning to commence.

Some of you will be wondering what will happen to our plans, your plans, should we face Covid-19 gathering restrictions during September 2021. We would of course comply with any government recommendations and make a call on our gathering in a timely way. We are working with the Book of Order Advisory Committee, should an in-person gathering not be possible, to hold Assembly electronically.

Please join us in praying for all who will be involved in the planning and preparation for General Assembly 2021.

Ngā mihi nui



Rt Rev Fakaofu Kaio
Moderator



Rev Wayne Matheson
Assembly Executive
Secretary