

## PCANZ COVID-19 virus: update

This is an update following on from previous communication by both the Council of Assembly, the Compliance Director and the Assembly Executive Secretary. View previous guidance [here](#).

Date of issue: 14 September 2021

### Life at Alert Level 4

Yesterday, the Government updated information on COVID alert levels outside Auckland. A reminder, Auckland remains at Level 4 and this will be reviewed by Cabinet on 20 September. Restrictions remain in place and full details are here: <https://covid19.govt.nz/alert-levels-and-updates/alert-level-4/>

Simply - at Alert Level 4, places of worship cannot open to the public for faith-based ceremonies or services.

### Life at Alert Level 2

Outside of Auckland, the Government announced we remain at Level 2. The current guidelines (as at 14 September 2021) can be found here:

<https://covid19.govt.nz/activities/faith-based-gatherings/#worship-at-alert-level-2>

#### Level 2 - worship

I draw attention to key aspects of these guidelines; an indoor worship event can host a maximum of 50 people inside, and 100 people outside – excluding clergy. All places of worship must record attendees – either scan in using the NZ COVID tracer app or record details manually. Allow for physical distancing. Encourage attendees to wear a face covering.

Please note – the advice from the [covid19.govt.nz](https://covid19.govt.nz) website can change without any public announcements.

Enabling worship to take place safely in our church buildings is a way of ‘loving our neighbours as ourselves’ – caring for everyone, especially vulnerable people. If a church is to host a worship service, our expectation is that all government issued guidelines will be fully complied with. These should be considered as the minimum standard.

For information – here is the link to generate a contact tracing code:

<https://qrform.tracing.covid19.govt.nz/>

If you are meeting - as in the past – advice is given that under these current restrictions we are strongly suggesting that Parish Councils consider deferring communion and serving refreshments.

The strong advice is to continue to offer online services while these current restrictions are in place.

Cabinet will again review the alert levels on Monday 20 September. Further advice following any changes may be shared after this date.

## Level 2 changes – church activities

Further - all activities that are run by or from a church are affected by the Government COVID Levels. I strongly suggest Councils/Sessions provide advice/instruction to those under their care. See information on gatherings and going to church buildings [here](#).

Finally, as we continue to live in these changing and at times, uncertain times, let us be reminded of these words:

“Kaua e manukanuka ki tetahi mea; engari i nga mea katoa whakaaturia ki te Atua nga mea e matea ai e koutou, i runga i te karakia, i te inoi, me te whakawhetai hoki. A ma te marie o te Atua, e kore nei e taea te whakaaro, e tiaki o koutou ngakau, o koutou hinengaro, i roto i a Karaiti Ihu.” “Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.” Philippians 4:6-7

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Wayne Matheson". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large loop at the end of the word "Wayne".

**Wayne Matheson**