



PBC NEWS

We're here to see lives changed by Jesus ... meeting Him and becoming like Him.

PBC meetings on Zoom

- **Sunday Service** 10.00am 17th May (click [here](#) to join)
- **Home Group** - Tuesday 7.00pm (click [here](#) to join)
- **Prayer Meeting** - Wednesday 10.30am (click [here](#) to join)
- **Home Group** - Thursday 7.00pm (click [here](#) to join)

Here are a few links that you may like:

- **Shine TV Schedule** - for week from 17th May
- **Radio Rhema** - Listen online, schedules, etc.
- **BBC Radio 4 Daily Service** - Christian podcasts
- **CBN News** - News from a Christian perspective
- **My Christianity Daily** - for today's news
- **Is He Worthy?** - Fellowship Bible Church of NWA's Easter Celebration (Quarantine Edition)
- **UK Blessing** - Churches sing "The Blessing" over the UK

The Lord is my light and my salvation;
whom shall I fear?

The Lord is the stronghold of my life;
of whom shall I be afraid?

— Psalm 27:1

Church at Covid-19 Alert Level 2

Dear Church Family

As you would be aware by now, the Government has decided that it would be best to follow a phased approach in introducing Alert Level 2 regulations. This means that worship services cannot commence just yet as physical gatherings are limited to 10 people in number, until further Government advice which is scheduled to be announced on Monday 25th May. Even though we might be disappointed by this turn of events, we are thankful that the recorded rate of Covid-19 infections is reducing. We are reminded of Paul's words in Philippians 4.6-7: *Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, 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.*

In the meantime, a few of us will begin to prepare our building for re-entry (i.e. cleaning, etc) and putting in place necessary protocols and safety guards for gatherings at Level 2.

Therefore:

Meditation on the Ascension of Christ*

By Larry Rice

So, why couldn't have the risen Christ simply stayed with us, guiding the Church on Earth for all time? Imagine what the world would look like if Christ has not ascended. If Christ were still walking the earth, what would faith be? Where would our free will be?

My own opinion is that it was necessary for Christ to ascend and send the Holy Spirit so that our faith would matter, and our free will would remain intact. God is still with us, and present to us, but in ways that allow us to freely choose to accept or reject His grace. Christ is present in the Church and in the Word of God proclaimed. The Holy Spirit is present to us, dwelling with us, received at our conversion. But these ways of remaining with us are not in ways whereby our free will is collapsed. He has the ability to choose the Good, and He helps us to choose to accept God's grace, but He's never going to do anything that makes that choice less meaningful.

So, the ascension of Christ is important to us not because it's a big "good-bye" to Jesus, but because it ushers in a new era in which Christ continues to be present to us, and in which the Holy Spirit dwells in the hearts of all believers.

*In the biblical records the ascension of the Lord took place 40 days after His resurrection. This year it falls on 21st May. The Pentecost (the outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon the Church) (see Acts 2) took place 10 days after the ascension. That's 31st May.

Do you need prayer?

If you are aware of special needs that the Prayer Team can pray for please contact Lynn Whitlock on 573 8858 or 027 733 9558.

1. Sunday services will be via Zoom for at least 17th May and 24th May.

2. Midweek prayer meeting will also continue on Zoom.

3. Home groups and other small gatherings are allowed to meet as long as they can ensure the following safety practices:

- Maximum of 10 people
- One-metre physical distancing must be maintained between households.
- Contact tracing: This has to happen at every gathering. Attached is a form that you can use, either electronically or physically to record each person who comes to the meeting, each time. Send these forms or a picture of these forms to pictonbaptist@gmail.com after each meeting so we can store the information on our database to aid with any contact tracing that might be needed. We will be doing this across all gatherings associated with Picton Baptist Church.
- Cleanliness: Practice good hand washing and ensure there is enough soap or hand sanitiser available at the host home. Keep surfaces clean.
- Food and drink: You are allowed to offer food and drink, but these have to be individually served, i.e. no buffets or plates of biscuits that people can grab from.

More freedom/Stay safe

Going to Alert Level 2 does give us more freedom and a chance to reconnect with friends and family. Hopefully, this will bring much-needed relief and help us through until the further easing up of restrictions and for when we can meet together again as a wider church family. Please continue to observe physical distancing (2m distancing in public), keep meetings to under 10 people and keep in mind your movements and the contacts you have.

We are called to be a people of prayer.

As an Eldership we offer the assurance of our prayers for the church family, and we encourage everyone to continue to pray for our nation and leaders. We also encourage the offering of pastoral care to each other in our church family and others in the communities we are a part of. We are called to act like the Good Samaritan, taking time to care for others as we would wish to be cared for. Thank you for your patience during this time as we all

adjust to these new phases of life and ways of being.

We will keep you updated with any changes, and we are also here to help and support you in any way we can.

Yours in Christ's service

The Eldership

Thank yous. Again, many thanks for all you are doing to support the ministries of our church at this time. Your gifts, your generosity, your participation are greatly appreciated and needed. Thank you to Jonathan and Bronwyn for their ministry of music for our Zoom services.

Thinking ahead to Sunday. To prepare for this coming Sunday, you may like to ponder the theme and Scripture text ahead of time:

- Theme: *God's Indestructible Kingdom*
- Reading: *Daniel chapter 2*

Resources on our website: If you missed last week's sermon or just want to hear it again, you can, [here](#). The sermons will be streamed in MP3 format and you should be able to hear them if the volume on your device is on. There are also study guides that you can use to get the most out of the biblical passages that we're studying. The study guide for Daniel 1 is available [here](#).

Picton Foodbank

The Picton Foodbank has continued to operate throughout Levels 4 and 3 of the lockdown and will continue to do so going forward. The red donation bin was removed from Picton Fresh Choice for health and safety reasons; however you can continue to donate non-perishable items by calling the Picton Foodbank phone number and making arrangements with the coordinator.

You can also support the Picton Foodbank by making an online financial donation. Call for account details.

Picton Foodbank: 022 010 5591



Mrs. Jones got a little too used to watching online worship from home.