

24 November 2021

Dear family

We greet you in the name of Christ.

We wanted to take this opportunity to share with you today the approach that we along with the entire House of Bishops are taking in light of the traffic light system about to be enforced from 11.59 on Thursday 2 December.

We quote from the joint statement prepared as Tikanga Pakeha Bishops:

Out of the deep love for the church and the people we serve we have sought to approach the next stage of our nation's response to this worldwide health emergency in a way that reflects two key agreements in common:

- 1. The normative position for worship, events and gatherings is that they will be fully vaccinated. In other words, vaccine certificates will be required to attend services of worship, events and gatherings. This fully vaccinated approach, as the norm, reflects the best and most current health advice available to us as we seek to do all that we can to minimise the risk of anyone becoming infected with Covid-19.*
- 2. We have a pastoral responsibility for the care of all people. This responsibility is to both vaccinated and non-vaccinated, but particularly to the most vulnerable. This care includes those who may not be able to worship with us because they have chosen not to be vaccinated. It also includes those who are in quarantine after exposure to infected people and are awaiting test results. Such pastoral responsibility also includes those who are ill, or those who are choosing to limit their potential exposure to infection because of their level of vulnerability or the level of vulnerability of members of their households. We are committed to supporting local churches in finding ways to minister to all.*

As bishops, we are committed to constantly reviewing these principles and the protocols and policies that are being established in each Diocese regularly to ensure that we continue to reflect the greatest level of care possible.

As we continue to navigate this season together we would also like to take this opportunity to thank and honour all those who lead and serve within our church in Christ's name and to work for the coming of Christ's kingdom. We continue to faithfully hold each other before God in prayer.

...continued

Office of the Anglican Bishops of Wellington

The Anglican Centre, 18 Eccleston Hill, Thorndon, Wellington
PO Box 12046, Thorndon, Wellington 6144
Phone 04 472 1057 | E-mail bishops@anglicanmovement.nz
movementonline.org.nz

Registered Charity Number: CC31568

In support of these principles, the Bishops and the Diocesan Council have created policies that have been released to all ministry leaders. These policies say that:

- all present at worship services held during the traffic light system will require vaccine certificates to participate.
- there is provision for a ministry unit to apply for an exemption to the vaccine certificate requirement, where it discerns that there is a need to provide a worship gathering without vaccination certificates.

If you have any questions, concerns etc. please discuss with your ministry leader in the first instance.

We close with this piece of scripture to hold us all in this time. Let us remember that we are people who are called to a living hope:

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 NIV)

Bishops Justin and Eleanor