

## VISION STATEMENT

*Equip for Life  
Prepare for Eternity  
Whakarawe mā mataora  
Whakareri mā āke tonu atu*



Term 1 2020:

23rd Poutū-te-rangi (March)

SPECIAL EDITION:

# CORONAVIRUS UPDATE

## COVID-19 SCHOOLS BREAKING NEWS

The difference a day makes is incredible. All information we sent out today is now out of date. Here is an update since this mornings newsletter:

- We are now at Alert Level 3 and will be at Level 4 on Wednesday. This means school closures from the end of tomorrow, **Tuesday the 24th of March.**
- All staff after Tuesday will be working from home. This means education delivery will be different. Teachers are trying to put in place online learning for every student. They only have tomorrow to prepare for this getting materials online and will not have access to school after this. Please avoid contacting teachers tomorrow for non-essential information to allow them to get things in place.
- The Prime Minister has said the school holidays are being brought forward. We do not know the date of this yet but it will be put up on our website on [www.matamata.school.nz](http://www.matamata.school.nz)
- Because the isolation period is for a minimum of four weeks the planned Stations of the Cross is now cancelled.
- All events including Learning Journal night is now cancelled until Term 2.

Your child's teacher will soon be in touch with you through the email address you asked us to use in last week's surveys. Work will be sent through this. We are planning online teaching and will send you details for this in the near future.

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## From the Desk of the Tumuaki

These are truly interesting times we find ourselves in at the moment. I know for a lot of our community, and our extended grandparent community, there is a lot of anxiety over the COVID-19 outbreak. Life has changed and the number of cases is increasing rapidly, both here and particularly in Europe.

But we do not need to fear.

*God wants us to face moments of fear with faith and confidence*

Things seem a bit scary and intimidating at the moment don't they? Entire countries closing down borders, millions of people self isolating and being ill, supermarkets running low on supplies, air travel coming to a halt, and millions of people panicking about what might happen to them if they come into contact with the virus. COVID-19 has given lots of people reason to fear and panic. We have every reason to be concerned.

But in Matthew 6:25—27 Jesus teaches us not to worry; *"Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothes? Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they? Can any one of you by worrying add a single hour to your life?"*

Note here that Jesus doesn't say don't be concerned or careful, He says don't worry! There is a difference between being concerned and being worried. You can be concerned but as soon as it consumes you or controls your actions and emotions that is when it becomes worry and fear. The Bible also teaches us in 2 Timothy 1: 7 that God has NOT given us a Spirit of fear but of Power, Love and Self-Control. The Bible also explains God's love is perfect (1 Corinthians 13) and that perfect love will cast out all fear (1 John 4:18).



So even though you have every reason to be concerned and cautious, let me encourage you to see this as a time to be bold and brave and witnesses to the world of God's love and peace that goes well beyond anyone's current comprehension. This is a great opportunity to be showing our children, families, colleagues and neighbours how we can react in FAITH and not FEAR. Fear has the ability to paralyse while faith is something that has the ability to free us.

Many countries have introduced some strict regulations and measures of isolation. Many schools across the globe have closed and there have been restrictions on large gatherings of people. Currently New Zealand has a limit of 100 people as a maximum at any event. Many families are choosing and being encouraged to stay at home wherever and whenever possible. Most churches are closing and looking for other ways to get their messages out, but it remains vital to keep building faith in your families.

Finally let me encourage you to do one more thing every day over the next 30 days. Read and declare the promises of

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## For our times...

*For God gave us a spirit not of fear but of power and love and self-control.*

**- 2 Timothy 1:7**

Psalm 91. You could even try changing 'I' to your own name or your families name when it is referring to you. Let's do this together and watch God at work over the next month.

God bless

Alistair Paterson

*My thanks to faith4families.org from which this has been adapted from.*

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