

# North Lake Macquarie Uniting Congregation

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G'day my Friends,

I hope this letter continues to find you and your family well. We have seen some encouraging signs of hope over recent weeks as some aspects of the recent 'lockdown' have been eased. Being able to go out, to see family and friends and to invite others into our homes are all encouraging. We have seen more and more aspects of life and work opening - albeit with considerable restrictions attached.

Our worship services will restart on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of August and for us this is most welcome news, albeit *with considerable restrictions in place* at the moment. Restrictions may be further eased or restrictions may be further imposed. We may return to full lockdown again - that is always a possibility while this Covid-19 virus is still around. In the meantime we will be thankful for small mercies.

It would be understandable if, like me, you were looking forward to entering church singing, or at least starting our worship service with a rousing hymn of togetherness, hope and thanks. How odd it will be for us to have such a desire vocally suppressed even if our song is loud and lively within our hearts. From *Jeremiah 28: 28:6* "...may the LORD fulfil the words that you have prophesied, and bring back to this place from Babylon the vessels of the house of the LORD, and all the exiles." We might feel as though we have been in exile... far from our church... cut off from our vessels and items of blessing - communion table, lectern, pulpit, baptismal font, and Holy Communion. They are a great source of blessing to us, but there are other blessings which God has brought to us in these days of 'exile' via other means.

This week's gospel reading, *Matthew 10:40-42* is all about 'welcome' and the blessings upon those who welcome in God's name - make sure to reveal God's gracious welcome to those who feel excluded, lost or forgotten. I look forward to God's Great Welcome on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of August, as we hear God say, "welcome home." In saying that, we have not been without God's guiding hand, blessing or presence in these past days. God has been present with us giving us hope and assurance. Our gathering together will not provide us with anything which we did not have; but gathering together will make it all the more joyfully obvious to us. "Tell out my soul the greatness of the Lord, unnumbered blessings give my spirit voice."

Finally, keep safe, take all precautions necessary and if you don't feel ready for any return as yet, you do what you must for your safety and peace of mind. You have my number and you are always welcome to call.

"The Lord is with you: *and also with you Kenneth.*" Amen.

*Peace be with you,  
Kenneth.*