

## North Lake Macquarie Uniting Congregation

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Greetings my dear friends,

Hoping that you and your families are well and keeping safe; taking all necessary precautions. These difficult times are strange and challenging for everyone near and far, in countries all round the world and in every area of life - including our church life. While our Church Council made the difficult decision to close the church building *the church* is not closed – you are the church. We will continue to *be the church*, albeit, in a different way. While we may not be able to gather together on Sunday – or through the week, there are many ways in which we can still keep in touch and in good contact. The challenge for us as a church is not to lose touch with each other. Some are to the fore of our congregation and some are quieter and less frequent. Our Pastoral Care Team will assist me in making sure all are included at this time with contact and news updates via telephone or email etc.

Our ways of keeping in touch are numerous... by letter, email, text, phone call, face to face call, and video link and Facebook. I plan to make use of all of the above. No one will be left out. All church members are receiving this letter. I will communicate with you each week. From this point on, some will receive a letter each week as you are not on computer, while those of you on computer will receive my 'letter' by email. For those who prefer other means of communication such as Facebook you will be able to access the Facebook message. My weekly letter will also be published on our church website. While I keep in touch with you, I ask you to keep in touch with me.

I will offer a Bible readings, prayers, a short '*thought for the day*' type pieces – in line with Lent, Holy Week and Easter – so we are all sharing in this season together. Important update information from the Uniting Church will also be conveyed to you all by every means available.

"The Lord is my Shepherd" is my first song in every first service of the New Year, in every church service that I have ever led. This (what we are all facing just now) is precisely why I start worship on the first Sunday of New Year in this way. There is nothing that you and I are going to face this year, *or right now*, that we cannot face with Jesus. You, who have been singing of the Lord being your Shepherd all your lives, know his shepherding. We are a people of faith and not of fear. There are fears without but may your faith burn within. In my last worship service with you I concluded quite dramatically with: "Into this new week we go... and as you go, "the peace of the Lord Jesus be with you." That is my word to you today. Now in the middle of a very different week I say again, "the peace of the Lord Jesus be with you... *and also with you Kenneth.*" Thank you.

Love to you all,

***Kenneth.***