



Uniting Church in Australia  
SYNOD OF VICTORIA AND TASMANIA

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This letter has been sent to: All Church Council Secretaries, Presbytery office bearers, Presbytery Ministers, people in placements and retired Ministers

Please feel free to distribute this letter further

Dear Friends,

**Re: COVID-19 response: closure of places of worship**

The National Cabinet, through Prime Minister Scott Morrison, has announced that as of midday today, places of worship are to be temporarily closed. The Church will follow this advice, as is required, in the interests of the safety and protection of the wider community against the spread of the COVID-19 virus.

The Australian Government, Department of Health website advises that the national discontinuation of non-essential gatherings entails:

*the temporary closure of ... religious gatherings, places of worship, weddings, funerals (other than very small groups with the 4sqM per person rule to apply).*

*All of these restrictions apply to outdoor spaces associated with the above.*

Please note: advice has been received from a number of authorities that it is inappropriate to relocate gatherings to homes or other locations.

Further advice about how our ministry may continue will be sent later in the week.

The lectionary scripture readings over the coming weeks, tell of God surprising us in love and compassion amidst times of sadness, grief, despair and even death. In our darkest moments, God touches our lives in Christ, bringing hope and new life where we could not have imagined it being possible.

May the God of life uphold you.

Grace and peace,

**Rev Denise Liersch**  
Moderator

**Rev Dr Mark Lawrence**  
General Secretary

