

## Position on COVID-19 Vaccination - Orewa Baptist Church

In early 2020, the world was introduced to the SARS-coV-2 virus which causes COVID-19. Since that time, those in the medical establishment in tandem with world governments have deliberated on how best to respond to the situation nationally and globally. While there has been a varied approach to how nations deal with the COVID-19 outbreak, many countries, including New Zealand have determined that the use of vaccinations should be part of the response in diminishing the spread and effects of COVID-19.

At present, the government is encouraging all residents of New Zealand to be vaccinated. The government's recommendations have been a source of contention between those who see vaccination as a proper path towards dealing with COVID-19 in New Zealand and those who are uncomfortable taking the COVID-19 vaccine. This contention has led to a polarization in New Zealand society which has made courteous conversation increasingly difficult. Due to this polarizing environment, Orewa Baptist Church has decided to release an official statement regarding the COVID-19 vaccine.

Orewa Baptist Church maintains the strong position that God's reconciling work through Jesus continues to advance regardless of what issues exist in the world. God's mission is, and will continue to be, what drives our belief and action. It is the recommendation of Orewa Baptist Church for all individuals to educate themselves through reputable, trusted scientific sources to determine a potential course of action regarding COVID-19 vaccination. Once a general indication of a potential decision has been established, we encourage all people take their decision before God in prayer and afterward, act on their convictions. Orewa Baptist Church is committed to loving and serving the church community and our neighbours irrespective of vaccination status.

Orewa Baptist Church understands the enormous pressure upon government leaders to make decisions for the sake of public medical and economic health. The church also identifies with community leaders, business owners, etc. and the difficulties they face in navigating a difficult environment. Orewa Baptist Church is committed to the values found in the gospel regardless of world events and will continually pray for government leaders and all New Zealanders affected by COVID-19.