

Weekly Newsletter No 32 - Sunday 25 October 2020



The Church of Scotland

Welcome to Church

For your safety please be aware of the following:

Symptoms

If you display any of these symptoms please do not enter our building and return home immediately-

- persistent coughing
- high temperature
- loss of taste or smell

Face coverings

You are required to wear a face mask when in our building (unless you cannot do so for medical reasons)

Contact details

We will ask for your name and contact details to support NHS Scotland's Test and Protect System.

Moving around

We may ask you to sit in a particular seat and move in a particular direction around our building

Hand hygiene

Please wash hands regularly and use hand sanitiser when entering or exiting our building

Physical contact

Please avoid physical contact with people outside of your own household

Distancing

Please maintain appropriate physical distancing based on current guidelines

Toilets

Please note that toilets may not be open. If they are entry may be restricted to maintain distancing.

Further information:

www.churchofscotland.org.uk

Scottish Charity Number: SCD | 1353

Back Again

Today's the day we are back in our churches to worship together albeit in a slightly different way. All the risk assessments have been done, all the permissions obtained, all the extra kit is in place, all the shifting of chairs and ensuring we have enough space is done, so all we have to do now is to gather in our limited numbers and worship our God who has brought us to this time and place. To some it may look like a gathering of bank robbers but God can see through facemasks – right into our hearts.

Apart from the unusual seating arrangements, it could be chilly in church as we have to keep the doors open to allow a free circulation of air. And speaking of the circulation of air, because we use a form of 'blown air' heating we are advised to switch off the blowers while people are in the church. In the depths of winter, we will need to keep an eye on the temperature and if it is too cold, we may have to suspend worshipping in the churches on a few Sundays. We will heat the buildings before people arrive but once the doors are open the temperature in the buildings falls rapidly.

To those who have chosen not to join in worship in the church buildings just now, please don't worry. It is perfectly understandable that you wish to steer clear of others to keep yourself and others safe. Some of you may be able to join in the 'streaming' of the service at Bellie Church, others may choose to use another on-line service and some may prefer Seòras's message in this newsletter.

We are also assured that Hamish will be making his weekly appearances on Facebook and the website – phew.

Whatever you do, God is listening and smiling over you.

There may be a special day for some this week.

You may be having a special day this week, an anniversary or a birthday and your plans for 150 guests, big meal, free drinks, party games and lots of fun have been put on hold. But in your COVID style celebration, from all your church family –



Silver Linings

'Every cloud has a silver lining' or so the old saying goes. And boy, has it rained. I tried to do a Moses, "He spread out his hands to the Lord; the thunder and hail stopped and the rain no longer poured upon the land" (Exodus 9:33) but clearly I am no Moses!



So, after the clouds (and rain) we have had over the last few days and weeks, there must be a lot of silver lying around.



However, this period may give us the opportunity to make a few 'silver linings' for ourselves and others. It is now **seven months** since the big 'lockdown' in March (Thursday was the date!). Since then we have had to live with the shadow of COVID-19 hanging over us. Some people are experiencing 'COVID fatigue' and most of us are just fed up with all the restrictions we have to deal with and are likely to deal with over the coming months. Some people, especially those who have been shielding and those who live alone are now really suffering from loneliness and a feeling of low esteem so it is up to the rest of us to try to raise spirits for everyone.

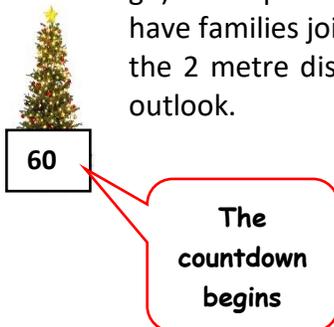
- As the clocks go back today and the long winter evenings set in, let's try to keep in touch with each other – make that little effort. We can't go into other peoples' houses but we can stand outside for a few minutes and have a chat – if it's raining, take a brolly. (That may change with the new rules.)

- Take some of that extra baking to someone (or a pot of jam you made over the summer). Make some extra soup and take that round. Share not just our wealth but our talents and time.
- Cook someone a breakfast and take it round to them – remember that presentation is everything! →
- Let's try to put smiles on faces and let people know they are loved and we care about them. Ask them if there is someone or something they would like you to pray for.
- Arrange a time and date when you will next call – it gives someone something to look forward to.
- Meet at a local café for a cuppy.
- Offer to help with shopping – there are still all sorts of opportunities to help.
- Make small donations to the Moray Food Bank to help those in our local area who need our help even though we don't know them. The food bank is run by volunteers but still needs cash for various purposes eg fuel for the vans which deliver stuff – details on next page.



Let's be an active church family supporting each other and the wider community showing the practical side of God's love.

Perhaps the new 'tier system' may bring us in Moray some relief. If that happens, remember this relief has been bought by the sacrifices of earlier this year. As we look forward to Christmas (only 60 sleeps to go) it is important we follow all the rules to keep ourselves and others safe so we can at least have families join together to celebrate our Saviour's birthday. So, keep up the handwashing, the 2 metre distancing, wearing face coverings when necessary and do it all with a happy outlook.



In the meantime, look after yourselves, be kind to others and yourself, and keep praying that is time of trial for everyone will end soon.

God bless us all
John.

THE FOODBANK

WAYS YOU CAN HELP IN 2020



FIND OUT
WHAT IS
NEEDED



PICK UP EXTRA
ITEMS WHEN
YOU SHOP



THEY DO A
GREAT JOB AT
THE FOODBANK



GOSSIP
POSITIVELY

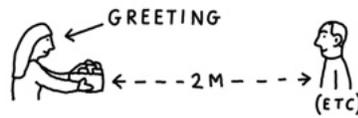


DONATE
MONEY



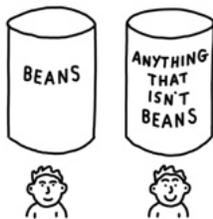
FUNDBRAISE

MIGHT
HAVE
TO BE
ONLINE
NOW



VOLUNTEER
(REALLY IMPORTANT AS
MANY VOLUNTEERS OVER 65
AND NOW SELF-ISOLATING)

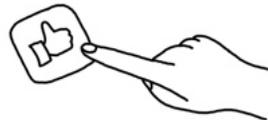
WHY IS THE
NEED FOR
FOODBANKS
INCREASING?



[BUT
CHECK
LOCALLY]



ASK PEOPLE FOR
FOODBANK DONATIONS
RATHER THAN PRESENTS



LIKE THE
SOCIAL MEDIA
PAGE



ASK AWKWARD
QUESTIONS