

Bellie & Speymouth Church
Reaching out - Welcoming in

Weekly Newsletter 7 – Sunday 3 May 2020

My dear friends,

As we start on our seventh week of not worshipping in our churches together, remember, our churches are still there waiting for our return.



(Just in case you had forgotten what they look like!)



We started the 'lock-down' towards the end of March and have now gone the whole month of April but just look at us. We are still worshipping, still praying, still sharing, still helping, still talking to each other. We are a family so we are still having disagreements, still moaning and mumping about each other ("why do I have to cut the grass? My sisters don't have to"), still going in the huff, still struggling with home schooling and working from home but we are **still together** as a Church Family. So, let's smile with each other – send a happy message to others, support each other, contact someone you haven't spoken to for some time. We have many reasons to be cheerful and positive. THANK GOD.

Worship

Many of us have viewed on-line and participated in worship from several locations. Some feature 'talking heads' others a more varied diet of different locations and styles of worship.

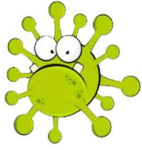
We mentioned last week that the Church of Scotland web-site publishes a list of worship services which are posted on-line but there are other websites with worship that can be accessed by ZOOM. This platform may suit some people as it allows you to take part in the worship rather than just watch it.



The minister of the Church of Scotland at Carloway on the Isle of Lewis, as part of worship last Sunday, featured a mini-tour of his parish showing some of the famous sites, the Broch at Carloway and the Callinish Stones.

Have a search round some church websites where you will find a huge variety of worship services.

It hasn't gone away.



Most of you by now will have heard of the guy from Buckie who tested positive for the COVID-19 virus. He was about to go to work off-shore a couple of weeks ago and was routinely tested at Aberdeen Airport. The test proved positive and that he had the virus. He was asymptomatic which means he had no symptoms of the virus. He didn't have a cough or a temperature, in fact he felt fine. He had to stay at home, totally isolated for the 7 days with the whole household isolated in the house for 14 days. He has no idea where or from whom he contracted the virus nor does he have any idea if he has passed it on to anyone as he was not aware he had contracted it. As a further result of this infection a business in Buckie has had to close for two weeks as the virus could have spread through his family.



It appears that as the period of 'lock-down goes on, some people are taking the issue less seriously and going out more often and not adhering to the social distancing. It's tough just now but the incident above emphasises the importance of staying home and keeping the required social distance (2metres) from others.

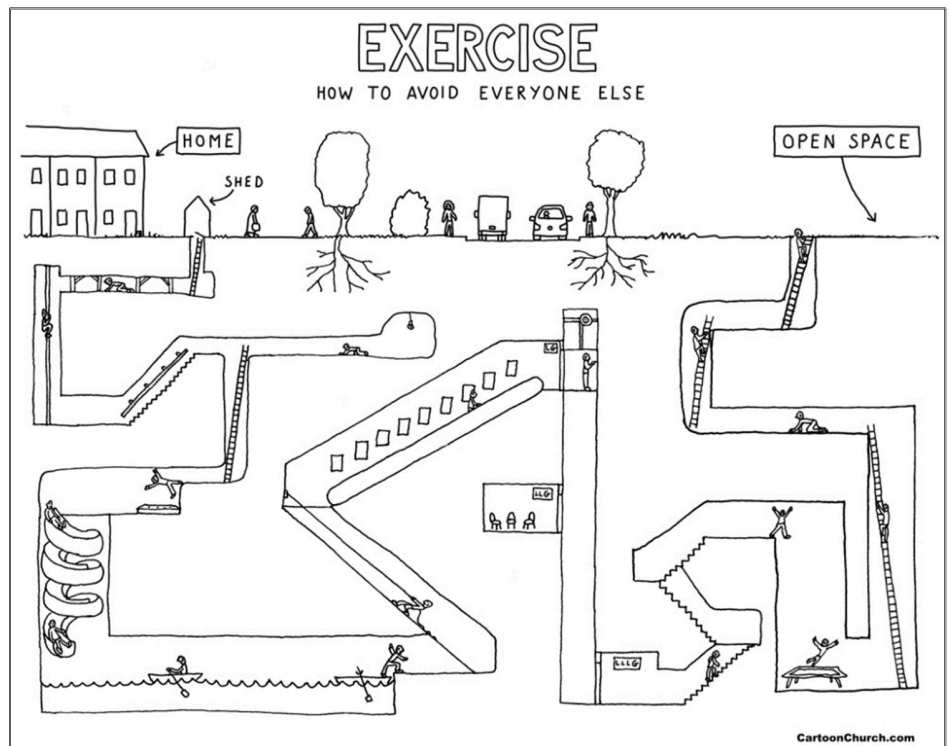
This is part of the reason **why our church buildings must remain closed** for the time being. A person who enters the church may be asymptomatic and pass on the virus unknowingly. At the moment, acting on the advice of the General Trustees of the Church, the buildings are regularly inspected by persons authorised to do so. Thus, we know who and when someone enters the buildings. This ban on entering the church buildings applies to all of us. No-one should enter the buildings, for whatever reason, as this increases the risk to others. So, for everyone's safety and wellbeing, please stay out.



Please be careful, stay at home, keep your distance, be patient – this will pass.

Exercise.

You may remember a couple of weeks ago I mentioned the importance of staying fit. Apart from the physical benefits, staying fit helps mentally as well. Some of you may be anxious about keeping your distance from others while doing your exercises so here's a suggestion of how to avoid meeting others when you leave your home.



Birthdays

Especially at this time, birthdays, anniversaries and special days are important. If you know of someone who has a special day coming up, do send them a card, phone them or send some sort of message to let them know they are remembered and they are important.

To all of you who have a birthday, an anniversary or a special day in the coming week, on behalf of your church family,



*Have a great day or at least, the best day
you can have in the circumstances*



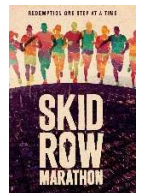
Thanks to parents.

At this time we have to give a special word of thanks and praise to all those parents who are home-schooling the kids. It's not easy being best pal, play friend, dinner lady, comforter, sticking plaster putter-onner, mum/dad, teaching assistant and for some, keeping up with full time work at home. For some of us, the lock-down is inconvenient, frustrating, and lonely but for parents at home, trying to do the best for their children, there are added stresses, sometimes severe stresses (and you don't need me asking for photos of scones to add to them!)

Parents have been doing their best for the last six weeks, the novelty has long worn off. There is still some way to go before the kids go back to school so we will hold you all in our prayers.

🏆 Mums and Dads, cut yourself some slack, we recognise and admire the work you are doing – WELL DONE
★ – you are all stars.

Last week, I was inspired by a documentary programme on the work done by a Judge in California. If you have Amazon on your TV it can be found on 'Skid Row Marathon' – worth watching. It can also be seen on other media sources.



Let's make Week 7 of the lock-down the best week so far. Phone someone new this week and ask how they are doing. Draw a new rainbow for your window – some of the early ones are getting a bit faded. Pray for the families locked-down at home who may be struggling. Pray for the young people who are at critical stages of their education, starting school, moving from Primary to Secondary School, moving up a year in school, finishing Secondary School and moving to jobs, apprenticeships or higher education.

Pray for someone you don't like or have difficulty with. If you are struggling, contact someone for help, don't keep your anxieties to yourself. If someone contacts you because they are struggling, be patient, be kind, listen.

May God Bless all of you as we look forward to the time we can all be together again.

(Cue – Vera Lynne,"  We'll meet again.....

.....some sunny day ")

John

