

*So do not fear, for I am with you;
do not be dismayed, for I am your God
I will strengthen you and help you;
I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.*
Isaiah 40:10

Dear friends,

In the light of recent events, I wanted to write to let you know what is happening in the church in response to the outbreak of Covid-19.

We received notification this week from the Church of Scotland that we have to stop gathering for worship immediately and that all activity that brings people together should also stop. Whilst saddened that we cannot continue to worship collectively, there is a huge amount of work going on across our Presbytery to make sure that worship continues online across various platforms.

Many churches and ministers are reaching out... here are a few things that are going on:

Inverurie West Parish Church and Rev Rhona Cathcart will livestream on Sunday morning at 11am. Follow them on Facebook, on their webpage or through their YouTube channel.

Ellon Parish Church and Rev Alastair James Stephen Bruce will be live-streaming on Sunday morning at 10:30am. Follow them on Facebook or YouTube to watch.

Kemnay Parish Church and Rev Joshua Mikelson will be streaming at 10am on Sunday morning. Follow them on Facebook or their webpage to watch.

Monymusk Parish Church, Cluny, and Rev Euan Glen will be sharing a meditation during the week and on Sunday. Follow them on Facebook or through their YouTube channel to watch.

Belhelvie Church and Rev Paul McKeown will be sharing a meditation on Sundays at 11am. Follow them on Facebook to watch.

Skene Parish Church and Rev Stella Louise Campbell will be streaming services on Sunday and sharing daily meditations on Facebook.

Tarves Parish Church is opening their church for prayer on Sunday at 11am.

Methlick Parish Church along with other churches are ringing their church bells at 6:45pm on Sunday and calling their congregation to prayer at 7:00pm.

Church goes on, just differently!

We are asking our elders to be in touch with the people in their districts to check if anyone will need any help over the next wee while. Please do let us know if there is any way we can help, even if that is simply a weekly phone call to check in. We are gathering volunteers ready to run errands and to telephone people. There is also a wider community effort being made to help anyone who might need help in coming days and weeks. If you are speaking to your friends, please let them know. More information about the community response will be forthcoming and will be shared as widely as is possible.

We live in uncertain and scary times. I am hopeful that through loving one another we can help each other through the weeks and months ahead. Please do not feel alone, the Lord our God is with us.

Blessing, health and peace be with you.

Your Interim Moderator, Paul McKeown

Prayer

Today, God,
The world is turning,
There is beauty around us,
We have people who love us,
And people to love.

There may be troubles and worries.
There are issues to face,
And problems to solve.

Nothing will magically take these away,
But we have the choice to see good,
To savour what is right,
To appreciate what is lovely,
To honour the efforts of others,
And to be grateful for the small things.

These help us in our coping,
They lighten our spirits,
And bring some balance to our thinking.

May we look beyond our present trials,
And see hope and support,
At least the kind that we might share with others.

Love us through our hardships.
Lift our spirits when they fall.
Be with us and bless us we pray.

Amen.

Philippians 4:6-7 New International Version (NIV)

6 Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. 7 And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.