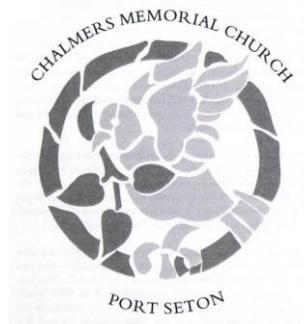




CHURCH OF SCOTLAND
CHALMERS MEMORIAL CHURCH
 PORT SETON



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26th March 2021

Dear Friends

I am happy to confirm that, in accordance with the recent announcement from the Scottish Government, Chalmers Memorial Church will be re-opening for worship on Easter Sunday.

This letter explains how we will do this and what arrangements the Kirk Session have put in place so that we are able to worship as safely as possible. Below are some questions and answers that we trust will answer any queries that you may have.

When are we re-opening? - Sunday 4th April 2021 (Easter Day)

When will services be held at Chalmers Memorial Church? –

From Easter Day we will now be holding two **identical** Sunday morning services – one at 10am in the Hall and the other at 11am in the Sanctuary. This will mark the first use of our sanctuary in just over a year.

What preparations have been made to clean the premises? –

We continue to employ a local cleaning company who use professional standard antibacterial cleaning products. They will thoroughly clean both the hall and the sanctuary on a weekly basis.

Will we still have to observe the usual social distancing protocols etc? - Yes.

Very much so. Face masks will continue to have to be worn whilst on the premises. We will have supplies of hand gel for your use. We have been asked to stress to those attending worship *not to congregate in groups prior to or after worship whilst still on Church grounds*. We are still not allowed to sing, so we will be using audio tracks and videos for hymns, though we plan to begin introducing some “live” music (organ, piano and praise band) in the near future.

What will the seating capacity be in the Hall and the Sanctuary? –

Because we are observing “physical distancing” the capacity in the Hall is a maximum of 45 people and 42 in the Sanctuary – assuming a few couples can sit together. *Where you can sit in the hall and sanctuary will be clearly marked* and there will be stewards on duty to guide you to where you may sit.

When attending worship how do I enter the premises? – //

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All entry to the premises will be via the Hall entrance vestibule.

- The 10am service worshippers will turn to the right and head into the hall. At the close of worship *in the hall*, all worshippers will *exit via the back* emergency exit onto Osborne Terrace.
- The 11am service worshippers will turn to the left and enter the sanctuary via the transept. At the close of worship *in the sanctuary*, all worshippers will *exit via the main sanctuary doors*.

Note that the sanctuary will not be open for the 11 o'clock service until the 10 o'clock service is cleared, so *we would ask you not to come too early*. Stewards will control the numbers leaving – a few rows at a time - to avoid “traffic jams.

Will we be operating a booking system? - Yes.

If we do not, then we run the very significant risk of having to turn people away when we reach capacity and we urgently want to avoid this.

There are two ways to book your place. Both are by contacting the Manse on either (01875) 812 225 or email rallison@churchofscotland.org.uk. Please specify which service you would like to come to, and we will do our best to accommodate your request, space permitting. All bookings will close on a Friday at 5pm, though booking earlier is advisable. When you book, we will need your name and contact number for the “contact tracing” form that we are required to keep. We will also need the names and contact number of anyone else that you are booking for.

We would ask for your forbearance in the coming weeks as we settle into this new pattern of worship and please, if you can, we would ask for flexibility as to which act of worship – 10am or 11am – that you might attend as we expect that there might be extra pressure on the limited number of places at the 11am service in the sanctuary.

We do expect the guidelines to change over the coming months, but the ones above reflect the current instructions supplied to us by the Scottish Government in consultation with the Church of Scotland.

In the meantime, we are delighted to be heading “Back to Church!”.

If you have any queries, please do contact your elder or myself. We will do our best to help.

Kindest regards

Robin Allison (Rev)