



Chalmers Memorial Church Update



October 2020

Dear Friends,

It's been a delight to welcome back folk in recent weeks to our Midweek Services. They have gone well and been appreciated by those who have come along. As you know these services were partly designed to help us test out the best way to bring folk back to Church and we've been using these few weeks to get things right for that. The good news is that we are now in a position – starting from **Sunday 11th October** – to reintroduce Sunday worship.

As with the last newsletter that we sent out, we've put together some questions that you might be asking about when services will take place and what to expect when you come along to worship. We hope that the answers we give will help. However, please don't hesitate to contact me at the manse on 01875 812 225 or email rallison@churchofscotland.org.uk if you've any queries.

I look forward to seeing as many as are able at these services. To those who won't be able to join us, for whatever reason, please be assured you are very much in our thoughts and prayers as this challenging time continues.

Your friend and Minister,
Robin Allison (Rev)

Now to the Questions...

Tell me a bit more about the new arrangements for worship.

Commencing on **Sunday 11th October at 11am** we'll be hosting two weekly services – one on a **Sunday at 11am** and the other on a **Wednesday at 2pm**.

The service on Sunday 11th October will be a “one off” service to mark our first Sunday service in well over 6th months. Thereafter the service conducted on the Wednesday will be repeated on the following Sunday – two identical services. Those services will also form the basis for the weekly podcast (more of which later in this newsletter). For the time being, worship will be held in the Church Hall.

Places at either of these services will have to be pre booked (see the next section of this newsletter). The Kirk Session will review these arrangements at a meeting scheduled for Thursday 5th November.

How can I book a place at one of these services?

Places are limited to a **maximum capacity of 45** at each service. Bookings can be made by phoning the Manse on **(01875) 812225** or by emailing the minister on rallison@churchofscotland.org.uk

We will need the following details when you book – your name and a contact number, and if you are booking for friends, then we will need their name and their contact number too.

To ensure that everyone gets an equal chance to attend the service of their choice, you will need to book each week by phone or email. Early booking would be recommended, especially for those who can only attend – due to work commitments – on a Sunday. If you find that you cannot attend after you have booked, then simply let us know and we'll allocate that place to someone else.

Bookings for the Sunday service will close at 5pm on the Friday,
Bookings for the Wednesday service will close at 5pm on the Tuesday.

Will the current podcasts continue?

Absolutely. These will continue for some time yet so, if you are not able to join us, you will hear the same prayers, bible readings and message as those used at the Wednesday and Sunday service. You will find the Audio Podcast at : <https://chalmersmemorialchurch2020.podbean.com/> or you can dial the following local rate number - 01875 444 495 – and you will hear the most recent podcast via the telephone. Printed scripts will also continue to be circulated.

Why are we using the hall and not the sanctuary?

If we are honest, the Sanctuary is where we would all love to worship. We are blessed with a beautiful and restful place of worship. There are some practical matters, however, that currently make using the sanctuary more challenging than using the hall.

One issue, as you know, is that we must operate with social distancing in our premises i.e. the 2 metre rule (that's just over 6 feet). The configuration of the pews in the sanctuary means, if we followed this, that we would have an operating capacity of only circa 35 places. Regulations do not allow us to use the gallery. There are also significant "line of sight" problems in seeing the screen in both the choir pews and in the transept. The hall, being a straightforward rectangular shape, and large, is able to accommodate up to 45 places at the 2 metre distance.

The second reason is that the hall is, at the moment, much easier to keep clean and - given the nature of Covid-19 - that's an important consideration. We are employing a professional cleaning company who use powerful anti-bacterial cleaners to disinfect the hall thoroughly between each service of worship. It may be, that at some point, in the not too distant future, that we could re-open the sanctuary for one of the services. We will keep you updated.

Will I have to wear a mask at worship?

Yes, unless you fall into the exempt category. Masks should cover both your nose and mouth to be effective.

In the last newsletter you sent out, there was a table to help me calculate whether I should come to church. According to my "score" I should be thinking twice about coming to Church. What should I do now?

The table that we sent out was not a straightforward "*should I come to church?*" table. Rather, it was designed by the British Medical Association to help folk calculate their own personal risk should they catch Covid 19. As we all know, people in certain age and health categories. are more at risk, but – as we also know - there are no hard and fast rules here.

Whoever decides to attend, they will be welcomed at the Church! Our premises are clean and well managed. We've carried out all our risk assessments and have good signage and stewarding arrangements in place.

We cannot advise you on whether you should come to Church or not, but what we can do is to assure you that we have more than fulfilled all the requirements to re-open as safely as we can for worship. In letting you see the assessment table we simply wanted to pass on the information that has been given to us. Whatever you decide we will always understand and support your decision.



Please recycle this newsletter and care for the earth as God intended.