



STONEHAVEN CARRONSIDE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND
Scottish Charity Number SC013165

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To – all members of Stonehaven Carronside Church of Scotland

29th November-- 2020

Dear friends,

On behalf of the leadership and Kirk Session of Stonehaven Carronside Church of Scotland, we hope you are coping with these strange and different times as we all do our best to comply with government guidelines and keep ourselves and everyone else safe from the Coronavirus Covid-19.

You will all be aware that back in March we were instructed that we had to close our church buildings and that normal worship has been on hold, and also that it is likely to be a considerable period before we get fully back to normal Sundays, Thursday morning coffee and the other things we do together that make us a church fellowship.

I am writing now to ensure that you know what is available for continuing our worship, to reassure you that pastoral care is still available, and to update you on potential limited reopening of church buildings as we make tentative steps back towards normality.

First, and foremost, however, I want to assure you that Church is **not** closed, and never has been; all that is closed is access to our buildings and the ability to worship gathered together. We remain a Fellowship of Christians, dedicated to worshipping God, praying, and seeking God's guidance, and following the leadership of Jesus in exercising love and compassion for everyone.

Weekly Communications:

Many of you have been receiving regular emails to help you keep up to date and to give you links to the recorded Sunday services on YouTube. If you would like to join this distribution, please email Jennifer Macdonald: jenniferrmacdonald@hotmail.com (note that there are 2 r's in the address!).

We also have a Facebook page: "Stonehaven Carronside Church" and a website:

<https://www.carronsidechurch.net/> - follow the link on the left-hand side for "This Week's News".

Sunday Worship:

Although some churches have started reopening, in a limited way with many restrictions, in Carronside we have decided that this is not yet the time to do so. We currently produce two different services each Sunday morning – one on YouTube and a written one sent out by email.

Additionally, there are many offerings on the broadcast media, with BBC Scotland TV offering "Songs of Praise" each Sunday, while BBC Radio Scotland has "New every Sunday".

Pastoral support:

Our Church Fellowship is normally enhanced by all the little chats we have, before and after worship, on Thursday mornings, at fund raising coffee mornings and at numerous other opportunities. Most of those opportunities are not available to us at the moment, but I hope you are keeping in contact with friends from the church by phone or internet. If you are just wanting a chat to cheer yourself up a bit, then please feel free to call up one of our elders, or for deeper pastoral support please contact myself (07914265412) – leave a message asking for a call back if I don't answer immediately.

Reopening of our buildings:

The full reopening of the buildings is very high on our agenda, and we are aware that other churches in town have reopened to a limited extent. That reopening is however limited, with the wearing of masks, social distancing imposing a limit on numbers and no singing. We are using our buildings to record services and hope to move to the next stage, as allowed by the Scottish Government and Church of Scotland rules soon.

Christmas Service:

Our Christmas service will be available on YouTube from late afternoon on Christmas Eve, 24th December – the link will be advertised nearer the time.

Locum:

Sadly, for us, but Joyfully for her, our Locum, Rev Dr Ibi Daramola is starting a new, full time post as Associate Minister at Skene. The Kirk Session will be discussing the appointment of a new locum. We wish Ibi joy and God's Blessing in her new role.

Keep safe and May God's blessing be with you all,

David Galbraith
Interim Moderator

As *Stonehaven Carronside - Finance Team Leader*, I wish to thank you all for your continued financial support throughout these challenging months. I will have more to say about our Church Accounts in 2021.

John Balsillie