

Reopening of Banff Parish Church

Although our halls remain closed for now, Banff Parish church is hoping to reopen for worship inside the church sanctuary on Sunday 25th October and thereafter twice a month starting with 8 November [Remembrance Sunday at 10.45am], 22nd November [communion Sunday], 6th and 20th December, 3rd January with 45 minute services starting usually at 11am.

We are really looking forward to welcoming folk back to church and have done all we can to minimise the risk to everyone attending. But it is of course for each person to weigh up their own situation; to help below are some guidance notes from the central church, because for example people who are self-isolating should not come. Importantly if you don't feel you are able to come or if the time is not right for you physically to attend as yet, don't worry – that's absolutely fine - you can still join us in other ways. We will be continuing with our online services, [available via Facebook, website, phone-in [on 01261 303464]and CD recordings. If you are unable to access them, let us know and we will see what we can do. Remember also that you can contact us if you would like someone to call you for a chat. If you would like to join us for Sunday worship and are a little nervous about what to expect, please read the guidelines below and be assured that we will do all we can to make your return to church services as joyful and safe experience as we can.

Preparing to attend a church service : advance booking essential

Government restrictions require we ensure everyone [apart from household members] is 2 metres apart. This means that, excluding office bearers on duty, we have pew seating for up to about 30 people, if some are households who can sit together. In addition, we have separate seating for a family of 2 and 4. It will thus be necessary to let us know in advance if you would like to join us. You can do so by telephoning the church office and speaking with Janet, our secretary. You should phone 01261 818211 and leave a message before noon on the Friday of the relevant week. You can also email us at the church office [info@banffparishchurchofscotland.co.uk]. Someone should get back to you by noon on Saturday. Your district Elder will be happy to oblige if you require further information. We will attempt to include everyone who wishes to come at a service over a rolling two week period as numbers permit. Remember to put on your mask before you enter as for other public places, as it is required to be worn throughout your time in the church unless of course you are exempt from wearing one.

What to expect when you get there :

When you arrive at the car park you will be met there by two Elders who will greet you and ensure that safe social distancing is in place. After entering the front porch in single file you will meet another Elder standing by a table where hand sanitiser will be placed for use before entering the main building. After using the sanitiser you will enter the main part of the church where you will be escorted to your seat by another duty Elder. David, our Minister, will also greet you.

Regulations required that pew cushions have been removed You must sit in clearly designated seats only-if you feel you may need to leave your seat during the service, please let the Elder know and you may be able to sit near the back. Please try and limit your contact with others and items as required. On the pew you will find a piece of paper and a pencil. Please complete your contact details and take the pencil away with you leaving your name and telephone number for trace and contact as required by the Scottish Government. There will be two offering plates placed on tables at the entrance and exit. Sanitisers will also be available at the exit. Limited toilet facilities are available in the hall and can be accessed by following the signs in the church. The church will look a little different due to all the information signs and the removal of all excess furniture. The floor will also be covered in markings for the purpose of social distancing. When you leave the church you will be guided one row at a time towards the vestry door exit.

The service :

The service will be shorter than usual, around 45 minutes, and may include parts of the online services. We are not permitted to sing but we will have music and hymns played for us to listen to. Some music and singing will be pre-recorded on the computer and Stephen, our organist, should also play at some points. David will not be masked during the service and will talk to us from the pulpit as usual. There will be no cushions or bibles in pews, nor can you bring one with you, but there will be a bible on display at the front of our church as it is central to our worship.

All information will be projected on to screens, as paper bulletins are not permitted either. Families are welcome and we will provide some space to sit as a group. Children must stay with their parents and avoid running around. Since this is very difficult for small children you may wish to just come for a short while. Again an Elder will escort you to the appropriate door.

If you have any concerns or further questions, please do not hesitate to contact us. We look forward to seeing you and or sharing worship together in person.

Assessment 'Tool' for individual and group health risks from the central church

The assessment 'tool' below may help you to see how different risk factors may combine to give serious health complications should you catch the Covid-19 virus. It does not include the factors that may make you clinically extremely vulnerable, where you should be following the guidance for those who are 'shielding'. It includes the factors where there is significant statistical evidence but does not include any rarer conditions which you may have, so this only offers a starting point.

We are not claiming medical expertise in sharing this way of scoring your risk but giving a way to show how serious catching the virus may be for you. Circle the score next to each one that applies to you and add up your score. A score of under 3 indicates a lower risk, but you should still be following the guidance for staying safe. A score of 3-5 suggests a greater risk and you should consider ways of reducing your risk by taking additional precautions or avoiding some activities. A score of 6 or more suggests a high risk and indicates that you should continue to work or participate in church life from your home.

Risk Factor		Total Score
Age	50-59	1
	60-69	2
	70-79	4
	80 and over	6
Sex at birth	Male	1
Ethnicity	Caucasian	0
	Black African Descent	2
	Indian Asian Descent	1
	Filipino Descent	1
	Other (including mixed race)	1
Diabetes & Obesity	Type 1 & 2	1
	Diabetes Type 1 & 2 with presence of microvascular complications or HbA1c≥64mmol/mol	2
	Body Mass Index greater than or equal to 35 kg/m ² online BMI calculator: http://www.nhs.uk/live-well/healthy-weight/bmi-calculator	1
Cardiovascular disease	Angina, previous heart attack, stroke or cardiac intervention	1
	Heart Failure	2
Pulmonary (lung) disease	Asthma	1
	Non-asthma chronic pulmonary disease	2
	Either of the above requiring oral corticosteroids in the last year	1
Malignant neoplasm (cancer)	Active malignancy	3
	Malignancy in remission	1
Rheumatological conditions	Active treated conditions	2
Immunosuppressant therapies	Any indication	2
Total Score		