



Faughanvale Presbyterian Church



Resumption of Church Services

With the easing of restrictions related to Covid-19 generally and especially the removal of the prohibition of holding church services, the Kirk Session, after very careful consideration, has decided to resume church services at 11 am on SUNDAY, 2 AUGUST 2020.

While many people will greatly welcome the return of church services, the Kirk Session recognises that, very understandably, some people will still be reluctant to join large gatherings and no one should feel under any pressure to attend church before they are entirely comfortable with doing so. The advice from the Chief Medical Officer is that the use of face coverings is “strongly recommended in indoor settings” and that they should be used in places of worship as a good principle. However, the use of face coverings in church will be a matter of personal choice. It is possible that regulations might be introduced after this letter has been written making the use of face coverings mandatory in churches. In that case, please ensure that you have a face covering when you attend services.

In order to meet existing regulations and advice on social distancing and on reducing risk during the ongoing Covid-19 epidemic, the Kirk Session will be implementing a number of measures, in line with both Government guidelines and guidance from the Presbyterian Church centrally, to provide as safe an environment as possible in which to resume services. **Your full cooperation is necessary to reduce the risk to yourself and others.**

YOU MUST NOT ATTEND SERVICES IF YOU, OR ANYONE IN YOUR HOUSEHOLD, HAS HAD ANY SYMPTOMS OF COVID-19 IN THE PREVIOUS 7 DAYS OR IF YOU, OR ANYONE IN YOUR HOUSEHOLD, HAS BEEN ADVISED TO ISOLATE.

The main measures that will be in place to facilitate the resumption of services are:

- **CLEANING** - the church will be cleaned thoroughly before the resumption of services, using recommended products and procedures. Thereafter, suitable cleaning, in line with guidance, will be carried out on an ongoing basis.
- **ARRIVAL**– Social distancing of 2 metres must be maintained between household groups when arriving for services. Please arrive in good time to allow for delays in entering the church and stay in your car until you can see that there is no build-up of people entering the church. Please follow the instructions of the door stewards. Please use the hand sanitizers that will be available in the vestibule and then move as quickly as possible to your chosen pew.
- **SEATING** – only household groups can share pews. Every other pew will be left vacant (pews not to be used will be marked). This will provide a minimum space of 1.8 metres between household groups of worshippers. Depending on numbers attending, it may be necessary to

make increased use of the gallery, so please cooperate if you are asked to sit upstairs. To reduce traffic in the aisles, it would be appreciated if you would fill pews from the front.

- **OFFERING** – it will not be possible to pass round offering plates. Please place your offering in the plates on the table in the vestibule as you leave church.
- **REGISTRATION** – it has been recommended that we keep a note of those attending each service just in case it is necessary to contact attendees. Forms will be placed in every pew and you are asked to fill in your name and a contact telephone number. These forms will be destroyed after four weeks.
- **MAGAZINES/ANNOUCEMENTS, ETC** – No material will be handed out or made available for collection, until further notice.
- **TOILETS** – The toilet in the church will be open, if required, but the Church Hall will not be open. If you have to use the toilet, please clean all surfaces touched with the wipes that will be provided before you leave the toilet.
- **LEAVING CHURCH** – Social distancing of 2 metres between household groups must be observed when leaving church. Worshippers using the first 6 pews on the left and centre left of the church (facing the pulpit) should leave using the back door. Other worshippers should exit via the front doors. Please do not leave your pew until there is a gap of at least 2 metres available in the aisle. Worshippers in the gallery will be asked to remain in their pews until the ground floor is empty – door stewards will advise you when to start leaving your pews. Once you start leaving the church, please move as quickly as possible and go straight to your car and maintain a distance of 2 metres from other household groups at all times.
- **FORMAT OF SERVICES** – Some changes to the usual format of services will be necessary to increase safety. Sadly, it will not be possible for the minister, elders, door stewards or other worshippers to greet you or mark your departure with a handshake and it will not be possible to offer you tea or coffee. Congregational singing is not recommended (because of the potential increase in the dispersal of water droplets) so alternative forms of praise will be introduced. The children will not be asked to come to the front of the church for the children’s address. The service will be shorter than normal and follow a family service format.
- **CRECHE/ CHILDREN’S CHURCH/SUNDAY SCHOOL** will not operate.

While the return to meeting and worshipping in church will be very welcome, of necessity, the situation will be far from normal. We each have a personal responsibility to make the process as good and as safe as possible and the Kirk Session asks for your patience and cooperation.

Three-Churches Volunteering Scheme

The scheme organised by the three churches and Eglinton Community Centre to help people in self-isolation with shopping or the collection of prescriptions is being wound up from 31 July, with the ending of shielding. However, if any member of the congregation continues to need help with shopping or the collection of prescriptions after that date, please contact the Congregational Secretary, Trevor Evans on 028 7181 1590.