

The Net

The Magazine of Priestfield Parish Church, Edinburgh
Living in the Way of Jesus



Priestfield Parish Church is a Registered Scottish Charity No. SC014499

Web: <http://priestfield.org.uk>

Minister: Rev Donald Scott



Dear friends,

My late father-in-law was fond of the saying, “anticipation is better than realisation”.

It might have been related to his early years in Dundee, but he retained an accountant’s reserve and a fairly measured response to circumstances until the end!

For many, the eagerly awaited return to worship might indeed prove that his maxim was right.

The limitations placed on numbers by physical distancing, and the lack of participation in worship through singing and responses, not to mention the sensible reticence of vulnerable people to attend, will mean our church family will be unable to share the fellowship and closeness we have previously enjoyed.

And yet.

Physically connecting is important. The Kirk Session have decided that taking this tentative step at this point allows us to begin to reclaim the importance of sharing together in worship on Sunday mornings beyond the screens of our laptops, tvs and mobile phones.

It is a beginning. It will take us some time to work out how we do this in a way that is appropriate and responsive to the precautions still necessary within this pandemic. Rest assured, we won’t abandon the parts of our fellowship who can’t physically join with us yet through vulnerability or distance. We will continue an online presence, alongside what happens on Sundays in our space.

Of course, what happens on Sundays is not the whole life of our fellowship, and we will continue to keep contact with those who are not yet ready to venture into the building.

Similarly, our regular monthly communion will continue online rather than in the building. The regulations and risks are still too great for us to share appropriately at a physical Lord's Table, but then it could be argued that the Lord's Table was never simply a physical expression anyway!

We are beginning the process of coming together, tentatively and cautiously, because we care about each and every one of you. If you want to ask questions or discuss the approach, please feel free to contact myself.

Until we meet again,

Your friend,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kumalo', with a long, sweeping underline that extends to the right.

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Re-opening the Church Building for Sunday Worship

At its meeting on Thursday 6 August the Kirk Session made the important decision to re-open the church building for Sunday worship. Having been physically closed since way back in mid-March, our return to the building for worship will be on **Sunday 6 September**. Our last 'open for private prayer' time will be on Wednesday 26 August.

We have been working through Government and Church of Scotland guidance to make sure that we keep everyone as safe as possible. We have also been able to learn from our experience opening the church for private prayer, which we've been doing since the beginning of July.

We have a robust regular cleaning and sanitising regime in place. This pays particular attention to contact points such as door handles, chair arms, etc.

We have hand sanitising 'stations' in the Lounge and invite you to use them when you arrive and again before you leave.

If possible, you should wear a face covering.

The sanctuary is set out slightly differently than normal to help us socially distance. The chairs are set 2m apart and we have a number of 'pairs of chairs' so that, if you arrive as a couple, you'll be able to sit together. We also have a family table if you come with children. It is a great help having chairs rather than pews, as we can be flexible



To comply with Government rules and to maintain social distancing we can accommodate up to around thirty people at Sunday worship each week. For this reason, we are introducing a system to let us know who will be coming and to avoid too many people turning up and having to be sent away. The system simply involves phoning up on Saturday afternoon to let us know you'll be coming on the Sunday. You'll be able to tell us then how many people will be with you. We will be keeping this process under review. The contact number is in the box below; make sure you keep it so you can use it each week.

Coming to church on Sunday?

Phone this number on Saturday
afternoon to let us know.

07849 352753

Simple!

Finally, to help 'NHS Scotland Test and Protect' in the event of a need to trace contacts, we'll be asking you to write your name and contact details down for us each time you come. This process is being carefully managed by the independent Information Commissioner. Your details will be kept for a maximum of four weeks before being shredded.

You will be familiar with many of these measures from your visits to various shops and cafes. I'm sure that we'll quickly get into the swing of things and will hardly notice them before long.

Finally, we know from feedback that people have been finding our weekly ***Priestfield Church On-line Services*** a real help and blessing. Indeed, we have many more people join us at them than at a physical Sunday service.

For this reason, the Kirk Session was keen to continue with our on-line services which can be accessed each week. So, if you can't join for worship in the building, you can still share with us on-line.

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At recent Kirk Session meetings, we have heard of two well-earned retirements.

Ian Murray ~

Ian has retired as the leader of the Priestfield team running *Supaclub*, the Scripture Union lunchtime group at Prestonfield Primary School.

Ian has been involved with Scripture Union for over seventy years in a variety of roles. Until the end of last year Ian was making a weekly trip up to SU's Outdoor Activities Centre at Lendrick Muir in the Trossachs to repair bikes for the children and young people to enjoy.



The other team members are David Dickson and Christine Mackintosh and we look forward to the time when *Supaclub* can meet again.

Here is a photo of Ian, Isabel, and son Gavin, at the top of Arthurs Seat last month.

Margaret Brownhill ~

After twenty-three years as 'Flower Convener' Margaret has earned her retirement. Margaret has made sure that every Sunday we have a beautiful floral display in church to praise God and enhance our worship. On many Saturday evenings Margaret could be found in church putting the finishing touches to a display. Here is a photo of the floral artwork, created by June Henderson and presented to Margaret on her retirement.

