

## **FAO All Session Clerk's (Shared with all members of Presbytery)**

### **Shared on behalf of the Presbytery of Aberdeen**

Dear Session Clerk

At the time of writing, we are waiting for advice from the Church of Scotland Faith Nurture Forum about what is happening regarding public worship.

I am expecting this advice to be that public worship should cease until further notice during the Coronavirus outbreak. However, regardless of the advice, the Presbytery can make its own decisions regarding public worship.

Given the advice from the Scottish and UK Governments (which specifically mentions religious congregations), given the age profile of our membership and the duty of care we have to them all, I have sought powers from the Convener and Vice Convener of the Business and Finance Committee and the Presbytery Moderator to issue the following:

In light of the ongoing crisis caused by the COVID-19 virus, Presbytery:

1. Instructs all congregations to cease public worship with immediate effect until further notice and to ensure that the Government advice regarding avoiding non essential contact with others is adhered to;
2. Encourages congregations to continue pastoral care of their members using other means of communication such as phoning, Skyping, Facetime etc. and to seek ways of offering any practical support that that they can for vulnerable members of the community;
3. Encourages congregations to explore options regarding placing worship resources on their web site or Facebook page if they have one;
4. Encourages everyone to uphold in prayer all who are suffering as a consequence of the virus.

I would be grateful if you could pass this on to your congregation and feel free to include it on your web site and/or Facebook page.

I attach a list of congregations which livestream their worship as past services are often available for people to watch, feel free to pass this on.

The Business and Finance Committee will be discussing further practical aspects of the situation and I will be in touch later in the week.

Please do not hesitate to get in touch if you have any questions during what is going to be a very difficult time for us all.

John

Rev Dr John Ferguson, Presbytery Clerk.