



# The Church of Scotland Strathspey Kirks

The Church of Scotland parishes of Cromdale and Advie, Dulnain Bridge and Grantown-on-Spey (Inverallan)  
Newsletter – September 2020

Dear friends,

I don't know about you, but I think I'm finally starting to get used to the idea that I've no idea what next week will look like! Just when I think I can plan, even vaguely, things change and I'm back to square one. It's all any of us can do, I suppose. To let go of our warped idea of control and let things be, living a little more for the moment we're in, and worrying about tomorrow when it comes.

Last week's small outbreak of Covid-19 in and around Grantown was a really powerful reminder to all of us of the potential this virus has to impact our lives. Those of you who were directly affected, either through a positive test result or a close contact with someone who did, will know how quickly your lives changed. I'm so glad that none of you had serious symptoms, and I hope you all get well again soon.

But all of us, I think, learned a lesson about how quickly Covid-19 can spread, and the role we all play in helping it, or stopping it.

Into all of that, our three churches were in the process of making plans to reopen our church buildings in a small way. We paused those plans last week until we could see how the local situation progressed, but I'm pleased to say we're now back on track.

You'll understand that there is an awful lot to think about in opening our buildings for any form of gathering. There are Scottish Government and Church of Scotland guidelines to understand and follow. And there are lots of small and not-so-small practical changes that need to be made to our buildings to make them as safe as possible for us to be in. In all three churches, small teams have been doing an enormous amount of work making any of this possible, and I want to thank them for all that they have done.

What we plan to do first is begin a mid-week, weekly worship that moves around the three buildings. Starting in Inverallan on Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup>, moving to Cromdale on the 23<sup>rd</sup>, back to Inverallan on the 30<sup>th</sup>, and then at Dulnain Bridge on the 7<sup>th</sup> October. These are still very tentative plans, and there are still a variety of permissions to be gained before we can be sure. But that is our plan.

Overleaf you'll find more information about what to think about, what to expect, and how to book places. All of that feels very alien to how we might normally go to church, but these are the things we must do and think about now, and they're a small price to pay to be able to meet for worship, if that is something you are particularly missing.

Of course, worship hasn't stopped at all since we closed our buildings in March. Each week we record a service that all of us can join in with, online or over the phone, and many of us have worshipped together, finding the experience meaningful and helpful. We know not everyone can join in in that way, though, and that is why we have chosen to open our buildings now: to provide another way to worship, especially for those who have felt particularly excluded since we moved online.

It's just a small step towards what might be our new normal, and we have no idea where things will move next. But for now, our Kirk Sessions feel this is a safe next step. Please hold all our church leaders in your prayers as I know how hard a job it is for them to navigate all of this on our collective behalf.

God bless, Gordon.

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**MONEY** This is a good time to thank so many of you for continuing to support our churches over the past few months. From all of us: thank you!

In particular, to those who have changed the way they give to standing order, a special thank you. Regular giving like this really helps to plan and keep the charities on an even keel.

If you would like to consider how you might change the way you give, then please speak to our Treasurers or Gift Aid conveners. You'll find their details in the Key Contacts section over the page.

Parish  
contacts



You can contact our Minister, Gordon, on 872084 or [GStrang@churchofscotland.org.uk](mailto:GStrang@churchofscotland.org.uk), and our Ordained Local Minister, Mary, on 872165 or [MDuncanson@churchofscotland.org.uk](mailto:MDuncanson@churchofscotland.org.uk).

At Cromdale & Advie our Session Clerk, Diane, can help on 872547 or [dbrazier39@gmail.com](mailto:dbrazier39@gmail.com). To talk about giving, speak to Maggie on 873793 or [maggiemick@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:maggiemick@hotmail.co.uk).

At Dulnain Bridge, speak to Session Clerk Ruth on 851797 or [ruth.coker@btopenworld.com](mailto:ruth.coker@btopenworld.com). Archie can answer any money questions on 872070

At Inverallan, Bill is Session Clerk and available on 870154 or [wmsteele33@aol.com](mailto:wmsteele33@aol.com). To talk about giving, speak to John on 07814 698661 or [johnf.wilson47@gmail.com](mailto:johnf.wilson47@gmail.com).



## Reopening our churches for worship

Over the coming weeks, we will have a short service (20-30 minutes) on a **Wednesday afternoon at 2pm...**

16 September: Inverallan Church  
 23 September: Cromdale Kirk  
 30 September: Inverallan Church  
 7 October: Dulnain Bridge Church

Numbers will be limited as we adhere to strict 2m physical distancing. Also, to comply with Test & Protect guidance, we'll be taking a note of each person who comes. Rest assured these lists are kept safe and secure, and destroyed after 21 days.

Ideally, please book a place at any of these services as we don't want to turn people away. **Call and speak to, or leave a message for, Gordon on 01479 872084** during the week before. It's first come, first served we're afraid!

We can't sing in these services, and everyone will be asked to wear a mask, sanitising your hands on the way in and the way out. We have defined places where people can sit, and ushers will take you to the next available seat. We ask that you stay there for the duration of the service and don't gather to chat before or afterwards.

The cleaning arrangements are strict, and we're doing our utmost to make sure the buildings are safe, sanitised before and after each gathering. To that end, the toilets will be closed and we've removed all the loose furnishings like cushions, and there will not be any bibles or hymn books.

If you are feeling unwell at all, please don't come, and especially if you have any of the Covid-19 symptoms. To the right is a simple scoring grid that you can use to judge how risky a group activity like worship is for you personally. **➡** You might want to think about how you feel about coming before making a decision to attend.



Our communities have continued to help people during the period of lockdown and on into this 'new normal' time. There are so many

wonderful, generous volunteers able and willing to help with shopping, prescription collection, and more. Please don't be stuck if you need help.

In Dulnain Bridge, call 263107 (24 hrs). In Advie, Cromdale and Grantown, call 722170 (9am-6pm, Mon-Sat). Someone will always be able to help.

### Worship online each week

Each weekend, a new service is produced and put up online. Over on our web page you can find links to video, audio and PDF versions: [www.strathspeykirks.org.uk/coronavirus](http://www.strathspeykirks.org.uk/coronavirus)

You'll also see links to interesting TV and Radio, and also other websites to find worship from further afield.

For those not online you can still phone in to hear our service. Call 01479 788800 any time.

On the Facebook pages we're still sharing regular reflections and links to places of help and encouragement:

[www.facebook.com/InverallanChurch](http://www.facebook.com/InverallanChurch) or  
[www.facebook.com/CromdaleAdvieChurch](http://www.facebook.com/CromdaleAdvieChurch)

### Assessing your own risk

The Church of Scotland have supplied this simple tool from the British Medical Association. It is simply to give you a guide. But it may help you to discern how different factors combine to make you more vulnerable.

A score of under 3 indicates a lower risk.

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		Score
Age	50-59	1
	60-69	2
	70-79	4
	80 and older	6
Gender	Male	1
Ethnicity	Caucasian	0
	Black African descent	2
	Indian Asian descent	1
	Filipino descent	1
	Other (including mixed race)	1
Diabetes	Type 1 and Type 2	1
	Type 1 & 2 with presence of microvascular complications or HbA1c $\geq$ 64mmol/mol	2
Obesity	BMI greater than or equal to 35kg/m <sup>2</sup> <a href="http://www.nhs.uk/live-well/healthy-weight/bmi-calculator/">www.nhs.uk/live-well/healthy-weight/bmi-calculator/</a>	1
Cardiovascular disease	Angina, previous heart attack, stroke or cardiac intervention	1
	Heart failure	2
Lung disease	Asthma	1
	Non-asthma chronic pulmonary disease	2
	Either of these requiring corticosteroids recently	1
Cancer	Active malignancy	3
	Malignancy in remission	1
Rheumatology	Any rheumatological conditions actively treated	2
Immunity	Any active immunosuppressant therapies	2
<b>TOTAL SCORE</b>		