

We'll meet again!

Dear friends,

It has been a long number of months since we last worshipped together in our church buildings and I know that many have been asking when we will be able to resume worshipping together, in person, in the building again. Thankfully, that time now seems to be very close. Subject to any further directions from the Government, the following describes what is planned:

- **DATE:** we aim to hold our first worship service in the church on **Sunday 6th September @11am**

- **ARRIVING:**
 - When you arrive you will be met by members of the welcome team, who will smile but not shake your hand! They will also record your name for the purpose of “**track & trace.**”
 - You will notice **safety measures** that are in place, such as hand sanitiser, signage, and some pews cordoned off.
 - **You will be shown to a seat** so that everyone is spaced safely and appropriately either on the ground floor, or if you prefer in the balcony. In the event that we exceed the capacity of the church, there will be an overflow in the hall.
 - **Offering plates** will be available in the vestibule, but we would encourage you to use internet banking if possible and details can be obtained from the church office.
 - In line with government regulations, **MASKS MUST BE WORN BY EVERYONE**, except for those under 13 years old or who are medically exempt. Please bring your own mask.
 - **Toilets** throughout the building will be open

- **WHAT THE SERVICE WILL BE LIKE:**
 - **Live Music!** We have been blessed to be able to use so much music from past services during the last few months, but it will be wonderful to have our singers and musicians lead us in person again. Unfortunately, we will not have congregational singing, as it is currently viewed as unsafe.
 - **Children are very welcome!** But under current regulations, we will not be able to hold Creche or Kids Crew during the service. We will have a talk and music suitable for children but children will remain with their parents. Parents can bring whatever toys, activities, or food they wish their children to have. And we won't object to some noise!
 - **Sermon:** instead of preaching to empty pews, I am looking forward to having interaction with people again!

- **LEAVING:**

- Length: we will aim for **a service of approximately 45 minutes**
- We will exit one pew at a time, maintaining social distancing and ask that you carry on conversations outside!
- For those who feel unable to attend in person, we will continue to upload services onto Facebook and YouTube and provide DVD's on request.

As you have probably gathered, a lot of thought, work and preparation by a number of people has gone into our plans to re-open the building for worship. We have taken the attitude that it is important to set a high standard which can be lowered when appropriate, rather than a lower standard that puts people at risk.

And finally, recent months have taught us that Church is not a building, but it is a community, a family, a people bonded together by faith and witness to their one Lord, Jesus Christ. So in the words of Psalm 100, we enthusiastically look forward to the day when we can:

*Enter his gates with thanksgiving and his courts with praise.
For the Lord is good and his love endures for ever;
his faithfulness continues through all generations.*

Yours as ever,

Cecil

Rev Dr Cecil Grant
Minister,
North St / First Carrickfergus Presbyterian Church