

Dear Member or Visitor to the website of First Holywood Presbyterian Church,

Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

I am realising more of the significance of how the apostle Paul began many of his letters to reassure Christians facing dark days and difficulties as the early church. I do not claim this communication is in that category!

This is an update of Coronavirus related matters for our church, as of 17th March 2020: Following government and Presbyterian church advice, ALL church services, organisations and activities are now cancelled until further notice. However, the church continues, and we encourage you to seek the LORD in these days, to encourage others, to look out for each other and your neighbours, to pray, read God's word, share encouragements with others, and practically help so far as you are able.

Please also remember Alan & Tracey as they begin ministry in Killinchy at this difficult time.

For those self-isolating who do not have existing support from family, friends or neighbours, you can make contact with us via Nicola in the church office on 90425035, and she will seek to put you in telephone contact with a volunteer who could pick up and deliver a prescription or food for you, or be available for a pastoral phone call for support. The church office hours are Monday – Wednesday 9.30am – 1.30pm and Thursday 9.30am – 4.00pm.

Kathleen, our pastoral worker will also be in contact (where possible) by telephone with more elderly members, who she would have previously visited, to offer spiritual and pastoral support, and assist with others.

Rev Nigel Craig will seek to give pastoral care over the phone or via email or text. He will also be available for critical pastoral situations and funerals and can be contacted on Belmont Manse phone 90653365, mobile 07763567965 or email ncraig@presbyterianireland.org

Other practical support for older people may be available locally via Silverline - helpline 0800 4708090 or Age Ni 08088087575.

We are making an additional donation of £1,000 to Storehouse North Down, who we already support, to help those more vulnerable in our community, and there may also be some financial support available from our FAIR Fund (largely from previous donations of members' winter heating allowance) in cases of hardship, and again please contact the church office.

For those who wish to maintain their giving to the church at this time (which will be required as most donations were usually made at Sunday services) you can do this by direct one-off or regular bank transfer to the church: Danske Bank, Donegall Square West, Belfast
Sort code: 95-03-32, Account No: 01005391

First Holywood Presbyterian Church General Account (FWO)

Payment Ref: Your name and FWO Number (you will find this number of your envelopes or contact the church office for it)

We aim to video record worship services to be available each Sunday to view from the front page of the website. Already in the media section of this website, there are audio files of recent services. Services are also available by CD if you contact the church office by phone. The website of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland will also be providing devotional materials.

May we all turn to God for his mercy and grace in these days. Let us continue to support each other as a family of God's people.

With thanks



Craig Russell

Clerk of Session

We also include below some Scripture passages that may provide comfort and strength at this time

Psalm 46

Lamentations 3 v21-24

Habbukuk 3 v 17-19

Romans 8 v 31-39

Hebrews 4 v14-16

Philippians 4 v4-7