

Laggan and Newtonmore Church of Scotland.

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Laggan and Newtonmore opening for Sunday worship

You will have seen or heard the news that from Friday 26th March places of worship in Scotland may re-open for worship. This is good news, and the Kirk Session is agreed that this is the time to begin our Sunday worship anew. **From Sunday 28th March we will resume services in our buildings.** It won't be quite as it has been in the past, as we still need to sit spaced out at 2 metre distance, we still need to mask, and singing is still discouraged.

However, we expect restrictions to be lifted gradually as the weeks go in, and meanwhile it will still be good for those who can to get together in worship.

There are limits on how many may attend, but I am not going to ask people to sign up in advance of a service, as I feel that many of you find this off-putting. Please just be aware that when you get to church it will be different and coming in good time is a good idea. If we have more coming than we can legally seat, the elders will be the first to give up their places.

Not everyone will feel able to come yet, either for medical or other reasons, and because of this we will continue to put a recorded service on the church website each week: www.stbrides-newtonmore.org.uk This will be the same as the service in the church building, except that there will actually be more music in the recorded service!

If you are attending in person – and I do look forward to seeing you! – then be aware that when you come in you will be asked for your contact details for track and trace, you will be expected to wear a mask throughout the service, you will be asked to sanitize your hands and you will be asked to sit where the usher on the door places you. We are supposed to fill the available seats from the front, so that the first to come go furthest forward: this may be a new experience for some! We are also asked not to move around the building but stay in our places through the service and then leave from the rear – so that first in are last out. This is to avoid people passing in close proximity to one another. You may feel that with the roll out of the vaccine this is all a bit heavy-handed, but these are the conditions on our meeting at the moment.

Please also remember that we are not supposed to hang around in big groups talking – not even outside. Outside the building the current meeting outdoors rules of four people from two households at a 2-metre distance applies.

One other change is that for now we will be receiving the offering as people come into the building: this means that no one has to walk around or pass a bag from hand to hand. We will still dedicate our gifts during the service.

Also as yet we are not able to offer Sunday School (or Xplorers) for children, though children are always welcome in the service.

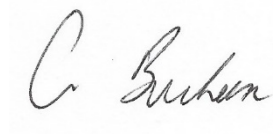
Finally, since I will at first be taking all three services in our linkage, we are **changing the time for St. Bride's**, so that I can come there straight from Laggan. Laggan will have its service at 9.30 a.m. and St. Bride's at 10.30 a.m. We may revisit that change later as life changes.

Holy Week services

The Kirk Session also discussed what we might do for Holy Week services this year and it was decided that while we cannot easily hold a communion service in person at the moment, we will hold a Maundy Thursday service in St. Bride's at 7 p.m. (on April 1st) while the Good Friday service will be recorded and put on the website.

I hope that you see this as a positive time in the life of our church, as I do, and I look forward to seeing our church life start up anew.

Your minister,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'C. Buchan', written in black ink on a white background.

Catherine Buchan.