

Session Clerk's Corner

Recent weeks have seen growing anxiety over the spread of the coronavirus, COVID-19. Outbreaks of respiratory illness, which started in Wuhan, China, have now spread across the world, bringing illness to some and fear to many more.

During March the Church of Scotland issued guidance to congregations over how to respond to the coronavirus. The first clear (and now familiar) message is the need for constant vigilance. Frequent hand-washing with soap, and the use of strong hand sanitising fluid in public places are two of the measures constantly being urged. Tissues used to catch coughs and sneezes should be used and binned immediately (followed by further hand-washing to kill germs).

But as we go to print the Church has urged all congregations to cancel their regular services. Longniddry Church has decided to do this, to help keep our vulnerable members safe and help slow the spread of the virus and hence reduce the pressure on our NHS. The Kirk Session had already decided to cancel several groups in order to protect those most vulnerable to the virus. There is a note later in the magazine about these.

As Robin says elsewhere, we are looking at new ways of delivering elements of a Sunday service and we are also going to deliver, in conjunction with others in the village, a service to help support those who have to self-isolate.

The next few months will be a challenging time for us all. But God gave us brains and ingenuity – in spades. He gave each one of us many other skills and talents. He now calls on us all to use them like never before. And He is by our sides to help us do so. I have absolutely no doubt that the good folk of Longniddry will step up to the challenge and we will emerge stronger and even better than before.