

## Church of Scotland: Orphir and Stenness Parish

**Interim Moderator:** Rev June Freeth 721449

**Locum Minister** Rev Martin Prentice    **Session Clerk:** Nicol Sclater 811242

### Intimations

- If you, or someone you are in contact with, would like to access pastoral care by telephone please contact Olivia Tait 811392, Carol Mainland 873596, Nicol Sclater 811242 or Martin Prentice 851139.

As the Lockdown continues, every day brings changes of one kind or another. Restrictions are being eased, and there is some suggestion that that before long we will be returning to 'normal', but there is a feeling that it will be a new kind of normal. Many people will be apprehensive that there may be another 'spike' in the incidence of Covid-19, and will wish to maintain precautions to a greater or lesser degree. Meanwhile, some people are getting fed up, needing to get out to meet family and friends, or complacent and impatient to get back to 'normal' life. It is still not clear whether or when we will be able to re-open our churches for worship. It may depend on whether or not we can comply with all the necessary precautions.

In times like these it would be surprising if our faith didn't wobble a bit. It is to be expected that from time to time we will have our doubts about what is to come. The theologian Alister McGrath has some helpful things to say about doubt:

"Doubt is a subject which many Christians find both difficult and sensitive. They may see it as something shameful and disloyal, on the same level as heresy. As a result, it is something that they don't- or won't- talk about. They suppress it. Others fall into the opposite trap- they get totally preoccupied by doubt. They get overwhelmed by it. They lose sight of God by concentrating upon themselves. Yet doubt is something too important to be treated in either of these ways. Viewed positively, doubt provides opportunities for spiritual growth. It tests your faith, and shows you where it is vulnerable. It forces you to think about your faith, and not just take it for granted. It stimulates you to strengthen the foundations of your relationship with God."

— Alister E. McGrath: Doubt: Handling it Honestly.

Keep safe. May God bless you and yours.

Martin.