

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.

The days and weeks of the Lockdown slip past, marked by thoughts and memories of things we might be doing. Shows and festivals and annual events, visits from families, holidays we had intended to take, many other things, all pushed aside by measures to stop the spread of the Coronavirus. Restrictions are being eased, but the practicalities of maintaining precautions against infection make for hesitation in re-opening places where people gather, including our church buildings. We have seen upsurges in infection in places where control measures have been flouted, and we hear warnings of further waves of Covid to come.

Maybe we are becoming tired and frustrated by all of this, but it is a time for care and for patience, a time for looking out for one another, even at a distance, remembering that the church is not a building, but the people of God; a time for looking out for ourselves, for taking care, and for keeping our faith.

As Richard Rohr reminds us, *"The most common one-liner in the Bible is 'Do not be afraid.' Someone counted, and it occurs 365 times"*.

Let us continue to hold one another in our thoughts and our prayers. Keep safe. God bless you all. Martin.

A prayer from *Seasons of the Spirit*:

As you have always been with those who have drawn apart,
for solitude, for grieving, for prayer, out of fear or out of hope:

Be with us now.

As you have always been with the ones who search or flee,
the ones who struggle or hunger:

Be with us now.

As you have always been in our place of worship,
and in every place where those who sought you have encountered you:

Be with us now.

Sometimes, God, we avoid you
because we do not want to wrestle with those things weighing on our hearts;
we do not want to deal with those things we know we are called to address;
those with whom we have broken trust;
those suffering from unavoidable circumstances;
those whom we fail to stand up for;
those with whom we avoid eye contact;
When we fail to spend time with you, we fail to learn about ourselves.
Forgive us. Amen

