**CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19) Update:**

**Wednesday 18th March 2020**

Formal advice was issued on Tuesday 17th March 2020 directing that “until further notice, all congregational organisations and activities should cease… “ and that “until further notice, all Sunday gatherings for worship should also cease….”

HOWEVER, in these extraordinary and testing times the WORSHIP and PASTORAL CARE of First Larne continues! (See the accompanying “posters” for guidance).

**WORSHIP – “First Larne Live!”**

This Sunday we will be gathering as a church family through internet, so we would love to encourage you all to go online at 11am and 7pm and join us LIVE.
See the three easy steps that will allow you to be part of it (please note that you do not need to have a Facebook account, anyone with internet can access our public live video).

We would love, however, that those of you who do have Facebook follow us, like, comment and share on the live video as it’s being streamed so that we can all interact with each other and be part of the service wherever we are.

We also intend to be uploading more live videos and resources for all ages at different times throughout the week to help us worship God, build His kingdom and share His love, so please do keep an eye on our pages.

**PASTORAL CARE**

If you or anyone you know needs pastoral support or have any other queries, please contact us in the usual way:

**Church Office 028 28269968**

**Rev. Colin McClure 028 28272441**

We will be continuing to offer the full range of pastoral care – albeit in an appropriately modified way and with altered priorities.

Continue to inform us of hospital admissions and any other situation which may require our assistance.

FUNERALS

Until further notice funerals will follow the normal format EXCEPT that they will be considered as “private” – essentially limited to family and very close friends.

At such a sensitive time we all want to show support for and solidarity with our neighbours and friends. However, we need to be mindful of the welfare of the grieving family and the local community.

HELPFUL RESOURCES

Join us in our streamed services and continue to pray in an informed way for our community, nation and world.

Look out for the congregational prayer resources we are currently preparing.

You may also avail of relevant resources from the PCI website: [www.presbyterianireland.org](http://www.presbyterianireland.org)

BEING CHURCH

Whilst this current crisis presents challenges and threats to us in a way we have never before experienced there is also a call to be the Church in a way we have never been before.

Jeremiah 17.7-8

7 Blessed are those who trust in the Lord,

whose trust is the Lord.

8 They shall be like a tree planted by water,

sending out its roots by the stream.

It shall not fear when heat comes,

and its leaves shall stay green;

in the year of drought it is not anxious,

and it does not cease to bear fruit.

The prophet Jeremiah points to trees as an example for us to follow so that when difficulty comes, we, like them, can hold fast to life.

Trees do so much to support the world around them.

They absorb carbon from the atmosphere.

They hold back storms and flooding.

They protect the soil and restore moisture to it.

They provide habitats for wildlife.

Will this prove to be the year when, trusting and rooted in God, we in First Larne can flourish as one of the restorers of life to our community?

Could this be a defining moment in our generation and for our congregation and community?

Maybe that depends on how we respond – with faith or with fear.