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***Council on Social Responsibility***

**COVID 19 – Our Social Responsibility** (October 2020)

The Methodist Church in Ireland is not merely interested in coping with the Covid 19 pandemic in terms of the functioning of our public worship and pastoral care. We have a responsibility to live out our faith in society, not least during this crisis when many are in need.

The points below are concerning the health of all in society. We begin by addressing the imminent threat posed by Covid 19, but this is also about the threat posed by social isolation and challenging contexts for good mental health. Jesus followers are suffering too, but we are called to rise to our societal responsibility.

**Follow Government Advice on Public Health**

As time moves on, it may feel harder to stick to the rules. More than ever however, we should be leading the way in encouraging society in its responsibility.

**Act in the interests of those most physically vulnerable**

Those who are older or who have health concerns, may benefit from our practical support.

**Act in the interests of those most socially vulnerable.**

Pressures on people’s mental health and loneliness are big issues now as these darker months combine with social restrictions. How can we act in terms of communication, practicality and imagination to combat loneliness?

**Where possible, purchase with community in mind.**

Can our shopping support local business that may be struggling at present? Can this different lead up to Christmas be a new opportunity to provide life giving gifts elsewhere in the world?

**Bring something radical, bright, fun and surprising to your community.**

If ever there was a time to do something out of the ordinary, it is now. Do something fun that brings colour and happiness. Get a few people together in a zoom brainstorm. Either do something very localised or encourage wider participation from everyone in their home or garden. Maybe get community groups and media involved. In the times we’re in this winter, people will be glad of something fun and different.