

Church opening for corporate worship

In order to comply with the Government and Church of England guidelines for the opening up of St John's for corporate worship we have had to provide the Archdeacon with our Risk Assessment. This has now been accepted and you will find below the ways in which we have made the church safe for us to worship together. These rules/regulations may seem to some to be "over the top" but we must comply otherwise we cannot open and we have been advised that our insurance could be affected. The rules will change as the Government changes the guidelines and we will inform you of any changes as soon as we possibly can.

Unfortunately at the moment we are unable to accommodate the Ethiopian Church which usually meets each Sunday after we leave as we are unable to ensure your safety or theirs. All that follows is to make sure that everyone who wishes to come to the Sunday Services will feel as safe as they possibly can in these strange times.

1) **General:**

- a) We cannot have individual hand sanitisers for everyone so please bring your own hand sanitiser with you to use before receiving Communion.
- b) In order to maintain social distancing, we have had to measure out the seating area, therefore you will probably find that you are not sitting in your usual seat.
- c) Face-coverings are **strongly recommended and will become a legal requirement on 8th August.**
- d) The Weekly Notices will continue to be emailed each week and can also be found on the Website and Facebook. They will not be available in church.
- e) We are unable to use the Social Room or the Choir Vestry (except to access the toilets) or the new kitchen area at the back of church therefore we are unable to serve refreshments at the moment.
- f) We have to keep a record of everyone who attends each Sunday in order that, should someone fall ill with the virus, we can provide the Test and Trace service with any who may also have been affected.
- g) If you develop any symptoms of Covid 19 after you leave church, please contact Canon Elaine on 07749 867347 **in order that Test and trace may begin.**

2) **When you arrive at church:**

- a) Please go to the side door that you have been allocated on a separate email. (Not main doors)
- b) There will be hand sanitiser at the door – please cleanse your hands before entering.
- c) There will be a collection plate at the door, please place your envelope or cash here before the sidesperson takes you to your seat.
- d) A sidesperson will take you to your allotted seat in the church where you will find your name plate.
- e) A second sidesperson will ask you to wait while others are seated.
- f) If you have a child with you, there will be packs of activities on your allocated seat. Children must stay with their parent/guardian.

3) **What to expect during the service:**

- a) Please remember to keep your distance – still 2 metres.

- b) The seats are all measured out in order to comply with social distancing; therefore please sit exactly where your name is so as not to encroach on your neighbours space.
- c) On your seat you will find a carrier bag with your name on it. Inside you will find a Hymn book, a Service book and the Book of Common Prayer. These are for your own personal use and therefore at the end of the service the books will need to be returned to the carrier bag and left on your seat for the next time you attend.
- d) As we are not allowed to sing at the moment, Andy will play the hymns and we can either hum along as we read the words or just sing in our heads. Hopefully this will change shortly and we shall be able to sing.
- e) The physical sharing of The Peace continues to be suspended so we can just acknowledge one another as you wish so long as we keep our distance – maybe with a smile, wave, thumbs up or a nod of the head!

4) **Receiving Communion**

- a) During the offertory hymn the priest will sanitise her hands before touching the bread or wine.
- b) There will not be an Offertory procession at this time.
- c) The priest will speak the words of the Eucharistic Prayer over bread and wine that she alone will consume, bread that will be consumed by other communicants will remain covered until being distributed.
- d) The priest will be the only person to handle the wafers during the distribution.
- e) Everyone is encouraged to sanitise their hands before receiving the bread.
- f) The priest will re-sanitise her hands before administering the consecrated bread.
- g) Please follow the direction of the sidesperson who is by the front pew on your left who will point to each row in turn. Remember social distancing.
- h) The consecrated bread or wafer will need to be dropped into the hands of communicants.
- i) Care will be taken by the priest not to touch communicants' hands. If this does happen, both the priest and communicant will need to sanitise their hands immediately.

5) **Leaving the church**

- a) Please remain in your seat until a sidesperson directs you to the door that you came in through.
- b) If you wish to light a candle this can only be done at the end of the service and you will need to advise the sidesperson that this is your intention.
- c) The candle stand is in the Lady Chapel and a sidesperson will stand at the door to ensure that it is safe for you to enter.
- d) After lighting the candle, please leave via the door that we usually use on a Sunday after refreshments.
- e) Once in the garden, please remember to keep socially distanced.

6) **Evensong - Please adhere to the above where it applies except for the following**

- a) For Evensong we can enter through the main doors
- b) Please try to arrive in good time as you will need to wait to be shown where to sit
- c) If you already have a bag with hymn books in please collect it when you arrive.
- d) On your first visit you can collect an Evensong book which you can keep in your bag.
- e) Place your bag back in your Sunday morning seat or at the back of the church where indicated.