

Whiston Parish Church

Guidelines for Church Services

The church is now open again for services on a Sunday morning. This will usually be a spoken Eucharist service at **9.45am**, with doors open from 9.15am, but may on occasions be a Service of the Word (without communion). If you or anyone in your household is showing symptoms of COVID-19, please do **not** come to Church because of the risk that you pose to others, but remain at home and self-isolate.

These services will be very different from how we worshipped before COVID-19 and so we have drawn up the following guidelines with the aim of keeping everyone as safe as possible during worship.

- ❖ As you come into Church to attend worship, we are required to gather personal information about you. You will be able to scan the NHS QR code if you have a suitable smart phone or we will ask you for a name and a contact telephone number. This is to ensure that we can comply with the Government Track and Trace programme. Any details we take on paper will be stored safely destroyed after 21 days.
- ❖ The number of worshippers in Church is strictly limited by the requirement for social distancing. This unfortunately means that we cannot guarantee that you will be admitted to a specific service—when the limit has been reached, we are absolutely unable to allow anyone else in. Please be understanding if this happens to you.
- ❖ It is a requirement to wear a face mask during the service except when taking communion.
- ❖ You will find hand sanitiser at the entrance to Church and at strategic points around the building. Please use this when you arrive at Church and before you pick up a service booklet and readings sheet.
- ❖ There is a one-way flow to move around the building. Please follow this. Social distancing measures are in place in relation to seating.
- ❖ Upon arrival, people will be welcomed and asked to wait to be shown to specific seats. These will be allocated with two individuals to a pew but household groups and members of established 'bubbles' can be seated together on the same pew.
- ❖ Once in these seats, people are asked to remain seated for the duration of the service unless instructed otherwise. Please note: all cushions and kneelers have been removed for the time being, but please feel free to bring a cushion for your own comfort.
- ❖ The toilets are available for use.
- ❖ Certain areas of the Church are closed to public access and these areas will be clearly marked. In particular, the areas used by children and young people will not be open and so for now they will not be able to meet as they usually do.
- ❖ Unfortunately, singing by the congregation is not permitted at the present time, but a cantor may sing with the organist for certain pieces.

- ❖ The common cup for communion also remains suspended. This means that only the priest who is celebrating communion can take the wine, which is done so on behalf of all communicants, who take communion in one kind only.
- ❖ The communion wafer will be shared in the following way:
 - The celebrant will sanitise his/her hands before starting to administer the consecrated wafer and the recipients should sanitize their hands before and after the giving of the wafer; hand sanitiser gel will be available.
 - As far as possible, without causing discomfort, arms should be kept at full extension during this time, to maximise distance.
 - There will be control of the queue to receive communion in place to maintain social distancing measures during this time, so please follow instructions from stewards.
- ❖ Single-use service and readings sheets will be provided for you to use. Please take this home with you and dispose of it in your home bin.
- ❖ We will not be serving refreshments after the service.
- ❖ We will be asking members of the congregation to leave the Church immediately after worship has ended and to wait to greet friends once they can do so safely outside in the churchyard. When leaving the building please follow guidance from the stewards to make sure we exit in a socially distanced manner.
- ❖ Once outside the Church please continue to keep a social distance and please observe the Rule of Six.
- ❖ We will not take a collection during the service. You are asked to drop your gift on to the collection plate near the Church door before or after the service, or to give directly to the Church bank account (16-00-07 a/c number15374552).

The Church will be thoroughly cleaned before each service to meet Government guidelines. The Government guidelines are planned to change as the COVID-19 situation progresses, but may also change because of unforeseen developments; we will respond quickly to ensure compliance with any new requirements.

We look forward to welcoming you safely at Whiston Parish Church.

Alan Teale and Colette White
Churchwardens

19th April 2021