

Whiston Parish Church

Guidelines for the Re-opening of Church for Services

Following the latest detailed guidelines from the Church of England and the Government, we will be re-opening Church from **Sunday 19th July 2020** for a spoken Eucharist service at **9.45am**, with doors open from 9.15am. 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. We look forward to welcoming you back to this service, or to a future service when you are ready to return to Church.

Services on future Sundays, for the foreseeable future, will be a spoken Eucharist service whenever possible but may be a Service of the Word (without Communion) at certain times. 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—your name and some contact details. This is to ensure that we can comply with the Government Track and Trace programme. Your details will be stored safely on paper and destroyed after 21 days.
- ❖ The **number of worshippers** in Church will initially be 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. In due course, we may bring in a ticketing system to allow booking for services.
- ❖ You will find **hand sanitiser** at the entrance to Church and at strategic points around the building. Please use this when you arrive, at communion and when you leave Church.
- ❖ There is no requirement to wear a face mask to attend a service, but if you would feel more comfortable with a face mask, you are welcome to do so. Please remove it carefully prior to going up for communion.
- ❖ There will be a **one-way flow** to move around the building, if you can please try to follow this. Social distancing measures will be in place in relation to seating.
 - Upon arrival, people will be welcomed and asked to wait to be shown to specific seats.
 - Seats will be allocated with two individuals to a pew but household groups and members of established 'bubbles' can be seated together.
 - 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.
 - Certain areas of the Church will be 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 is not permitted at the present time and the common cup remains suspended, as does the sharing of the peace.

- ❖ 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 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 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.
- ❖ 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 re-opening on Sunday 19th July and thereafter will be regularly cleaned and sanitised to meet Government guidelines. These guidelines are changing frequently as the COVID-19 situation progresses and we will respond quickly to ensure compliance with any new requirements.

We look forward to welcoming you back **safely** to Whiston Parish Church.

Alan Teale and Wendy Whitaker
Churchwardens

12th July 2020