

Church re-opening

I have been waiting to write to you about re-opening for worship until all the information, advice and directions were available. The advice from the Church of England reached me this morning, following government advice issued a couple of days ago.

It is not uncomplicated, but the good news is that we will now be able to open All Saints for public worship.

Provision for Sundays will be slightly more complex than for weekdays, so the churchwardens and I have decided that we will open from **Monday 6th July**, to allow time for any necessary practical adjustments before Sunday 12th July.

The plan is as follows:

Daily Mass, including Sundays, will continue to be at **12 noon**, and will continue to be live-streamed.

The building will be open daily from **11am until 1.30pm** initially: we will review the opening hours in the light of experience.

All Masses will continue to be celebrated at the High Altar, allowing maximum socially-distanced use of the nave.

Communion will be given in the hand, the Host only will be offered, and 'eucharistic tongs' (sourced from Italy, of course), will be used to avoid the celebrant touching the Hosts or the hands of the communicants. No words of administration are to be used nor should the communicant say 'Amen' when receiving the Host.

Those wishing to receive communion (and there may be some who wish to be present but not receive) will come to the chancel step one at a time and receive standing; each communicant should wait until the previous communicant has returned to their place. There will be a *prie-dieu* between the priest and the communicant to ensure some distancing.

On weekdays there will be no orders of service provided. A copy of the weekday Mass card can be supplied to anyone who wants to keep one for their own use.

On Sundays a one-off order of service for the day will be placed on seats around the nave, to indicate where people should sit. Households may sit together; it would help if they did so on the ends of rows, to free up more space for individual worshippers. This will be indicated by the position of the orders of

service. The two metre rule has been relaxed, but it is advised that further precautions should be taken if people are less than two metres apart. This could include wearing a mask, but it is not mandatory to do so.

All hassocks have been removed. The advice suggests that people should be seated whenever possible. Standing is, however, preferable for all liturgical prayer and should not be considered a risk if appropriate distancing is adhered to.

Those reckoned to be at higher risk of infection, including people over 70 years of age, are to be reminded of that risk, but the decision to attend is their own.

Choirs are not yet permitted, but the use of a cantor is allowed; the organ can be played, but congregations are asked not to sing. You may make said responses, but I will encourage the cantor (or during the week, another lay person) to continue to lead responses: this will be necessary for the live-streaming, and also means that others present can answer quietly.

Hand-sanitiser will be provided at the door. Toilets will not be available.

Giving should preferably be done electronically, but a plate will be provided at the door for cash donations.

Government guidance includes a request for the names of all attendees to be recorded and kept for 21 days to assist 'track and trace' if required. We will attempt to do this: there will be someone stationed at the church door with a list of those with whom we're regularly in touch to expedite the process; other names and contact details will be taken as far as is practicable.