

## Updated Guidelines including the wearing of face coverings in churches.

In compliance with guidelines received we would ask everyone who attends a service in church to now wear a face covering. This is a measure intended to keep everybody as safe as possible. I think many will find the move reassuring and hopefully more of our sisters and brothers will feel confident enough to return to Church.

Some people are exempted from the guidelines and if you believe you are, then please get in touch so that we can help make your visit to church as easy and comfortable as possible.

There are two other obvious differences in the way we conduct services. Firstly, your clergy will for the time being not be using words of administration when you receive communion and a blessing. This is so that there is absolutely no risk of us potentially contaminating you or the communion bread. Instead we will just drop the bread into your hands and then bless you silently. We are praying the words just inaudibly.

Secondly, and this will feel very strange, we really would ask you not to carry on distanced conversations with one another while you are in church. If a person in a pew at the front turns around to speak with another person a few pews back; in order to be heard, they will naturally have to raise their voice, this increases the risk of aerosol spray. There are lots of ways to still be sociable and still keep yourself and others safe. Most of these involve being outside in the open air.

We would also ask you not to speak at a volume above your usual speaking level while worshipping. The clergy are finding this quite difficult as you'll imagine. The sort of robust voices many of us use when joining in with, for example, the creed or the Lord's Prayer need, for the time being at least to be toned down a bit. A simple rule to follow is that if you can't hear the person nearest you speaking then you are probably speaking too loudly yourself.

We realise that this is quite a lot to take on board and also may feel rather contrary to the ways of worshipping that we are more used to. It won't be forever but in the meantime please be patient, resist the urge to shoot the messengers and help us to keep one another safe and well.

Our team of safety trained welcomers and any member of the ministry team will be pleased to help you in any way that they can.

With every good wish

Peter.