Resuming Sunday Worship at St Andrew's & St Cuthman's: Questions and Answers

Q Must I wear a face covering to church?

A It is now a legal obligation to wear face coverings in places of worship under s.2(2) of the amended *Health Protection (Coronavirus, Wearing of Face Coverings in a Relevant Place) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2020*. We have a limited number of disposable coverings available for those without one, but please be aware that face coverings are not a replacement for regular hand washing and the other existing control measures.

Q What are the exceptions?

A Some members of our congregations will be exempt from the regulations and should therefore not wear a face covering. Such exceptions include all children under the age of 11 and those with invisible conditions such as asthma, autism or those which would cause severe distress for the wearer.

Q How long is today's service?

A Today's service is likely to last around 45 minutes, not including the final organ voluntary.

Q Why can't we sing?

A We are told that singing, indeed any loud voice, increases the risk of risk of virus transmission through aerosol droplets. Equally we are advised that spoken responses during worship should be in a soft voice.

Q What about recorded hymns?

A We decided, on reflection, that sitting and listening to a recorded of hymns would feel like 'second best', and might raise a question if people started to sing along from memory.

Q How will we receive Holy Communion?

Communion will be administered in the form of the bread only. It has long been the teaching of the church that to receive in one kind is 'complete communion'. You will receive communion from the chancel step, standing, much as it was administered at the more informal service on third Sundays. Further instructions about the administration will be announced before the service. Please let us know if you would like to borrow some sanitizing gel to use before going up for communion.

Q Do I have to receive communion?

A Anyone who feels that they should not receive the host for health reasons is assured that they are partakers by faith of the body and blood of Christ and of the benefits that he conveys to us by them. (The presiding priest will consume the consecrated wine on our behalf.)

Q Can I greet my friends after the service?

A Government guidance makes clear that anyone attending any venue, including a place of worship, does so either as an individual or household and should not mingle with other people, and goes on to say: 'If attending a place or event that is following Covid-19 Secure guidelines, you should take care to limit your interactions with anyone outside of your group and you should continue to maintain social distancing from those that you do not live with.'

Q Why can't we worship and sing outside?

Whilst this may be something for the future we would need to find a sufficiently large and safe space for everyone to gather without risk of falls or injury. Our churchyard is unlikely to pass any risk assessment. Even if we were to worship outside current guidance would prevent us from singing.

Q Why is there only one service on a Sunday?

We need plenty of time between services to allow not only for cleaning but also for any undetected traces of virus (if someone was symptomatic) to die off. We also need to take account of clergy time for as long we continue to prepare resources for worship at home, including the weekly Armchair Homilies.

Q Why have the choirstalls been moved back?

A The present chancel arrangement is to accommodate the regular midweek Eucharist. All are welcome to join this service which is held at 11:30am every Wednesday.

Q What happened to the Pews News?

A For the time being we are distributing the Sunday bulletin electronically, and fortnightly by post to those without email. To join the mailing list please speak to a steward or write to office@steyningparishchurch.org