

PROPOSAL FOR SUNDAY SERVICES FROM 6th SEPTEMBER 2020

A working party comprising Neil Colman, Rhys Davies, Jane Rawling, Sue Proctor, David Thomson, Chryst Wickramasinghe and Paul Lander met on Wednesday 19th August to discuss how to reopen the church for regular Sunday services, starting on 6th of September.

The discussions were based on revised information from the Government dated the 14th August, and updated advice from Church of England of the 18th August.

The meeting produced the following proposal from that discussion, in italics below. These include general matters, set up arrangements, measures the congregation should take, how the band can contribute (where the issued documents refer to the government advice for performing arts), matters relating to broadcasting the services live etc.

To enable this to commence on Sunday 6th Neil would like to issue appropriate information to the church during this coming Sunday's online service. It would be very helpful if members of the PCC could read the this proposal and advise any comments to Neil in the next couple of days.

Sunday morning services would be aimed for all ages participation in the first month whilst we re-establish momentum in gathering together before exploring resuming children's and youth provision when appropriate. We would start a new series on Prayer which would ideally be followed by small groups too. This has free online videos for groups meeting online, and a book which service leaders/preachers might take inspiration from for Sunday's <https://prayercourse.org/run/>

There is no numerical 'cap' on services, but physical distancing and Public Health requirements must be met. While those at extra risk and the 'clinically extremely vulnerable' should be advised of the risks of attending public worship, a decision to do so is theirs alone. See point 12

<https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2020-08/COVID%2019%20advice%20on%20conducting%20public%20worship%20v2.3.pdf>

These are our collective response to the guidelines, given the nature of our building and that we anticipate our congregation will act responsibly and with a reasonable degree of caution. More details on national guidance can be found here

<https://www.churchofengland.org/more/media-centre/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-churches#na>

- *The wearing of face masks/covering will be a standard requirement by members of the congregation, unless medically unable to or children under 11 years old.*

- *People will be encouraged not to wait in the entrance. The entrance will be one way in before the service, and one way out after*
- *It was agreed, given that the wearing of face masks is now a mandatory obligation in places of worship, both main doors will be used for entry. Likewise, both main doors will be used for exiting the church after the service. The proportionate risk of congregating in the entrance to enter or exit is probably worse than the risk of using both doors. The disability access entrance at the front by the Hall, together with the door at end of the corridor past the toilets, will be accessible for the duration of the service.*
- *We will use every other pew (1.8 m apart) – using the ribbons as present to indicate pews not to be used.*
- *People will come into the worship space using the outer sets of doors. The centre pair of doors will be shut at this stage.*
- *On entering the worship space they should go around the outside on whichever side they have entered, and go into the pew. The first person/household to enter a pew should go right along to the aisle end of the pew. Other households/‘bubbles’ may use the same pew, but others sharing the pew need to be socially distanced – they should leave three book rack sections clear between different households/bubbles (1.4m).*
- *If required, socially distanced seating under the balconies will be used, and if necessary the balconies will be available too. In the case of the balcony the front row should not be used, and beyond that every other row will be closed.*
- *After the service the congregation should exit using either the route they came in by or the centre aisle. All the doors to the entrance will be open at the time, as will the disabled entry/exit access and the door at the end of the corridor past the kitchen. Waiting and conversing in the entrance is to be gently discouraged – any conversations should take place outside.*
- *The service leader/preacher will exit the Church to converse outside with anyone wishing to, Warden’s would then direct rows to depart promptly to continue conversations outside.*
- *The toilets will be available.*
- *As per latest directives the band will be able to play and sing. The congregation should not sing, but could hum along and service leaders will not be looking to kerb congregation members (who have face coverings on) who softly speak or sing along.*

- *The front line of the band in normal times is over 3m from someone in the front pew, which is considered acceptable.*
- *The musicians need to be 2m apart which, subject to measurement, may mean musicians in three lines – the back line being behind the communion rail.*
- *It is proposed that the speaker be seated at the front of the church in the centre (which will also be where communion would be served), the service leader would be in the box seat in front of the pulpit, and the lectern would be half way between these two positions.*
- *Readers and intercessor's using the lectern, should take their own notes, and should not touch the microphones.*
- *The leader and preacher will use radio microphones as before, the musicians will use microphones on stands.*
- *When distributing Communion, we will continue the procedures that requires the priest to lead liturgy when the elements are covered before then putting on their own face mask, and sanitising their hands before giving Communion. Members of the congregation will be invited to only consume the individual wafer bread's by coming up individually via the central aisle, when directed by warden's (i.e. not gathering around the communion rail) to receive the bread into their hands from the priest, move to one side to then remove their face covering to consume the bread in their own time. When finished they should then replace their face covering before returning to their pew around the outside.*
- *Personal prayer ministry after the service cannot yet be resumed, but it would be good to encourage socially appropriate and prayerful contact afterwards and during the week personally and/or via small groups.*
- *Refreshments could only be served at tables and are not deemed a priority currently as we would have to increase the use of the Hall and Kitchen, potentially introducing more risk to Preschool staff and children.*
- *It is proposed to broadcast the service live for the benefit of those who cannot attend, or are concerned about coming into the building. Exact details are under review. One possibility can be the use of the existing live feed on Facebook and using another platform whilst considering ceasing the use of Zoom to ease costs.*
- *From Neil's survey most people responsible or delivering prayers and reading will be coming to church. It was suggested that initially we use prayers and readers who can attend. Once we have the (broadcast) technology settled for this, we may introduce recorded contributions from those who are not*

attending. We should also investigate the option of live contributions from people isolating at home, but this may be the hardest technical hurdle. For those who are extremely vulnerable see the current parameters and advice here <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-on-shielding-and-protecting-extremely-vulnerable-persons-from-covid-19/guidance-on-shielding-and-protecting-extremely-vulnerable-persons-from-covid-19>

- If we have to cease meeting in church at sometime in the future we would probably resume the Zoom webinar to allow remote contributions.*
- We would only use projection, no service books or handouts (apart from for the visually impaired or those not online, to be prepared 72 hours beforehand). Pew Bible's may be used by a single user.*
- In addition to the P.A., Brian will advise what else or who is required to film, project & broadcast services after his considerable investment that is underway. Understudies, particularly drawn from our young people, would be welcomed into being involved, trained and delegated to as soon as possible.*
- The welcomer's and/or church wardens will make a note (names) of attendees at the service to aid track and trace compliance with the appropriate permission sought.*