**Changes to Services in St Andrew’s Church (main ones in bold)**

Following the latest Government guidance and mandatory requirements, a risk assessment, using Government and Church of England guidance, has been carried out to try to ensure the safety of everyone bearing in mind the rise in transmission of the new variant of coronavirus.

**Before deciding to come to church**

There is no requirement to tell us in advance that you are attending church. We look forward to welcoming everyone wishing to come.

However, anyone showing symptoms of COVID-19 should not attend church due to the risk that they pose to others; they should self-isolate at home immediately with other members of their household. This applies equally to individuals who work at the place of worship. Where individuals are self-isolating due to a possible or confirmed case of COVID-19 in the household, or because they have been requested to so by NHS Test & Trace, or pinged by the NHS App, they should not attend.

**The recommendation of SAGE is that people should take a lateral flow test at home before going into places where there are larger numbers of people, as it is possible to transmit the virus without having any symptoms, and if the test is positive, people should isolate until taking a PCR test.**

**Arriving at church**

We invite everyone to keep a respectful distance from others, to be considerate towards others who feel more comfortable with, or who are advised to maintain, distance from others. To avoid having to queue to enter church, we encourage early arrival, up to 30 minutes before the service starts and if needed wait outside to ease crowding.

Please continue to use the automatic hand sanitiser before you enter church.

**It is now mandatory to wear a face covering when entering church and at all times whilst indoors, unless exemptions apply (e.g. leading a service, giving a reading, medical reasons etc.)**

Please collect a service sheet and a hymn book (unused since the previous Sunday) from the shelf near the font before you take your seat.

Thank you for your offering on the collection plate at the back of the church. The plate will not be passed around although the offering will be blessed during the service.

A record of who attends will continue to be kept for 21 days so that people can be contacted, if necessary, to assist with NHS test and trace. The QR code is available for you to use.

Please sit in a pew with a cushion and we ask that a respectful distance is maintained when sharing a pew with others.

**The service**

Music will be played before the start and at the end of the service.

Rev Eileen will stand in the Chancel at safe distance from those in the Nave. Please stand or sit as requested in the service.

We are glad for the opportunity to sing together. However, as we transition, we shall begin with one hymn, the Offertory Hymn. We are invited to stand to sing the hymn.

**Receiving Holy Communion**

Communion will return to being administered at the high altar. Rev Eileen or the Presiding Celebrant will use her/his own bread and cup. She will bless and consecrate the Priest’s bread and cup, as well as the bread and wine for us contained in separate covered receptacles on the altar. The cup will be shared in the form of intincting of the bread performed by the Priest using an untouched implement (e.g., chopsticks; tongs).

After using the hand sanitiser and putting on a face covering, Rev Eileen or the Presiding Celebrant will invite us to come to the altar, maintaining respectful distance as we go forwards, taking turns to stand one at a time in front of her/him. She/He will pick up the bread using the implement (e.g., chopsticks; tongs), touch the bread into the wine and drop it into our outstretched cupped hands. You are welcome to stand or kneel at the rail as you prefer. On receiving Communion, please acknowledge without speaking then return to your seat, keeping respectful distance **and only remove your face covering briefly in order to consume the bread.**

Although everyone who is able to receive communion is welcome, no one should feel obliged and may remain seated during this time.

Everyone is also welcome to receive a Blessing, going forwards as others to the altar rail (maintaining respectful distance) but keeping hands down and head bowed in front of Rev Eileen/the Priest.

**After the service**

When leaving your seats, please keep a respectful distance.

Please return your service sheets and hymn book to the shelf.

To avoid crowding at the entrance please have conversations outside the church, where we are freer and more comfortable to have conversations.

***We hope that this information is helpful for you as we adapt and safely ensure that we adhere with further restrictions. We hope everyone who wishes to attend church feels confident to do so, although no one should feel under any obligation to attend. We respect whatever you feel is right for you.***

*Let us help one another to care for each other as we worship together. We look forward to seeing you*

*Eileen Harrop, Chris Barnett and Lynne Lobley*

*10 December 2021*