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29th July 2020

Letter to Christ Church re resuming services in Church from 2 August 2020

Dear friends,

As you may be aware the Bishop of Shrewsbury has requested that we recommence services in church again from this Sunday, 2nd August 2020. We are looking forward to worshipping in the church again. As you can imagine, there are quite a few restrictions currently upon us! However, John Farrow has done a thorough job of reading through all the many guidelines to enable the PCC to think through a safe re-opening of church.

Risk Assessment

John has completed a Covid-19 risk assessment in order for us to comply with all the guidelines and use best practice to ensure the premises and arrangements are as safe as possible.

PCC met on Tuesday 28 July to discuss and agree the following:

- The maximum size of the congregation is currently **40 people** plus sidespeople, clergy and wardens.
- Because of this restriction and those detailed below, it has been agreed that for the month of August we will hold a 9am service only each Sunday. This will be streamed for those who cannot come to church on Microsoft Teams and via our website as we have been doing in the lockdown. It is hoped that from September we will be in a better position to hold family services at 10.30am – but this will be reviewed later in August in the light of the developing Covid situation.

In the meantime, the following will apply:

- **Seating:** family groups/couples can sit together but there has to be a 2-metre distance between them and the next group of people/person. Incidentally 2 metres is approximately 4 chairs width!

- **Face Masks** – The C of E strongly recommend the use of face coverings when attending church services
- **Songs & Hymns:** sadly, we are not able to sing hymns together at the moment so the use of YouTube videos will continue to be used. We may look to introduce 'live' worship led by musicians, but there can be no congregational singing.
- **The vulnerable** – we strongly encourage people who are vulnerable in their health not to return to church at the moment
- **Holy Communion:** will be held in a more restricted way each week. We are not able to share the cup and partake of the wine, but bread will be distributed in a different way – the clergy are working on this!
- **Coffee:** sadly, we will not be offering coffee at the moment as this is against the guidelines.
- **Social distancing:** everyone must maintain a two-metre distance on entering and leaving church and we have been advised to minimize social contact before and after the service.
- **Test and Trace:** it is strongly recommended that everyone should complete a short form with their name, address and other contact details. There is also an App that can be used on entering church. We will be complying with current legislation and these records will be kept for 3 weeks in a secure place
- **Sanitising hand gel** must be used on entering church
- **Toilets:** for the foreseeable future we will make use of the toilets in the hall, rather than in the small corridor
- We are not able to use prayer books or church Bibles currently and everything will be displayed via the data projector. **Please bring your own Bible to church!** Children's toys are not permitted at the moment.

You will know that this is not the normal way we 'do' church! However, it is important to honour the government and diocesan guidelines in working together to be a safe place where we can worship the Lord.

If you have any queries about this, please direct them to John Farrow or Sarah Birchall

With love in Christ, and with my prayers,

Peter