Corona Virus – Covid-19 Information

Under the current tier restrictions, the following regulations are in place.

This will be reviewed regularly in line with any Government and Church of England updates.

**Church Services:**

**We will have a service at St. Bartholomew church at 11:00am each Sunday**

There will be no midweek services or 8:00am services in the parish at the moment; this is under review and will be reassessed in September.

**Please do not attend:**

* If you have symptoms or a diagnosis of Covid-19 / Coronavirus
* If you are in a household where a member has symptoms or a diagnosis of Covid-19 / Coronavirus
* If you have been asked to isolate as part of a contact tracing programme or as part of medical treatment

**Pattern of Services:**

**The services may not all be communion services but may include Services of the Word.**

**Arriving at Church:**

**Please follow all the guidelines concerning social distancing and note that attendance will be limited.**

* Entrance will be via the main door
* You will be asked to register so that we can have a contact tracing system in place. Attendance sheets are stored for 21 days and destroyed in line with Data Protection Measures. This is NOT a school form attendance register. This will be reviewed after the new guidance on Track and Trace coming into effect in mid- August.
* Alcohol gel will be available to clean your hands.
* **We may need a set a limit on numbers attending**
* **Face coverings are no longer mandatory in line with Government regulations but we ask that people wear these when entering or leaving. Once seated, you may remove your face covering for the duration of the service. We respect each person’s view on whether they wish to wear a face covering during the service or not. It may be possible to set aside an area of the church where face coverings will be worn, if this is requested.**

**Within the Church:**

**Social distancing will be strictly observed.**

* The layout of seats will look very different – do not try to move them. Additional seating will be returned during August
* Doors will remain fixed open to avoid people touching door handles / door panels
* Hymn books and service books will be reintroduced during August
* There will be a table with service sheets. You will be invited to take one and you must take this home with you; please do not leave it behind.
* The offertory plate will also be on this table. There will be no offertory taken during the service.
* Families / “bubbles” may sit together. We ask that people maintain a one seat gap between families / “bubbles” as part of social distancing.

**Children / Young People’s provision:**

**We are not able to offer this to comply with social distancing**

* The toy box, children’s books and soft play bags will not be available
* Families must sit together in church; gathering in the back room or narthex is NOT allowed.
* Sunday School will not resume until September while the back room is being cleared and will be dependent upon sufficient leaders.

**The Service:**

**The form of the service will be very different to comply with Church of England guidelines. As an example**

* It is recommended that services are shorter
* Robes may not be worn
* There will be less movement during the services – we may stand to sing hymns and sit for the rest of the service [as instructed by the presiding minister]. This will be reviewed in September.
* There may be only one or two readings
* A sermon may not be preached if printed on the pewsheets
* Sharing the peace is not allowed physically; people are asked to remain in their seats and may make a gesture of peace.
* At communion services, only the bread will be administered; the altar rails will not be used and people will be advised to come forward in a distanced queue, receive and return to their seat following the one-way system in place & using hand sanitiser provided.

**After the service:**

**Serving of refreshments is being reviewed**

* Until the back room is cleared we may serve the in church / outside / on special occasions only. This will be reviewed in September.
* Do not block exit routes and exit doors.
* If chatting, please respect people’s wish to maintain a safe distance

**School Form Signing:**

**This has not altered**

* Church attendance can now be recorded but we cannot do this in ways that would be unsafe, break social distancing rules or put anyone attending at risk of transmitting or catching Covid / coronavirus.
* **From Sunday 13th December, if you do attend a service within the team or would have attended a service had restrictions not been in place** [i.e. you would have attended St. Thomas’ church, a Café Church Service, an 8:00am service] or where you cannot attend due to limits placed on attendance, **please e-mail:**

[bdhww.churchattendance@gmail.com](mailto:bdhww.churchattendance@gmail.com)

giving both your name / your child or children’s names and the church you would usually attend.

* You will need to do this even if you attend a service and sign in as these sheets are for contact tracing purposes only and must be destroyed after 21 days.
* Only one e-mail per week will be counted [even if you would have attended more than once in any week].
* Please do NOT use any other e-mail address to register church attendance as these will not be included.

**Please contact us:**

**Team Rector: Revd Carol Pharaoh** 01942 859251 [carol.pharaoh@gmail.com](mailto:carol.pharaoh@gmail.com)

**Team Vicar:** **Revd Angela Wynne** 01204 468150 [revawynne@gmail.com](mailto:revawynne@gmail.com)

**Curate: Revd Andy Jones** 01942 813750[reverendandyjones@gmail.com](mailto:reverendandyjones@gmail.com)

**Further Information:**

**Please see also the Parish website** [www.westhoughtonchurches.org.uk](http://www.westhoughtonchurches.org.uk/)

**Church of England website** [**https://www.churchofengland.org/more/media-centre/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-churches**](https://www.churchofengland.org/more/media-centre/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-churches)

**Government Coronavirus website** [**https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus**](https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus)

**and safe use of places of worship** [**places of worship**](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-for-the-safe-use-of-places-of-worship-during-the-pandemic-from-4-july/covid-19-guidance-for-the-safe-use-of-places-of-worship-during-the-pandemic-from-4-july)

**Or e-mail the Parish Office** [**westhoughtonparish@outlook.com**](mailto:westhoughtonparish@outlook.com)*[NB not staffed 24 hours]*

*Please note that this is a rapidly changing situation which is being updated frequently. We will aim to provide the latest information available.*

Edward McHale [Churchwarden] 22/07/2021 update