

All Saints Church

Hampreston & Stapehill

Dear Church Family

As you will know, on Monday 19th July nearly all Covid-19 restrictions were lifted in line with Step 4 of the Government roadmap.

We appreciate that everyone will feel differently about the lifting of restrictions, some of us are elated, some of us are anxious, some of us are a mixture of both. As a church this is another opportunity for us to "shine in the darkness" by preferring and loving one another, which means respecting each other's choices and not standing in judgement. What a powerful witness this could be to our community at a time when division is rife! Whatever our personal views, God calls us to love one another.

We have now received and had the opportunity to digest the detailed updates from the Government "Places of Worship" notes and from the Church Of England. Thank you for your patience in the waiting.

Please find below a detailed update on changes at All Saints Hampreston.

- **Service Bookings** – We respectfully ask you to please continue booking for services so that we have an accurate attendance record for the NHS Track & Trace service in the event of any cases being reported. We won't be turning people away if they just turn up (as long as we don't exceed capacity, see below).
- **Social Distancing** – There is no longer a requirement to observe social distancing. However, the Government has advised caution, particularly in places where there are lots of people. We ask you to please be mindful of this. We appreciate that some people will want to continue to observe social distancing at church services which is why we are reserving some seating for those who would feel more comfortable with this. If you would like to sit in our socially distanced area please make a note on your online booking or inform Helen when booking by phone.
- **Face Coverings** – Although there is no longer a requirement to wear face coverings when you come to church, you may wish to continue to do so. The Government has urged people to be cautious when attending larger gatherings. We will continue to make masks available in church.
- **Hand washing / Hand sanitiser** – Good hand hygiene is a great way to reduce the risk of picking up and passing on the virus. We will continue to provide hand sanitiser for use on arrival and throughout the building. We warmly encourage you to continue using these and our hand washing facilities.

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- **Singing** – We are now allowed to all sing in church as a congregation again, which is wonderful news as this is an element of worship that has been very much missed.
- **Bibles** - We will be putting the Bibles back into the pews for people to reference during the services if they wish to. It is therefore important that we all sanitise or wash our hands on arrival.
- **Holy Communion** – Due to the considerable contamination risk of sharing the communion cup, we are going to continue to receive communion in one kind only.
- **Ventilation** – Good ventilation is an important factor in reducing the risk posed by Covid-19, so we will be keeping the main door open during services to increase air flow.
- **Social Interaction** – As much as we love to chat with and hug others, please be respectful of each others' wishes. Consider giving people space when you talk together and always ask before hugging someone.
- **If you feel unwell** – If you don't feel well, please don't come to church but join us online if you can instead. If you have symptoms of Covid-19 please arrange to have a test. If you feel ill with Covid-19 symptoms AFTER coming to church please arrange to have a test and let us know immediately when you receive your test result if it is positive.
- **Love One Another** – Jesus taught us that people would know us as His disciples through our love for one another. Like Jesus, we should meet people "where they are at" and not stand in judgement over them, rather treating them with the respect we owe each other as brothers and sisters in Christ. Risk will be minimised through this simple act of preferring one another. Honour one another above yourselves." (Romans 12: 10)

The past 18 months have been very challenging and as a church family we have had to cope with many changes. However, Jesus is the same yesterday, today and forever. Let's continue to fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith – and follow His teaching to love one another as He loves us.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to speak to us or Helen Bifield.

Blessings and love
Sarah, Patches and Oli

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