

Precautions around COVID-19

The spread of the COVID-19 virus is on all our minds, and we want you to know the steps we are taking to keep you safe, when you attend services. We do not want to be the place where any virus is passed on, so we need to work together to keep our buildings and meetings as safe as possible.

The most important thing that we can all do is to stay at home if you feel unwell. Government advice is that the virus can produce a cough and a raised temperature, so if you have these symptoms, please self-isolate. If you are alone and need shopping or other help, please phone or email us.

The best way to avoid the spread of the virus is to keep washing your hands, and if you sneeze or cough to catch that in a tissue and throw it away.

At the moment, there is no advice to avoid church services or other gatherings, but we do want to be responsible, so we have put the following measures in place:

1. When you arrive at church our welcomers will not shake your hand. We will try to prop doors open so you are not handling doorknobs. We do not believe that the virus can survive on books, so if you need a book, you will still be given one.
2. We will not shake hands during the peace. Whoever is leading the service will suggest other ways of greeting others, if that is your tradition.
3. If the service includes Holy Communion, we will not share a common chalice. Whoever is presiding will either offer you just the bread, or will intinct each wafer with a drop of wine. When we are putting the bread into your hands, we will do so without touching your skin.
4. When you leave church or stay for coffee, we encourage you not to shake hands, and allow sidespeople to open the door for you.

5. When you get home, we advise that you wash your hands properly, and try not to touch your face with your hands until they are clean.

As clergy we will be cleaning our hands with alcohol gel before presiding at communion. We will be asking welcomers and sidespeople to wash their hands and keep washing doorknobs.

If you have a duty in church and feel unwell, please don't soldier on. Let us know that you can't attend.

We also encourage you to put similar measures in place for any home groups or other church meetings that you attend.

We are doing this to give you confidence that it is safe to attend church. We know that church is a valuable place of encouragement, faith and community. We encourage you to keep attending, for the time being.

Please ask us if you have any questions, and hold our government and health services in your prayers as they tackle this virus.

God Bless,
Rev Gill

6 March 20