

COVID STATEMENT - July 2021

From July 19th Covid restrictions have been removed but it is very clear that the virus has not gone away and infection rates are rising quickly again across our city. The way we use our buildings and how we are expected to behave in worship is now left to the discretion of each individual church following advice from the Government, the Church of England and the Diocese of Leeds. Ultimately that decision on how restrictions are lifted now lies with the incumbent.

The following is presented after a meeting of the PCC on Monday 19th July.

Entering the building

There are now no restrictions on the number of people who can attend services – this applies to all services.

In view of the high rate of infections across the city we will continue to sign in or use the QR code each time we come into church.

Hand sanitizer will continue to be available.

Masks/face-coverings are no longer mandatory and their use is left to the discretion of the individual if they wish to use them or not.

Although there are now no restrictions about where people can sit, it is asked that we are mindful of peoples' personal space and respect that some may wish to maintain a social distance.

The Mass

Until at least the beginning of September we will continue to use individual service books printed for each service.

Hymn singing can resume – see the note about streaming worship

We will resume singing the mass parts in August or September

The collection plate will remain at the back of the church

The Peace will be offered in the way that has been our practice for the past eighteen months.

The Offertory Procession, bring up the bread and wine will resume in September.

Receiving Communion will continue as we have from the chancel step.

We will not resume receiving the chalice until September or October.

Streaming Services

We are very much encouraged by the Church of England and the Diocese to continue streaming services where we can.

Zoom is not a live music friendly medium, so we will have a live hymn at the start of the mass and a streamed hymn just before the reading of the Gospel.

On occasions when we use the Gloria that will be streamed for the time being.

The streamed part of the service will end after the notices and not with the Offertory hymn.

Refreshments

Refreshments can resume and it would be a very good thing for that to happen.

To be seen to be doing that which is important and it is asked that the person serving refreshments wears a face covering when serving until the start of September in the first instance.

When people come to get their drinks, they would need to move away from the serving table to allow space for others to come forward.

Food served should be individually wrapped.

There is now no restriction on sitting or standing for refreshments.

Life Events

The same principles apply for Baptisms, weddings and funerals as apply for the mass.

Concerts

The same principles apply as for the mass and the same is the case for the refreshments served at concerts.

I am sorry that this is long and very prescriptive but hopefully it will provide us with a way of allowing us to do things we have not done for a long time while keeping each other safe and relieving the anxieties of those who may still be nervous in the present situation.

Unless Government or official Church advice changes significantly these principles will be reviewed at the October meeting of the PCC.