

Procedures and controls for the partial re-opening of St Helen's Church Tarporley from March 28th 2021

Dear Friends.

For the first few weeks we will hold a single weekly Sunday service of Morning Prayer or Holy Communion at 10am at St Helen's.

It is with sadness but a firm grasp of the reality of the situation and the resources we have that we cannot open all our churches and immediately return to our normal service pattern. I know that this will be a disappointment, but no-one wants to undo all the good we have done through being careful over the last few months and **I would urge all those who fall into vulnerable categories and all who feel vulnerable to continue to exercise extreme caution and care. No one should return until they feel fully comfortable and safe in so doing.**

For this reason, as before, there will be no rotas of volunteers and the Minister will undertake all the service roles.

I pray that the precautions we are taking will keep us all as safe as possible and reassured and that it will not be long until we can resume our rotas and the normal service pattern at all three of our churches.

Please take the time to read the following outline of how worship will resume and if you have any questions, or need to talk any of this through, please email or speak to Julian, Phillip or Liz.

We will continue to monitor how all this works in practice alongside changing Government, National Church and Diocese guidelines, so please bear with us if and when things change again. **I very much look forward to the day when we can resume our regular service pattern, and all meet without these limitations, but the most important thing, and reason for these temporary restrictions, is that we are all safely there to celebrate together.**

How Our Sunday Morning Service Will Look for the Time Being:

1. To help with social distancing we will operate a **one-way system and ask you to enter by the North Door (the one closest to the Swan) and leave by the South Door (the Lychgate side)**. Signs will be in position to remind and guide everyone.
2. Please **sanitise your hands on entering and leaving**
3. Please **maintain social distancing** as you enter and leave and within the building. I know you will all want to chat and sit together but please do so whilst following the current guidelines
4. Sadly for the time being **we cannot sing** during our services and, because of the restricted and enclosed space in the Tower, **bells cannot be rung**
5. To help with social distancing we have to **restrict access to some pews, and we ask to observe the signs and keep 2m apart from others who are not part of your household**
8. Please **wear a mask.**
9. **We cannot serve refreshments**, at the end of the service **the minister(s) will leave by the South Door and wait under the Lychgate**. This prevents any risk of a bottle neck at the church door but still allows you the opportunity to talk to the minister(s). Please leave the church when you feel comfortable and continue to observe social distancing.
10. We will not include a collection during the service, but our collection plates will be left out along with our digital card machine (and sanitiser) and **we welcome donations as you enter or leave**. Like everyone else over the last few months, our income has dropped because we have

not been able to receive collections (safe receipt and counting of monies will follow the latest guidelines.)

11. To continue to minimise risk **we have removed items** that might be touched by many hands such as visitor's books, pens, church leaflets and guides, and the toys and objects in the children's area. **Carers are welcome to bring their own books, crayons, soft toys etc for use by their own family.**

12. For the same reason we will remove the prayer request book and matches in All Souls Chapel. **Candles will be refreshed** and left in situ each day and we ask you to either light a candle from one that is already lit or **bring with you (and take away) your own matches** or lighter.

13. To help with social distancing and improve air flow and circulation **we will open both sets of double doors and keep them open as far as is possible during the service.**

13. To ensure that the pre-school can safely open and because we cannot safely monitor and clean both the Church and Toilets at once, **the Done Room will be locked and the toilets will remain closed**

14. We remain **unable to accept Food-bank donations** because Mid Cheshire Food-bank is not yet able to receive them other than through supermarkets. You can still donate with physical items in store as you do your own shopping or with cash online through their website.

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