

Emerging from Lockdown: Phase 3 Plan

(Based on Scottish Episcopal Church guidance date 14th August and earlier. This guidance is regularly updated – see <https://www.scotland.anglican.org/coronavirus-updates/>)

St John's Episcopal Church, Moray Street, Wick

Bringing the building back into use if not reopened in Phase 2

1. Describe the action taken to bring the building back into use.

Once agreement to re-open has been received, the following actions will be taken in both the church and hall. The buildings will be thoroughly cleaned. Water systems will be flushed. Heating will be checked and timers re-set. Printed materials such as bibles, hymn books and orders of service will be placed in a storage box. The leaflet stand will be covered over and taken out of use.

Use of building for communal (or public) worship for limited numbers

2. The Offer

It is proposed to hold a Eucharistic Service at 11.30am each Sunday, to last about an hour. It is also proposed to hold a Morning Prayer Service at 10.30am on the first Wednesday of the month, to last about an hour. To maintain social distancing, there is seating capacity for around 17 worshippers. Details of the constraints under which each service will operate will be circulated to the congregation via the Outlook magazine and on the website.

Signage will be posted at the entrance to the church and hall, advising of the need to maintain a two metre distance, wear a face covering and regular hand washing/sanitising. Signage will also state that visitors should not attend if they are displaying the symptoms of Covid-19. Visitors will be met at the entrance and their name and telephone number written down for Track and Trace. The privacy policy will be displayed on the noticeboard, confirming that Track and Trace details will be held confidentially for 21 days then destroyed. Anyone who does not wish to provide their details will be asked to leave.

3. Preliminary Considerations

Safety of volunteers and visitors is the prime consideration. A rota of stewards for each service will be drawn up. In the event of a steward not being able to take their place on the rota at the last minute, efforts will be made to fill that role. If this is not possible, the service will be cancelled on that date. It is recognised that many of our congregation have been in the shielding category during the lockdown. There will be no pressure placed on anyone to participate in the services and each individual must

make their own decision on whether to attend, assessing the risks according to their own circumstances.

If there is a Covid-19 outbreak in the congregation, the buildings will be returned to a care and maintenance basis and re-opening approval sought in due course. In this instance we will cooperate with Track and Trace authorities and provide details of those attending services.

There will be one steward on duty at each service to direct attendees to specific seats and register their details. The steward will also advise on the safety precautions such as wearing of face coverings. Individuals will be expected to provide their own face covering although a limited number of masks will be available if necessary.

Visitors will be asked not to enter the buildings if they display the symptoms of Covid-19.

Singing of hymns or parts of the service will not be permitted until advised by the Scottish Government that it is safe to do so. Music can be provided by playing the organ, but this is only to be played by one person. To reduce cross contamination, a blue book will be given to each person, to take home and bring back to the next service.

4. Hygiene Measures

When in use, the outer door of each building will be open to minimise surface touching. The inner door will be closed. Hand sanitiser and tissues will be available on entering or leaving the building. Hand sanitiser will be placed between the inner and outer doors of the church building and on immediately entering. If using tissues, visitors will be expected to take these away with them to minimise contact. A limited number of disposable face masks will be available.

The celebrant will take specific precautions with regards to hand sanitising and wearing a visor whilst conducting the service.

There is a toilet in the church hall. This is used by those attending church and hall functions. It is expected that use of the hall will be fairly limited in the short term. Signage will be placed in the toilet that individual users should take responsibility for cleaning the surfaces after use. One-time antibacterial wipes will be provided for this purpose. Paper towels will be used for hand drying. In addition, the toilet will be cleaned as part of the regular hall cleaning.

General cleaning of the church and hall will be carried out as usual. Cleaning will take place before the next service rather than after the last service, to allow time to elapse. This is to protect the cleaners from any active Covid-19 which will naturally decay after 72 hours. Anti-bacterial spray will be used on hard surfaces, and the soft furnishings sprayed with a suitable product. Kneelers will be removed from use.

5. Physical Distancing

Notices on each pew will indicate where the individual should sit to maintain the 2 metre social distancing required. The pews will be filled from the front, so there is not a requirement to pass in the aisle, as directed by the steward. At the end of the service, those at the back will leave first. Members of the same household do not require to social distance from each other, as long as the 2 metre distance is maintained from those outwith their household. Persons with their carers may sit together.

There will be no contact during the Peace. The collection plate will not be handed around the congregation, and there will not be an offertory procession.

Donations through direct debit or standing order will be promoted to regular attenders, to minimise handling of cash. For those unable to use this method or who prefer to make a cash donation, a donation box will be available on the font. Disposable gloves will be provided for counting of the collection.

6. During Communal Worship

The priest will be the only person in the sanctuary and vestry areas, with the exception of the organist. The priest will set up the altar and clear away at the end of the service. There will not be a server on duty to assist the priest.

Face coverings may be removed for the purpose of receiving communion or reading/intercessing. The lectern and pulpit will not be used, so readers should remain in their own pew and stand when reading. The priest will stand at the altar rail to deliver the sermon.

Specific guidance for celebrants will be in line with the liturgical guidance from the College of Bishops. A closed ciborium will be used for wafers. Communion will be in one kind only, with the priest consuming all of the priest's wafer and the wine from the chalice. The priest will take the wafer to each communicant, who will remain in their pew.

Use of the reserved sacrament is not currently possible. In the event of no priest being available, a service of Morning Prayer will be substituted.

7. After Worship

The steward will direct the congregation to maintain physical distancing whilst leaving the church, use the hand sanitiser and leave from the back of the church first. There will be no shared refreshments provided.

Once out of the building, the congregation should maintain the 2m distancing requirement whilst in the grounds.

The collection will be counted using disposable gloves and the amount entered in the register after using hand sanitiser. The register of services will be updated after use of hand sanitiser.

Cleaning will not take place until a suitable time period of at least 72 hours has elapsed.

Completed on behalf of the Vestry of St John's Scottish Episcopal Church by:

Name: Jeanette Harper

Position: Vestry Secretary

Date: 16 August 2020