

Monday, 20th December 2021

Dear Fellowship

Today the wardens and I got together to discuss our service arrangements over the coming week. The recent exponential rise in COVID-19, due to the latest omicron variant, requires us to increase our precautions to ensure all who attend our churches remain as safe as possible. The most recent government and Church of England advice is that we can still meet in person for worship and our PCC have approved an updated risk assessment to allow this.

At present we will also continue to offer the opportunity to join worship in person and using our online Zoom meetings. The decision on attendance is a personal one and must be made taking into consideration your own circumstances and over the Christmas period. At the moment we intend to meet for the following Christmas services:

Christmas Eve; Friday 24th December at 11:15 pm - without Holy Communion
Christmas Day; Saturday 25th December at 10:30 am - without Holy Communion
Boxing Day; Sunday 26th December at 10:30 am - normal Morning Worship

Ventilation; to minimise potential risk in our current worship area windows in the Hall and Dining Room will remain open, along with the doors to the foyer, to create maximum airflow. We will heat the building before and during services but advise people to come well wrapped-up.

Masks; in line with the guidance we insist on masking, except those who are clinically exempt (please wear your official NHS lanyard). Masks should be worn at all times in church, including when singing.

Social distancing; seating will be spaced to ensure suitable social distancing. Family groups can sit together but groups will be distanced by **2 metres**.

Planning to attend; the social distancing will limit church capacity and we therefore need those who would like to attend in person to contact the vicar (telephone or email). Details can be found in the Linksheet and on our website. When attending we will operate a one-way system for entry and exit, to limit queuing on the way out.

Testing; finally we ask everyone who is attending to take a Lateral Flow Antigen Test (LFT), no earlier than the night before attending a service. We will not be asking people for these results but are trusting to your own integrity and desire to keep one another safe.

We realise this is frustrating. We pray that this will allow us to worship and celebrate the birth of our saviour, Jesus, in a safe and considerate manner, to reduce the anxiety and concern of many during this ongoing pandemic situation and to avoid having to close the church in the event of someone contracting COVID. By implementing these measures, we aim to balance worship and safety for the fellowship, and do our part to slow the rise in hospitalizations and pressure on NHS going into the New Year.

With love in Christ Jesus, who is after all the 'reason for the season'.



Johannes Roth

Vicar

St Martin's Church

Suez Road (next to 127), via Radegund Road

Cambridge CB1 3QD

Vicar: (01223) 665 848

Email: vicar@stm.org.uk

Website: <http://stm.org.uk>