

What to expect when coming back to Church

Dear Parishioner,

'God is our refuge and strength' Psalm 46:1a

I am pleased to announce that we are now in the position that we are able to return to church this coming Sunday the 28th June.

I don't know about you but I have been looking forward to coming back together as church and it is wonderful that we can partake in corporate worship once again. But what this will look like will be quite different. I am writing to you in advance so that you may have the right expectations and know in advance how the service will work on Sunday.

As you are well and truly aware we are now in a 'new norm'. As much as we would love to, we are unable to go back to the way things were prior to COVID-19 outbreak. In line with new government regulations we have to do church differently for the foreseeable future.

From the outset I want to say if you are concerned for your health or have underlying health conditions and don't feel able to come to church at this time please don't feel pressured to do so.

We note that the Tasmanian Government currently advises that vulnerable people are encouraged to stay home and protect their health.

If you are in the vulnerable category you are encouraged to seek advice from your doctor. Meeting with others at church is important and valuable but please have a conversation with your doctor so you can make up your mind on what is safe in terms of maintaining your health.

Can I humbly ask if you are showing flu like symptoms please refrain from coming to the church service for the safety of others and we won't be able to let you into the building. If you are required to isolate or quarantine this will also mean you won't be able to attend church.

As on arrival at church you will be asked by the sidesperson on duty to read the notice on the door about whether you have been exposed to COVID-19 or are showing flu like symptoms. If the answer is 'yes' you will be politely asked to go home and won't be allowed into church.

When you come to the church can I also please ask that you maintain physical distancing of 1.5m from others at all times.

People from the same household will be able to sit together in church and will need to maintain 1.5m distance from people of a different household.

Hand sanitiser will be provided as you enter and exit the building. Everyone will be asked to sanitise their hands on entry.

We are also unable to hand out prayer books. The entire service will be on the screen. Due to the increased risk of potentially spreading the virus we are unable to sing in church for the foreseeable future.

These new restrictions about how we gather may be a bit overwhelming and I get that. But this is all part of the 'new norm' we have found ourselves in. We need to be seen to do due diligence and be in line with government regulations to ensure the physical health of the parishioners and the community as a whole.

I am confident that despite these new restrictions we can go forward and work towards building our Christian fellowship and seek to encourage one another to grow in our trust in the Lord Jesus as Lord and Saviour. I look forward to seeing you on Sunday.

God Bless

Revd James 'Dub' Gannon
Rector
Christ Church, Longford