

30 June 2020

To all Clergy, Secretaries, Diocesan Councillors

COVID-19 Update No. 8

Dear Friends in Christ,

As of Monday 29th June, South Australia will enter Step 3 of the Government's Roadmap for easing COVID-19 restrictions. As a result the density requirements for indoor spaces will be reduced to one person per two square metres. There is also no set maximum of people that are allowed to be in a space, it will be completely defined by the new density rule and the size of your worship space. We are however still being strongly encouraged to practice physical distancing of 1.5 metres wherever and whenever possible.

Religious Ceremonies are still classified as a "Defined public activity" and so we still need to have a COVID-Safe Plan completed and it should be available on your premises. Those that have already completed a COVID-Safe plan will not need to complete another one, you will have received an email from the Government with an updated version of your existing plan. If you do not yet have a COVID-Safe plan then you must complete one before services can recommence. The link to create a COVID-Safe plan and more information is available on the Government's website; <https://www.covid-19.sa.gov.au/recovery/create-a-covid-safe-plan>

Below are a few points that I provide information on as we continue with the easing of restrictions.

Contact Tracing Records

For the time being it is still necessary to keep a record of all the people who attend your services or activities. For convenience I again attach the form the Government has produced to assist with this recording, but very simply we need to note the date, the person's name, the time, and a means of contact (ie. a phone number) should contact tracing be necessary. These records should be kept in a secure location and then destroyed after 30 days – not simply put in the bin.

Singing and Hymn Books

Other states and countries have put a ban on singing during worship. The SA Government has said that it is fine for us to continue singing, as long as we maintain our social distance. This does bring about a complication if you are using Hymn books though. Handling a book by one person is fine but they can't be passed from person to person, so they can't be handed out at the door. This also applies to bibles and prayer books or service sheets. Once used, they mustn't be touched by anyone else for a week. That means if there is more than one service on a Sunday, the books that have already been used cannot be used in subsequent ones.



The Collection

Taking a collection during a service is fine but the plate should not be passed from person to person. If possible, the plate should be available for people to use on their way into or out of the service – not on the way up for Communion. People counting money should use gloves and ensure that they wash their hands. If people have been able to give electronically over the last few months, they should be encouraged to continue to do so.

Passing of the Peace

To continue maintaining our social distance there should still be NO passing of the peace during the service. The phrase, “the Lord be with you” should simply be responded to with “and also with you.” Similarly, any greeters/welcomers should not be shaking hands when people arrive, and neither should the Priest at the conclusion of the service.

Holy Communion

Communion continues to only be permitted in one kind – the wafer. There is no indication when the regulations concerning the common cup at Communion will differ but we will keep an eye out for any changes.

Morning Tea

As I said in the previous update, I am happy for morning teas to be held after services now. It is important that people do not share utensils though so this should be considered.

Cleaning after services and other gatherings

This should be continued as recommended by the authorities and outlined in your COVID-Safe plans.

We are being urged not to become complacent as the restrictions are eased and so as the Church we should continue to do our part within our communities. Wash your hands or use hand sanitiser frequently, sneeze or cough into your elbow, maintain a physical distance from people outside of your household, and if you are feeling unwell then please stay at home.

With continued prayers,



The Right Reverend Keith Dalby
Bishop of The Murray