

## **Restoration of Worship Post-COVID-19**

V1.4 5<sup>th</sup> December 2020

Westoning Baptist Church

This policy has been developed following the closure of Westoning Baptist Church for services of worship since Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2020 due to government restrictions to prevent the spread of the COVID-19 virus and after the second 4 week lockdown lasting until 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2020.

COVID-19 Risk Assessment is attached and has been shared with the members and congregation uploaded to the website

### **1. Shielding and COVID-19 symptoms**

- 1.1. Anyone who is shielding due to being clinically vulnerable should follow government and medical guidance regarding whether they attend services – online access will be available.
- 1.2. No one with symptoms of COVID-19 – high temperature, persistent cough or loss of taste or smell should attend services – a notice to this effect is on the front door.

### **2. Register**

- 2.1. A temporary register will be kept of people attending the services in order to support the NHS Test and Trace service – name and contact telephone number and/or email address
- 2.2. All records will be destroyed after 21 days

### **3. Social distancing**

- 3.1. We will maintain 2m distance as much as possible between individuals and households at all services.
- 3.2. The maximum number that can attend is set as 20 family groups – including utilising the Sunday school rooms and vestibule.
- 3.3. On entering and exiting the building there is a one way system and a 2m distanced queue will be maintained using floor markings
- 3.4. Pews will be sectioned off to ensure 2m distancing and pews designated for visitors
- 3.5. All services will take place in the chapel sanctuary
- 3.6. The Sunday school room will also be set up for social distanced seating for those that need to use it during services.
- 3.7. All worshippers will wear a face covering in accordance with the law unless exempt.

### **4. Tiers**

- 4.1. Social distancing guidelines will be adhered to at all times and the rules will be kept according to which tier Westoning is placed in.
- 4.2. Tier 1 – No groups larger than 6 people indoors or outdoors. (apart from those in a bubble larger than 6)
- 4.3. Tier 2 and tier 3 – there will be no mingling with people indoors unless they are in your bubble

4.4. Tier 3 – No mingling outside with people who are not in your bubble.

## **5. Hand hygiene**

5.1. Hand hygiene posters are on display in the toilets and kitchen

5.2. Paper towels are provided in toilets and kitchens

5.3. Hand sanitiser must be used on the way in and out with automatic dispensers provided.

## **6. Reduce risk of cross-infection**

6.1. All communal items have been removed, including pulpit Bible

6.2. Ministers must bring their own bible

6.3. Attendees to be provided with their own hymn book and Bible to keep or bring their own

6.4. If hymnsheets are provided – each individual takes and keeps their own, removing them at the end of the service to dispose of at home

6.5. Attendees sit in the same seats – as individuals or families and additional seats marked for visitors (as below - 11)

6.6. Windows and doors to be kept open as much as possible without impacting worship

6.7. If anyone requires water during the service they should bring their own bottle

6.8. The Sunday school rooms, vestry, hall and chapel will be set up so that there is reduced risk of infection and cleaning burden – e.g. unnecessary furniture put out of use and toys removed from use.

6.9. The coat rack has been removed

## **7. Cleaning**

7.1. All frequently touched surfaces cleaned regularly – including door handles, and pews

7.2. Waste to be disposed of safely – double bagged and left for 72 hours before going into the household waste – disposable gloves will be worn for waste disposal

7.3. Appropriate PPE will be provided for cleaning – including gloves and apron.

7.4. All those involved in cleaning will be sent online link to training videos for donning and doffing PPE

7.5. Separate guidance has been written for the weekly cleaning procedures

## **8. Over 70s and shielders**

8.1. Over 70s are advised to stay at home as much as possible and to minimise contact with people outside their household.

8.2. Shielding individuals have been issued guidance by the government

## **9. Online services**

9.1. Online services will continue to be provided for those who are unable to attend due to illness or shielding

## **10. Toilets**

10.1. It is encouraged to avoid using the church toilets – the one way system must be used.

10.2. Wipes will be provided in the toilets – please use one to wipe the toilet flush and then the seat after use and dispose in the bin, use a second wipe to clean the door handles and then dispose in the bin.

10.3. Always wash your hands well after use following hand hygiene guidance

## **11. Visiting preachers**

11.1. Preachers should bring their own Bible and hymn book or be provided with one to keep

11.2. The children's talk should be conducted from the pulpit

11.3. Water will be provided for the preacher with good hygiene procedures

11.4. The preacher may stand outside to greet people at a social distance if he wishes to do so, avoiding creating a queue in the chapel

11.5. Visiting preachers will be provided for as they choose – either remaining at chapel or entertained at someone's home whilst maintaining social distancing.

## **12. Vestry**

12.1. The vestry chairs are wipeable and cleaned whenever a different preacher is engaged to preach

12.2. The vestry window will be opened

12.3. The vestry toilet will be cleaned each week as usual, including the door handles

## **13. Visitors**

13.1. Visitors are very welcome at services

13.2. On arrival visitors will be made aware of the church Covid-19 rules – not to attend with any Covid-19 symptoms, hand hygiene and social distancing.

13.3. There will be designated pews for visitors to use.

13.4. These will be wiped down after each service.

13.5. Visitors will be provided with a hymn book and Bible to keep if they do not bring their own.

13.6. If visitors insist on returning the Bible or hymn book, these must be quarantined for 48 hours – a quarantine box is provided dated for when the items can be reused.

## **14. Lord's supper**

14.1. We hold the Lords Supper at the close of the service. Those who wish to leave via the one way system may do so. Those staying shall remain in their seats. The procedures outlined elsewhere for services shall apply.

14.2. Bread will be pre broken and put into individual pots sealed pots and wine put in cups with sealed lids prior to the service. The person doing so will wear a mask and gloves.

14.3. The bread pot and the wine glass will be distributed to the seats where members sat in the morning by the person who prepared them, with their mask and gloves on.

14.4. The bread and wine will be available to pick up from the table in the entrance hall on entry to the building for any members who were not present in the morning.

14.5. The celebrant will have his own bread and wine, and will only break a piece for himself during the service.

14.6. The bread pots and wine cups will be taken by the member to the exit where they will be disposed of in a bin bag, which will be dealt with in accordance to the cleaning procedure.

### **15. Special services, Baptisms, weddings and funerals**

15.1. Numbers are limited.

15.2. These will be conducted in accordance with our Covid-19 rules and a specific risk assessment will be carried out as the need arises.

### **16. Singing and music**

16.1. Congregational singing is not permitted indoors.

16.2. The organ may be played but must be cleaned before and after use with screen wipes.

16.3. If worship takes place outdoors, the congregation may join in with singing. Congregation members must continue to follow social distancing.

### **17. Sunday school**

17.1. For children aged 5-18 years old.

17.2. No children should attend if they have symptoms of coronavirus

17.3. No more than 15 children will be in a class

17.4. A register will be kept of attendees and stored for 21 days for Test and Trace purposes

17.5. Hand hygiene will be used on arrival and after Sunday school

17.6. Face coverings do not need to be worn during Sunday school

17.7. Children and adults will sit socially distanced

17.8. Children can bring their own drink and snack

17.9. Children should bring their own Bible, pens and workbook

17.10. Surfaces will be cleaned before and after Sunday school

17.11. Tissues and a bin will be provided so children can 'catch it, bin it, kill it'

17.12. Church leaders must be informed if a child develops symptoms of coronavirus within 3 days of attending Sunday school

### **18. Other Matters**

18.1. Face coverings will be compulsory from 8<sup>th</sup> August.

18.2. Discourage cash giving – gloves used to handle cash offerings.

18.3. The first aid box is available and where possible should be administered by a member of the same bubble.

18.4. Qualified first aiders should not carry out mouth to mouth resuscitation if emergency CPR is needed – only chest compressions.

18.5. The water system will be flushed through all the taps for at least 5 minutes prior to re-opening the chapel on July 4<sup>th</sup>.

## **19. COVID-19 Cases**

19.1. If anyone has symptoms of COVID-19 after attending the church they should inform Martin Hare.

19.2. The church will take advice from Public Health England on handling any cases linked with worship.

### **References:**

Cleaning guidelines: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-decontamination-in-non-healthcare-settings/covid-19-decontamination-in-non-healthcare-settings>

Government church guidelines <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-for-the-safe-use-of-places-of-worship-during-the-pandemic/covid-19-guidance-for-the-safe-use-of-places-of-worship-during-the-pandemic>

New government guidelines <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-for-the-safe-use-of-places-of-worship-from-4-july/covid-19-guidance-for-the-safe-use-of-places-of-worship-from-4-july>

Government guidelines December 2<sup>nd</sup> [COVID-19: guidance for the safe use of places of worship from 2 December - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-for-the-safe-use-of-places-of-worship-from-2-december/covid-19-guidance-for-the-safe-use-of-places-of-worship-from-2-december)