

# AMERSHAM FREE CHURCH

## CHURCH SERVICE PROTOCOLS from 10<sup>th</sup> September 2021

*Original Approved by Elders on 13<sup>th</sup> July 2021*

Following the lifting of all restrictions concerning church worship we need to put in place protocols so that both congregation and stewards know what to expect.

1. The building will still be thoroughly ventilated with all side windows being open. The outside doors in the Sanctuary Vestibule will be left on 'permanent open' after the service whilst the ministers greet the departing congregation, thus giving greater ventilation at a 'gathering point'? This provision to be reviewed as time goes on.
2. Hymn books, service sheets and bible to be used once more. Stewards could either give out the hymn books and service sheets, or direct people to take copies from the table. The congregation are asked to return the hymn books to the table as they leave.
3. The offering will no longer be collected, but it will be presented during the service.
4. Although the wearing of face masks and the use of the hand sanitisers will no longer be obligatory, both the sanitisers and spare face masks will continue to be available.
5. We intend to set aside some physically distanced seating. Therefore, we will mark the last three rows as being available for those who wish to sit, physically distanced and wearing a face mask without singing. Stewards need to monitor. This provision to be reviewed as time goes on.
6. The back three rows will leave first as directed by stewards, socially distanced. The rest of the congregation will revert to leaving the service in their usual way, we will no longer suggest doing so one row at a time. (Amended September 2021)
7. Congregational singing was reintroduced from July 25<sup>th</sup> 2021 for all except the back three rows.
8. For the time being the ministers will not extend a handshake greeting, instead we will smile and nod! However, if folk extend their hand, we will be pleased to shake it. This provision to be reviewed as time goes on.
9. Holy Communion will be served by the elders wearing masks in just one distribution, using cups and plates together – at least until the end of the year. The Communion elements will be placed in the holders of the Physically Distanced rows at the back and not included in the elders' distribution. This provision will be reviewed as time goes on. (amended September 2021)

10. Whilst recognising that not everyone will want to stay behind for coffee, we need to make the following clear. After Service Coffee will be served, from July 25<sup>th</sup> 2021, exactly as before – there are no restrictions about queueing or requirements that only table service is offered. There will be both a seating and standing area and mingling, rather than physical distancing, will occur. These arrangements are made clear on forthcoming notice sheets giving folk the information they need to decide whether or not they attend After Service Coffee.

11. All of the above are subject to change as further guidelines are issued by both the Government and the URC/Baptist Union.

Revised following elders' meeting September 10<sup>th</sup> 2021