

# “When you come to worship”

a guide to good practice by worshippers, and what to expect  
*Advent 2021 Version – following reintroduction of some restrictions.*

*Public worship while COVID-19 is still among us is both a joy and a responsibility. It comes with risks: for ourselves, for those immediately around us, and for the wider community. The steps that we all take need to work in combination to keep risks to a minimum. This document sets out the main principles and the practice we adopt.*

## Basic Principles

- We do not leave home if we or someone in our household is displaying symptoms of the virus, or has tested positive on a lateral flow test, or if Track and Trace requires it.
- We take care to keep distance from other to reduce the chances of transmission. This is normally at least a metre.
- We are regular in our hand-washing and sanitizing.
- We touch as few surfaces as we can.
- Apart from when leading worship, preaching, or reading/praying at the lectern, face coverings must be worn. Those who are singing in the choir may remove their coverings to perform (and, if they struggle to sing, in congregational items); but the congregation should not remove face coverings to sing.

To support these things, the church will provide sanitizer and arrange seating to maintain distance of at least one metre, and will also ensure that some ventilation will be in place, proportionate to the size of the congregation and the different natural ventilation patterns of our two buildings. The church is not currently maintaining track and trace records but may reintroduce them if it seems appropriate (or required) to do so. The crèche areas are available for use, though resources there are still a little limited.

## Arrival

At many of our services, the numbers arriving may cause no great difficulty. But it is good to observe this practice.

- Do arrive in good time: the pace at which people can enter church will may be slower than normal.
- Bellringers & choir members aside, please enter by the North door.
- Please ensure you are wearing a face covering and keeping distance as you enter.
- Please use hand sanitizer on entering (and leaving) the building and after touching surfaces likely to have been touched by others.

- Please take care to maintain some distance when gathering with others, whether inside or outside.
- Please touch handrails and furniture as little as you can.
- Please place cash and envelopes directly in the collection plate opposite the entrance door
- Please do not stop to talk in the area around the North Door – this allows others to move in and out freely.
- If you need a gluten-free wafer, please ensure that one of the clergy knows well before the service starts. At St Neots Sunday 9.30a.m. you are advised to sit on the North side of church.
- If you carry sanitizer with you, you are encouraged to sanitize your hands immediately before and after receiving communion.
- If you need to leave church while others are entering, please take care to maintain some distance as you approach.

### **8 a.m. Sunday Communion at St Neots (BCP)**

The service is at the Nave Altar (or led from the lectern with consecration at the High Altar). The congregation sits in the front half of the Nave. It is OK to sit with a person from another household, but you may wish to keep some distance.

If you have the order of service issued first in July 2020, please bring it with you if you can, and take it away again for re-use. Fresh booklets will be available if you don't have one. Please do not hand booklets to others.

When you have responses and prayers to say, please say them clearly and audibly, but quietly. Please try to avoid loud responses.

Communion is administered in one kind (bread) only, into the outstretched hand, after words of distribution are said to all from the platform. It will be brought to you in your seat.

### **9.30 a.m. Sunday Communion at St Neots (CW Order One)**

This is with singing. A Sunday School ('Little Saints') restarted in the Autumn of 2021, and takes place during the first half of the service on the 2<sup>nd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> Sundays of the month during school term. On those Sundays, children go to the Church Rooms during the first hymn, and return to Church in time for the Eucharistic Prayer.

**Pews are not necessarily for one household only, though you may want to keep a little distance between households.**

Seating is on those pews that are not taped off, right round the Nave, as well as the chairs against the back wall. Robed choir members sit in the Chancel (without procession, for the time being). We hope that this will be sufficient for the numbers, but if we find that we are reaching capacity, we may have to say that we can't admit people.

If you have the order of service issued first in 2020, please bring it with you, and take it away again for re-use. Fresh booklets will be available at the desk if you don't have one. Please don't hand booklets to others.

When you have responses and prayers to say, please say them clearly and audibly, but quietly. Please try to avoid loud responses.

Communion is in one kind only (bread), into the outstretched hand.

All members of the congregation in all parts of the church (including choir), will receive communion in their seats. You can sit or stand for that as you prefer. If you are sitting at a distance from an aisle and can move closer to the aisle end to receive, please do so. Please bear in mind that administration across a poppyhead pew-end can be a little awkward, and please do not make it necessary for an administrant to reach across one person to communicate another.

At the end of the service, the North Door is the main exit, but you may leave by the Tower (two big steps!) if you need to exit quickly. Please sanitise your hands on leaving. Sometimes the ministers will be outside, sometimes inside. It is OK to engage in conversation in the building, but please try to avoid creating blockages or crowds.

## **11 a.m. Sunday Communion at Eynesbury (CW Order One)**

This is with singing. The congregation sits on the pews that aren't taped off. In each block there is one pew which is long enough for two households to sit on them with substantial distancing.

If you have the order of service issued first in 2020, please bring it with you, and take it away again for re-use. Fresh booklets will be available at the desk if you don't have one. Please do not hand booklets to others.

When you have responses and prayers to say, please say them clearly and audibly, but quietly. Please try to avoid loud responses.

Communion is in one kind only (bread) into the outstretched hand.

All members of the congregation in all parts of the church, will receive communion in their seats. You can sit or stand for that as you prefer. If you are sitting at a distance from an aisle and can move closer to the aisle end to

receive, please do so. Please bear in mind that administration across a pew-end can be a little awkward, and please do not make it necessary for an administrant to reach across one person to communicate another.

At the end of the service, the main exit is the North Door, but you may leave by the South Door (big step!) in an emergency. Please sanitise your hands on leaving. Sometimes the ministers will be outside, sometimes inside. It is OK to engage in conversation in the building, but please try to avoid creating blockages or crowds.

### **Midweek Communions at 9.30a.m. (CW Order One)**

The midweek communions at St Neots on Wednesdays & Fridays and at Eynesbury on Thursdays adopt the same basic principles and general procedures. The seating will be on pews in the front half of the Nave: communion will be brought to you in your seat.

### **And finally**

We will continue not to place a large quantity of markers on floors. We are trusting that people will understand the importance of distance, both inside and outside church, and especially in the vicinity of doorways and the main aisles.