

Northallerton Evangelical Church

Public Worship Policy after 19th July

We have considered the advice of the Government and taken into account what other churches and church bodies are recommending. Overwhelmingly it is clear that we should proceed with caution and take due note of local circumstances. Covid-19 has not gone away so it is important to remember that the actions we take will not only help to keep us safe but will help to keep others safe as well.

At present in the North East we are seeing huge rises in the infection rate: Redcar & Cleveland now has the highest rate in the country, Middlesbrough and Stockton are in the top five and Hambleton has seen large increases over the last week or two.

With this in mind our updated policy is:

- to use hand sanitiser,
- to maintain good ventilation of the building
- to continue to keep track and trace details for the time being
- to maintain reasonable social distancing indoors
- to wear a face covering when entering or leaving the building and when moving about inside. If you wish to remove your face covering whilst seated you may do so.
- to avoiding mingling indoors.
- After the Service: if speaking outside after the service is difficult for you, then another option would be to talk inside with your face covering on.
- not to sing for the time being. Once infection rates locally have come down we will reconsider singing. Initially this will be done softly and face covering will be worn whilst singing.
- If you have symptoms of Covid-19 you should not attend a church service

We know that some may be in favour of a faster lifting of restrictions, but please bear in mind that we have to show due diligence in our Risk Assessment and an understanding of the current local risks. In regard to face coverings please remember that their main purpose is to protect others and that about one in three people with Covid-19 do not have symptoms and could be passing on the virus without knowing it. Any one of us could be such a person. Please remember too that no vaccine is 100% effective and it is estimated that around 10% of fully vaccinated people might still contract the disease. That is why for the time being our Policy is that everyone should wear a face covering whilst entering or leaving or moving about within the church building.

Whilst in prison at Rome, Paul wrote to the Christian Church at Ephesus (consisting of both Jews and Gentiles) and urged them

to walk in a manner worthy of the calling with which you have been called. Live with all humility, gentleness, and patience, bearing with one another in love. Make every effort to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. Eph 4:1:3