

THE DIOCESE OF THE WINDWARD ISLANDS

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The Rt. Rev'd C. Leopold Friday, B.A., M.A.

Review of Guidelines for resuming services

You are being kindly asked to do the following:

- Post several signs at and near the entrance(s) and Inside the Church alerting members of the protocols from the Ministry of Health regarding COVID-19 and that they must follow the 6ft distancing at all times.
- Announce social/physical distancing expectations periodically.
- Ensure that 6 feet social/physical distancing is maintained within aisles, between pews/seating rows (front, sides and back)
- Avoid having different members/ persons using the same Bible/Prayer book for reading lessons or saying prayers. If a lectern is used have it sanitized after each person uses it.
- Avoid using the pulpit for preaching unless you are wearing a face mask (remember the virus is spread from droplets and the higher you are may allow them to travel further or to fall on anyone sitting close to the pulpit). When preaching from the lectern wear a face mask or ensure the nearest person is 10 to 12ft away from you.
- Avoid holding hands during the service/prayers.
- Avoid handshakes as a form of greeting/sign of peace.
- Avoid hugging and greeting with a kiss

- Modify the method for collecting offering i.e. instead of passing round a collection tray/basket: - Use a stationary collection box or extended (poled) collection bags by an usher
- The Sanctuary Party wash their hands with liquid soap and running water or use a hand sanitizer that contains at least 70% alcohol prior to conducting the service and before the Eucharistic Prayer and after the service. The Sanctuary Party must maintain the 6 feet social/physical distancing when processing and at all times.
- Communion is to be administered in one kind (Body) with the celebrant consuming the blood.
- Ensure that the 6 feet social/physical distancing is maintained during the administration of Holy Communion.
- Maintain the requisite number of people in the church according to the size and adhering to the 6 feet social/physical distancing.
- Wash hands after handling offering
- Clean and sanitize highly touched areas and items before and after each service. (Pews, chairs, lectern, tables, surfaces, door knobs).
- Where there is more than one service in the same house of prayer/building please ensure that there is an interval of at least one hour between services.
- Provide sanitizing stations for congregation entering and leaving the building.
- Churches are asked to provide liquid soap and or an alcohol-based sanitising gel and paper towels for use in bathrooms.

- Ensure that there is no gathering inside or outside of the church, before or after services.
- Sanitise members hands before they receive Communion.
- All children attending services should be accompanied by a parent/guardian.
- Blessing of Children – Ask children to stand where they are sitting with their parents/guardians and say a prayer of blessing from the Altar rails then proceed to sprinkle them with Holy Water.
- If there will be singing during the service encourage all members to wear a face mask, since the virus is spread through droplets and singing tends to make them to be airborne for a longer distance. Social/physical distancing ten to twelve feet is recommended without a face mask. The celebrant should wear a mask as well once he or she cannot maintain this distance while singing or preaching.
- Inform your members and visitors of the following: - anyone who has symptoms of acute respiratory illness should stay at home. – if you are sick, have a fever or signs of a fever, and any other flu like symptoms- the vulnerable are encouraged to stay at home. Members who have recently returned from overseas and are under quarantine- Members who have been in close contact with someone infected by COVID-19 should stay at home.
- Put some measures in place for anyone who falls or feels ill during the service. Earmark a particular place (Sick-Bay with basic equipment and have someone to be responsible for it) in the church where they can be cared for and stay until they can be taken home or to a health facility as may be required.
- Appoint a committee of one, two or three members to observe how well members/people are responding to the protocols and to advise on where there are strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats and make recommendations.

- Clergy are asked to be pastorally sensitive in your response to the concerns of parishioners and people, generally.
- Best hygiene practices are to be observed in all pastoral contacts.

Funerals

- Guidelines for Funerals will follow those above which includes the celebration of the Holy Eucharist (Please inform the family of the number of persons who can be present in the church following the 6ft social/physical distancing stipulation above).

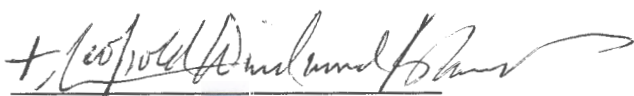
Weddings

- Guidelines with regards to weddings will follow those given above along with the following: The Bridal party should be restricted to the Bride and Groom, The Father-giver, Best-man and Chief Bridesmaid. They along with the officiant are expected to wear a face mask.
- During the signing of the register each person will sanitise their hands before signing. Different pens are to be used for signing or if it's a single pen it must be sanitised after each use. A sheet of paper towel must be placed in the register and removed/replaced after each person signs.
- After the giving and/exchange of a ring/rings the officiant is to sanitise his/her hands or put on gloves before joining together the right hands of the bride and groom and saying: "Those whom God has joined- Let no one separate." The gloves should be removed after the blessing.
- There should be no hugging, kissing or shaking of hands in congratulating the newly wed.

Guidelines For Baptisms

- The parent with whom the infant resides is to hold the child throughout.
- The 6ft Social/physical distance at this time should be maintained.

- The parent should hold the child over the font while the priest/deacon pours the water.
- The priest/deacon should put on a glove or sanitise his/her hands with liquid soap and running water (poured water) before signing with the sign of the cross.
- The priest/deacon alone should hold the prayer book and rest it on the font as appropriate since covid-19 is spread by droplets and a server can be placed in danger.
- The Priest should wear a face mask during the rite of baptism.
- Godparents should wear a face mask as well.
- The Candle should be collected before the service to have it sanitised and the priest/deacon alone, after sanitizing his or her hands, should light it and give it to the parent.
- Having more than one baptism at the same service should be avoided, unless they are from the same household.



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