

Friends: A Note on Coronavirus (Covid-19)

Our prayers continue to be with those who have been deeply affected by Coronavirus, those who are or have been sick, those isolated, for health specialists and authorities who are combating the spread of infection, and of course for all who at this time are feeling anxious.

As Christians, let us not be afraid. We are rightly more focused on keeping others well. While no one looks forward to it, we are not a people who are afraid of becoming ill. We are people of faith, and common sense. The widespread transmission of the virus across the globe is becoming “more likely”. The advice about the conduct of services, sharing the Peace, Holy Communion and so on is shared below and is being continually reviewed and may be updated.

Although concerns are heightened, the risk to the public remains moderate. There are now more cases reported in a wider number of areas, but the number of cases remains small and preparations and awareness are more and more in place.

What about Church?

If you are feeling well, you should make every effort to join in community for worship. If you are feeling under the weather, remain home.

Holy Communion

While it is our faith that the sacraments are a means of grace and not of sickness, they are physically ministered, and we should take physical care. As well as the specific concern about Coronavirus, this advice is generally applicable for all infectious disease.

1. **Wash Hands.** Clergy presiding at the Eucharist, communion administrators and servers are reminded to wash hands. We will use of hand sanitizers immediately before the Preparation of the Table and Eucharistic prayer. Hands will be washed regularly with soap especially when engaged in pastoral visitation.
2. **Do not intinct.** Because hands can be as much a source of pathogens as lips, intinction - dipping the bread into the wine - is no safer than drinking and can introduce germs into the cup.
3. **Consider receiving Holy Communion in one Kind.** It is Anglican teaching that to receive the sacrament in one kind only (i.e. just the bread) is to receive the sacrament in its entirety. Communicants who feel ill or not wish to drink from the chalice ought to receive the consecrated bread alone. No problem.
4. **The Common Cup** There is no need at this stage to cease offering the chalice to the congregation. When I preside, I will always receive *last* from the Chalice as a sign and

witness. I have always received in this way for 30 years and I am rarely down with a cold or flu.

5. **The Peace.** At this time there is no need to refrain from sharing the Peace, though hugs and greeting with a kiss may be avoided. Pastoral sensitivity should be shown to those who would rather not touch hands. So for the remainder of Lent, our greetings will be less demonstrative than usual.
6. **Visiting.** Pastoral visitors to homes and hospitals will observe all precautions in personal hygiene before and after such visits.

In general, we are a loving and courageous people who don't scare easy. All obvious caution is borne from a compassion for others. Being gathered together as the Body of Christ is essential to our identity and I look forward to our community worship with even more focus than ever before.