



July 2021

Dear Friends,

Worship at St Leonard's from July 25th.

On 19th July we reach Step 4 of the Government's route map out of Lockdown. This step removes all legal restrictions on social contact, and places responsibility on individuals to make decisions regarding their own safety.

At St. Leonard's we've been thinking carefully about how we will respond to this change, in a spirit which enables us to embrace a fuller range of activities relating to worship, while looking after all members of our congregation.

The vaccine rollout has been remarkable. Although cases are rising, they are not translating into serious illness, hospital admission or death in the same way as high case numbers did before the vaccine was with us. This is partly because those contracting the virus now are overwhelmingly children, or adults who have yet to be vaccinated.

I've been discussing St. Leonard's future patterns of worship with the PCC, the Wardens and the Clergy and Staff teams. We've prayerfully considered a range of factors affecting how members of the congregation might feel about a change to patterns of worship: vaccination status, age, health, and anxiety levels have all been important aspects of our thinking.

I'm pleased to let you all know the PCC has agreed that from Sunday July 25th, we shall return to our historic patterns of worship at St Leonard's:

8am – Spoken Eucharist

10am – Sung Eucharist (also livestreamed)

4.30pm – Choral Evensong (not during August)

Wednesday 12 noon – Spoken Eucharist

Our seating capacity at St Leonard's is **220**, plus space on the gallery. Before lockdown, our average Sunday attendance at services did not exceed 120, so we're confident that the only act of worship where social distancing may be difficult is the 10am Eucharist.

Those who are seeking a greater level of reassurance can:

- Attend at **8am**, for **Evensong** and on **Wednesdays**. These services will always enable social distancing to be maintained. This provides for both those who would like to receive the Eucharist and for those who enjoy hearing the choir.
- Tune into the **Live stream of the 10am**, which we shall continue for the foreseeable future.

- Make use of the **gallery**. Reserved spaces will be here for those who request a socially distanced seat during the 10am Eucharist. You can do this by speaking to one of the Church Wardens or emailing the Parish Office.

Church layout

The main visible difference from will be that the Church will return to a **full seating layout** from Sunday 25th and people will need to choose where they wish to sit, with the support of our sidespeople, who will help those who feel the need to maintain social distance.

Children's church

An important reason for returning to this layout is that **Children's Church** depends on the Unity Chapel being available and we will need to move the chairs out! A knock-on effect of the pandemic was the loss of families with children at services. Children are a vital part of our congregation and getting them back into our main act of worship on a Sunday is very important.

Mask wearing, ventilation and sanitisation

There will be some who will wish to continue wearing masks after it is no longer mandatory and others who cannot wait to ditch their masks!

Until all adults have been offered both vaccinations, we will continue to wear our face coverings whilst at the 10am Eucharist. We anticipate that this will be until mid-September.

There will be no need for masks at either Evensong, 8am or on Wednesdays as there is plenty of room for us to socially distance, if we have concerns. However, if you're attending one of these services and would like to wear a mask, please feel free to do whatever makes you comfortable.

We shall continue to leave the doors and windows open wherever possible and there will be plenty of hand sanitiser available throughout the building.

Congregational singing

We can sing again!

This is wonderful news as singing is such an integral part of our worship and extremely good for us.

It will feel a little strange singing from behind a mask, but I'm sure it's a challenge we can all rise to!

I hope that this update serves to reassure you all that we will continue to do everything that we can to journey out of this difficult period, conscious of each other's needs.

This is a great opportunity to work on the greatest commandment!

If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to be in touch with me or one of the Wardens.

With love and prayers,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Anna". The script is cursive and fluid, with a large initial 'A'.