



21st July 2021

Dear members and everyone in our wider fellowship,

Moving out of COVID-19 related restrictions

As I'm sure you are aware, the Government lifted all restrictions that were in place in order to reduce the spread of the COVID-19 virus on Monday 19th July. Trustees and Elders met last Wednesday to discuss the implications of this for Battle Baptist Church, and I am writing to you on their behalf to set out how we plan to move forward.

Over the summer period, we plan to gradually ease some of the measures that we have in place at the church, and we anticipate that all restrictions *may* be lifted from Sunday 12th September – subject to careful review.

There are some over-arching principles affecting attendance that remain in place:

- Please do not attend if you have symptoms of COVID-19 or have had them in the past 14 days.
- We ask that everyone who attends takes personal responsibility to:
 - Follow Government guidance on self-isolation after symptoms and / or positive test;
 - Follow Government guidance on returning from foreign travel;
 - Engage with the NHS Test and Trace system.
- We ask people who are clinically vulnerable to consider carefully whether they should attend.

Gathering on Sundays

There is no longer any restriction on the number of people who can attend church services. However, seats will continue to be spaced out more than pre-COVID times. It may be that some people wish to maintain social distancing, to protect their own health, or indeed the health of family members. The Baptist Union comments that, 'In some respects it was easier [to organise worship] when rules were more restrictive but at least definite,' and calls upon us all to:

'Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love. Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace.' (Ephesians 4:2,3)

This exhortation is central to the decision-making process of Trustees and Elders.

Battle Baptist Church, Mount Street, Battle, East Sussex TN33 0EG
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Registered Charity number: 1134288



If you choose to attend church in person, we ask you to abide by the following:

- Let the office know in advance if you plan to attend.
- Be aware that you may be seated in the Manna House if the chapel is full.
- Continue to sanitise your hands on entry to the premises.
- Continue to wear a face mask when moving around the premises.
- Keep your face mask on whilst singing.
- Continue to sit in household bubbles.
- Please do not socialise in the chapel – at the end of the service you are welcome to move outside to chat with friends.

We are no longer asking you to wear a face mask when sitting down in the chapel or Manna House (unless you are singing), although you may of course choose to do so. There are no longer restrictions on the number of people using the toilets in the Manna House. For the time being, Stewards will continue to be in place to ensure that these ongoing restrictions are adhered to.

We will not be serving refreshments over the summer period: we hope that this can start again from 12th September.

Services will of course continue to be broadcast online.

Meeting in small groups at the church

The use of the church is no longer restricted to meeting for worship or prayer alone. We ask that everyone using the premises should:

- Sign in (either as an individual using the folders provided, or via your group leader who will give a list of attendees to the office). This is so that we know who has been in and when.
- Use hand sanitiser on entry to the premises.
- Maintain social distancing as far as is possible.

We are not asking you to wear face masks unless you are singing. If refreshments are to be served, we ask that one person, having sanitised their hands again, makes the drinks for everyone in the group and serves the drinks to individuals where they are sitting.

Trustees and Elders are conscious that the number of COVID-19 cases is rising rapidly at present. Given their responsibility for the safety of those attending church, for staff, and for any visitors, they take the view that retaining some measures to restrict the spread of the virus is sensible.

Please do get in touch with me in the first instance if you have any questions about anything in this letter.

Yours faithfully,

Jo Reeves
Church Administrator

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