



30th November 2021

Dear members and everyone in our wider fellowship,

COVID-19 Pandemic: Responding to the emergence of the Omicron variant

As you will doubtless be aware, a new variant of Coronavirus has been identified and the first cases have been found in the UK. The Government is adopting a cautious approach as scientists try to find out more about the characteristics of the Omicron variant, and, as a temporary measure for the next three weeks, anyone deemed to have been a close contact of someone with the Omicron variant must isolate for ten days regardless of vaccination status.

Trustees discussed the new situation at their meeting on Monday 29th November, and I am writing to you on their behalf to reiterate the over-arching principles affecting attendance at Battle Baptist Church:

- Please do not come to the church if you have symptoms of COVID-19 or have had them in the past 14 days.
- We ask that everyone who comes here takes personal responsibility to:
 - Follow Government guidance on self-isolation after symptoms and / or a 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 services and other activities.

The success of the vaccination programme gives Trustees confidence that we can continue to meet collectively. However, in this period of uncertainty, they have agreed to introduce the following additional control measures to minimise the risk of spread of the virus:

- Face coverings should be worn throughout church services, including when singing, from Sunday 5th December. Masks can be removed when having refreshments.
- We ask that those involved in leading services (hosting, preaching, leading worship or managing tech) carry out Lateral Flow Tests (LFT) before attending a service.
- We ask that members of the welcome team and those who are serving refreshments take an LFT before attending a service.
- We encourage everyone attending church to take an LFT before arrival.

We will continue to ventilate the premises as this is an important way of reducing the risk of spread of the virus. Please wrap up warm when you come to church!

There is no requirement to maintain social distance, and we will not be spacing out chairs in the chapel. Once again, we acknowledge that some in our fellowship remain very cautious about meeting inside, and Trustees ask that each of us respects the wishes of those people who prefer to maintain social distance. Services will of course continue to be broadcast online.

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Registered Charity number: 1134288



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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