

# The Parish of Christchurch



*The Priory Church of the Holy Trinity, Christchurch  
St George, Jumpers • St John at Purewell*

*for Sunday 11 July, 2021*

Dear Friends,

A lot has happened since this time last week. On Monday the Prime Minister announced the plans to lift all the legal lockdown restrictions from July 19. These measures are to be confirmed finally next Monday, a week before the planned release from lockdown. Then on Tuesday, the Health Secretary, Sajid Javid, made a statement in the House of Commons, in which he went into greater detail on some of the elements announced the previous day. During that statement, Mr Javid announced that from July 19 all restrictions on singing indoors would be lifted. This means that from Sunday 25 July we will be able to sing hymns again in church, something I know many of you have been anticipating keenly.

In response to Government announcements, the Bishop of London has issued a statement that sets the coming weeks in a Christian context:

“The vaccination programme has been an answer to prayer but, while it has transformed the outlook of the pandemic, it has not eliminated all risk. So it is right, as the Prime Minister has said, that we must all exercise personal responsibility and carefully manage the risks from Covid-19.

“As Christians, called to love our neighbour as ourselves, we must also exercise collective responsibility and continue to take appropriate actions to protect others ... We will await the new Government advice for places of worship and adapt our guidance to churches accordingly.”

This means, of course, that I and my senior colleagues still do not have the information that may be forthcoming, in order to make good decisions as to how best to manage the ‘transition out of lockdown’.

If you watched Monday’s press conference, you may also have been reflecting on Professor Chris Whitty’s response when asked in what circumstances he would wear a mask post-July 19. He said:

“...Under three situations, particularly at this point when the epidemic is clearly significant and rising; the first is any situation which is indoors and crowded or indoors with close proximity to other people; that is because masks help protect other people – this is a thing we do to protect other people; that is by far its principal aim ... Second is if I’m required to do so by any competent authority; I’d have no hesitation about doing that.

“And the third reason is if someone else is uncomfortable if I did not wear a mask, as a point of common courtesy, of course I would wear a mask.”

With all that in mind, as we negotiate our way through these weeks, balancing newly-restored freedoms with the rise in infection numbers, here is a phrase which I commend to you all as our watchword: having been ‘Covid-compliant’ since March 2020, I now encourage us all to be:

**Covid-considerate**

**Please consider other people’s well-being  
consider keeping a safe distance  
consider wearing a mask**

So here are the provisional plans which, barring new information, will come into force from July 19 and continue until September.

- a) First, it is important to acknowledge that among us there will be a range of views. Some of us will be content to mix with others, while others will prefer to maintain a safe distance. (NB: the request for anyone sitting in close proximity for more than 15 minutes with someone who tests

positive to self-isolate, remains in place till August 16<sup>th</sup>.) Both these are legitimate opinions. So please may we be 'Covid-considerate' of those whose decisions are different from our own.

- b) In the Priory Church, therefore, there will be a "mixed economy" of seating, to give everyone a choice. Those who would prefer to sit in an area with pods and screens still in place will be accommodated in the South side of the Nave; while those who want to sit in an area without pods or screens can sit on the North side.
- c) In both the Priory and St George's, members of the congregations will be asked to sit in every other row; the row in between will be left empty. This is primarily for two reasons: first, because as we get back to singing hymns, it will be safer if there some distance between one row of congregation and the next; second, because it will enable the clergy to distribute Communion in the safest way, as we have done since re-opening for services.
- d) Both in St George's and the Priory, there will be a kneeler on all the chairs that are out of use. Please do not move the kneelers or sit in those seats.
- e) Please remember also that some people are more vulnerable than others and that we shall all need to respect others who may want to avoid close contact.

This will be reviewed towards the end of August Please may we all play a part in keeping one another safe by following these guidelines in the coming weeks.

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### **Summer Fayre**

Many thanks to everyone who helped make this year's Summer Fayre such a success: to all the stallholders, those who provided refreshments, to the announcers, those who counted the money, the entertainers, the vergers, Pat Richards, and Peter and Coleen Warren, who oversaw the preparations for the Summer Fayre for the first time. Even the weather was kind to us, after a little light drizzle early on.

The figure raised by this year's Summer Fayre is around £5,500, which is an excellent result. What became clear as the day went on, however, is that there was also an equally wonderful and unquantifiable outcome: the sense of joy and encouragement that so many of you expressed at being present and being together at such an enjoyable day. Thank you to everyone who was part of this special occasion.

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### **Kinkiizi donation**

Thank you to everyone who contributed to the collection for the Kinkiizi health emergency appeal. The sum raised by the congregation was £1428.60. Because the Friends of the Priory have match-funded the collection, the parish will be donating £2857.20 in total.

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### **Confirmation 2021**

A reminder that there will be a Confirmation Service in the Priory on Sunday 17 October, to be led by Bishop Debbie. This service will be held at 2.00pm. The Confirmation Course will start in September. Anyone interested in joining a Confirmation Course or wanting a 'refresher' at this stage of your Christian journey, should write to me on [vicar@christchurchpriory.org](mailto:vicar@christchurchpriory.org), or talk to one of the clergy.

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### **Priory Choir returns!**

A reminder that on Sunday July 18 we aim to hold Choral Evensong at 6.30pm outside on the lawns, depending on the weather. This would be the first time the Priory has sung together in many months.

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Hearing Prof. Chris Whitty's answer (quoted above) last Monday, immediately recalled words written by St Paul to the Philippians over nineteen centuries ago: "Let each of you look not to your own interests, but to the interests of others" (Philippians 2.4). This is the spirit that will help us think, speak and act in a Covid-considerate way. With every blessing,

