

St Albans Public Relations Team Meeting

Corona Virus Crisis Response

The COVID-19 virus has been identified as being a serious threat in Denmark. Today, 10th March, the Prime Minister Mette Frederiksen has confirmed that 262 Danes have been tested positive for the virus and around 800 are in isolation. There are 7 hospital cases, one of which is critical. These statistics are changing hourly and it is important that as an interim team we monitor this situation closely and take decisions on how to best protect the congregation and ministry team at St Albans and minimize the risk of infection to those who encounter us.

We are continuing to monitor the Danish news, health authority website, British embassy and the Church of England as well as the Diocese in Europe's website and will act based on the directions given as well as what we deduce to be at the best interests for our congregation, visitors, ministry team and for those who may come into contact with them.

A WhatsApp group has been set up for the Bishop's appointed interim committee so we can communicate quickly and get alignment for the necessary decisions and communication.

Ongoing Response:

Services:

The actions listed below were adopted in St Albans from Sunday 8th March 2020 and these have been communicated in person by Rev Smitha at the Eucharist as well as in the pew sheet

- Communion: Restricted to distribution of host only (wine was consecrated but not distributed)
- Contact: No physical contact during greetings or during the peace
- Hygiene: Servers (during Eucharist) and coffee servers practiced hand washing and sanitizing of hands

Guardians:

The start of the season for welcoming tourists has been postponed until May 3rd, 2020

Future Response:

Our future response will be dictated by the level of risk:

Immediate Actions

Church Council meeting 10th March:

The meeting will go ahead, possible issues could be people having to travel on public transport which the government have suggested people not do in peak times.

Bishops Interim Team Skype call: Friday 13th March:

The team should meet to assess the situation to make key decisions which may include the following:

Current level of risk:

- To prevent spread of infection we will stop using hand towels and replace with disposable paper towels
- Everyone should either bring their own cups for coffee after the Sunday eucharist or use disposable cups

- Internal and External communication Friday and Saturday 13th and 14th March asking people who are ill, to stay home and not come to worship and stating the changes people will notice if they come and worship with us.
- Messy church and group meal to go ahead with extra precautions taken (see below)
- We continue to only have the host at communion and Smitha should continue explaining that when she invites people for communion and include information on the pew sheet
- Continue the principal of 'namaste' during the peace – an alternative could be using sign language (Helen has the details)
- Stewards and greeters are encouraged not to shake hands
- Congregation members should not make any physical contact with each other.
- We place a poster on the door of the church asking people not to enter if they have been in any high-risk areas (Victoria will take a copy of Agilent's door poster)
- We place instructions on hand washing in each of the three toilets and at the kitchen sink and in the sink room (Victoria will take a copy of the directives of the Danish health authority on hand washing) and set these up on Sunday morning before the 1030 Eucharist
- Victoria to prepare all communications in the event of an increased risk or if one of the congregation gets a positive testing for the COVID-19 infection.

Future Actions:

Recommendation – Current level of risk:

- See directions above. The strategy would be to maintain the status quo and monitor the situation closely. The interim team would meet virtually daily for a short meeting to assess the situation and align on response.

Recommendation - Increased level of risk:

- **Worship:** All worship at St Albans will be suspended until further notice and instead, e-services will be recorded and communicated on our website with links from social media. In addition, we will direct people to available liturgical resources.
- **Social Events:** All social events, like the shared meals are cancelled until further notice. If people want to still meet each other, this should be outside of the church building and at their own risk.
- **Groups:** Lent groups, bible study are cancelled and where possible turned into skype meetings.
- **Meetings:** All physical meeting activity will be suspended until further notice. – these include (but are not limited to) ACM, Council meetings, Sub-committee meetings, Ministry team meetings and Bishop's interim meetings are cancelled and where possible turned into skype meetings.
- **Home Communion and visits:** These will be assessed on an individual basis, based on a risk assessment by the Chaplain, bishop's interim team and the safeguarding officer.
- **Meetings with external churches and institutions i.e. schools:** These will be assessed on an individual basis, based on a risk assessment by the chaplain, bishop's interim team and the safeguarding officer.

External Communication:

All external communication will be handled by Victoria and approved by the chaplain and Bishop's interim team (min 1 member). If there is an urgent need, Victoria will take the decision to act independently with only the Chaplain's approval.

All internal communication will be handled by Rev. Smitha (with support if needed from Victoria) and shared with the Bishop's interim team.

Main Communication Channels:

External communication: The church website and social media will be the main external communication channel.

Internal communication: This will also be church website, social media but will also include email to the electoral role and phone calls when possible.

We will post the Chaplain and Bishop's interim team's telephone numbers to the electoral role for emergencies.

Crisis Communication: Positive COVID-19

1. If a member of the congregation or a visitor is tested positively for COVID-19, they should self-isolate (complying to the Danish health authority guidelines). In addition, they should contact one of the Bishop's interim team.
2. The Bishop's interim team should share this information confidentially with each other and the chaplain and communicate this to the relevant authorities to get direction on actions.
3. Deep cleaning may be required in church and we will follow official guidance from the local authorities
4. The Bishop's interim team should also take the necessary steps to communicate this to people who may have been infected asking them to take contact to the COVID-19 hotline in compliance with the Danish health authority guidelines) and direct them to official information sources such as:

English

<https://www.sst.dk/da/Viden/Smitsomme-sygdomme/Smitsomme-sygdomme-AA/Coronavirus/Spoergsmaal-og-svar/Questions-and-answers>

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Updated 10th March 2020

Victoria Wadsworth on behalf of the Bishop's interim team