



## AD CLERUM – 4<sup>th</sup> March 2020

Dear Colleagues

In the face of the spread of the Coronavirus (COVID-19), the health and wellbeing of everyone connected to our churches and schools is a priority. It is important that our churches continue to be places of community, fellowship, pastoral support and practical help. That means that, as far as possible, churches need to maintain their core activities, both public services and practical support, such as running foodbanks. As Christians, we are here to support people, to listen to their concerns if they are worried, and to affirm and confirm the official health guidance.

You will find on the Diocesan website <https://exeter.anglican.org/resources/coronavirus-guidance/> advice for churches, church-run groups, church schools and individuals about the Coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak and the sensible precautions we need to take. ***Please check this page regularly to ensure you have the most up-to-date advice.***

### **Advice for individuals**

If you are concerned about your health, phone NHS111 - the number to call is 111.

Public Health England guidance is here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/public-health-england>

### **Advice for churches**

As a diocese, we are following the official guidance of the Church of England on Coronavirus (COVID-19). You can read the latest guidance, plus helpful FAQs, by following the link below. It contains information about digital worship resources and a list of churches which live-stream services for anyone who is unable to attend a church through illness or who are self-isolating: <https://www.churchofengland.org/more/media-centre/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-churches>

### **Advice for schools**

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-to-educational-settings-about-covid-19>

### **Advice for church-run groups or groups using church buildings:**

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/covid-19-guidance-for-non-clinical-settings-and-the-public>

## Good hygiene

The current government advice is that individuals should always follow good hygiene practices including:

- carrying tissues and using them to catch coughs and sneezes, and binning the tissue
- Washing hands with soap and water (for 20 seconds) or using hand sanitiser gel to kill germs.



## Sharing the Peace

According to current guidance, congregations can continue to share the Peace by shaking hands, though some people may prefer to share the Peace just verbally as a precaution. This advice may be subject to change at short notice; so please keep up to date with official guidance.

## Communion

Churches *should already be following best-hygiene practices* that include advising parishioners with coughs and sneezes to refrain from handshaking during the Peace and to receive holy communion in one kind only (ie only the consecrated bread). Communion in one kind is sufficient and should not be thought of as “half-communion”.

Intinction (dipping the communion wafer into the consecrated wine) is *not* recommended, even by celebrants or administrators of communion. This represents an infection transmission route, as well as a risk to those with certain allergies.

Churches should have hand sanitisers available for parishioners to use.

Priests presiding at the Eucharist, ministrants of communion and servers should all wash their hands, preferably with an alcohol-based (minimum 60%) hand-sanitiser.

Any consecrated bread or wine not required for the purposes of communion should be consumed at the end of the distribution or after the service by the celebrant in the normal way.

Best hygiene practice should be observed in all pastoral contacts. Churches are invited to print this guidance for congregation members in their notice sheets and on their websites, as well as including it in the verbal notices. Updates will be sent from this office on a regular basis to keep you informed as the situation develops.

**If you would like further advice, please contact: The Venerable Andrew Beane, Archdeacon of Exeter: 01392 425577**  
[archdeacon.of.exeter@exeter.anglican.org](mailto:archdeacon.of.exeter@exeter.anglican.org)

**If you are a member of the media or would like communications advice, please contact Chloe Axford, Director of Communications: 01392 294905**  
[chloe.axford@exeter.anglican.org](mailto:chloe.axford@exeter.anglican.org)

“The LORD is good,  
a strong refuge when trouble comes.  
He is close to those who trust in him.”  
*Nahum 1:7*

Keep us, good Lord,  
under the shadow of your mercy,  
in this time of uncertainty and distress.  
Sustain and support the anxious and fearful,  
and lift up all who are brought low;  
that we may rejoice in your comfort  
knowing that nothing can separate us from your love  
in Christ Jesus our Lord.