

**Parish of Millisle – St. Patrick's**  
***PLEASE READ THIS IMPORTANT INFORMATION REGARDING RETURN  
TO 'IN BUILDING' CHURCH WORSHIP***



Dear friends,

I hope that you are all well and looking forward to returning 'In-building' Church Worship. We have all had to adjust to this very strange time; I hope that you have been able to join in with the online service each week.

The Northern Ireland Executive gave the go ahead for Churches to open from the 29<sup>th</sup> June for public worship, providing certain conditions are adhered to. We have received guidance from the Diocese, the wider Church and local government. We appreciate that some churches have already opened, but certainly a good number have yet to do so and whilst we haven't yet, for a number of reasons, please be assured that your safety is our priority.

We have been working hard to make the Church ready for service and you will appreciate that we will have to adjust the way we do things, in order to avoid undue risk and provide a comfortable setting for public worship that is as safe as possible.

We are pleased to advise that we plan to open for 'in building' worship on Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> September 2020.

We fully recognise that some people may not plan to return at this time and I continue to pray for all who are shielding, isolating or recovering from an illness which prevents you from attending Church. Please be assured that online worship will continue as we hope to record one of our churches each Sunday morning and post it online later in the day. Please do not feel that you have to rush back especially if you or a member of your household are experiencing, or not yet recovered from, symptoms of Covid-19 or if you are in an at risk group.

**Guidelines for attending in-Church services:**

We will keep a record of each person attending on a Sunday as this will be required in the event of a contact tracing process being required, should an attendee being tested positive for Covid -19. These details will be securely retained in the safe unless otherwise required.

I know this is difficult, but we need to discourage you from congregating outside the Church building for any length of time before or after the service. Please wash your hands for 20 seconds before leaving for Church.

**When you arrive at Church:**

- The entrance will be used, but please be aware going in and out of the building is difficult with a narrow and limited entrance. Doors will be opened from 9.45am
- Wardens will be at the entrance to assist you with any information or assistance you need. (Wardens may be wearing Face Visors for their and your safety)

- Everyone will be asked to sanitise their hands at the entrance (sanitiser will be available, you may prefer your own, if so you should bring with you). You are requested to keep a 2m social distance.
- Seats will be spaced out using the whole building with a few in pairs or threes for couples and family groups. Please go to a seat and remain there for the duration of the service.
- Households can sit together.
- Please avoid touching surfaces apart from where you are sitting.
- The service will be conducted using the screen and will be shorter in duration; there will be no Prayer Books or Service Booklets. You may bring your own Bible.
- As singing can spread Covid-19 it will not be encouraged for the time being. There will however be recorded singing or music.
- If anyone experiences symptoms of Covid-19 during the service, please inform a warden.
- The offering will be taken as you leave, no collection plates will be passed around. We would encourage the use of standing order for giving which negates the need for envelopes, please speak to a Warden, the Treasurer or Rector if you wish to do this. Your continued support to the Parish is essential & appreciated.
- As these guidelines are being written, face masks are going to be a requirement for congregation members, but this could change. Please follow Government guidelines
- At the end of the service we will exit from the back first to minimise risk. Please do not delay your exit and ensure you keep a social distance. The Rector will not be at the door. If you require any Pastoral help please remain in your seat.

Thank you for your understanding and prayers while adhering to the guidelines. I know these guidelines will be strange and while be 'different' for some time, but we need to follow the guidelines/regulations and use the wisdom that God has given us. This is a working document and may be subject to change as and when the guidance is updated. We will inform you of any changes as they are made.

Yours in Christ,

The Rector & Church Wardens