



The Parish of St Paul

Rondebosch

(The Anglican Church of Southern Africa)

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Dear St Paul's family

I greet you in the name of God our Creator, Redeemer and Sustainer.

On Sunday 7 February we opened the church building for in-person worship services. There was much excitement because of the reopening of the church and 48 people attended the service.

However, we must still be very cautious and vigilant because there is also an ever-present danger of resurgence.

Therefore the ACSA COVID-19 ADVISORY TEAM has drawn up some guidelines to help parishes to worship in a safe environment to protect everyone at the service.

Here are some extracts from the guidelines:

- * Masks **MUST** be worn by all at all times and must cover mouth, chin and nose. Masks are not to be removed for any purpose.
- * No singing is allowed, especially not by choirs (recorded music may be played).
- * Surfaces must be sanitised during the service as needed. This includes microphones as well as lecterns and pulpits.
- * If more than one service is to be held, the venue needs to be cleaned and sanitised before the next service.
- * Screening of attendees must be done at the door or entrance. Any person coughing or showing signs of fever or difficulty breathing **MUST** be denied entry and either taken to an isolation room, returned home or sent to hospital. The same principle is to be applied to people who answer any of the screening questions in the positive, and compliance officers need to be vigilant in this regard.

- * The maximum number of attendees is 50 (this includes the clergy and the altar party), if the building is large enough to accommodate the 50 people with a social distance of 1,5 meters between them.
- * All attendees must be seated at least 1,5 metres apart. This requirement applies even to family members and those living together. It is for everyone's safety and, difficult as it may be, is applied at funerals too.
- * Buildings must be well ventilated, and the time spent at the gathering must be limited. **Our standard is a maximum of 1 hour.** The longer the time gathered, the higher the chance and likelihood of infection.

Ash Wednesday

- * For 2021, Ash Wednesday will only have the distribution of the Ashes in the APB liturgy for Administration of the Ashes outside of a Eucharist.
- * The service must be limited to one hour.
- * No communion will be served.
- * The priest or minister will bless the ashes at the beginning of the service and then say to the congregation, "Turn away from sin and receive the good news" or "Remember, O man, that dust thou art and unto dust shalt thou return".

Vestry

- * The need for an annual vestry meeting has been suspended for 2021.
- * Reports (Financial/Rector's and wardens) will be made available to parishioners.

I know it is not an easy time and all these guidelines and regulations make worship very challenging, but let us not lose hope and trust in our Lord, who will never leave or forsake us. ***As the Psalmist says in Psalm 23, "He gives me new strength. He guides me in the right paths as he has promised. Even if I go through the deepest darkness I will not be afraid for you are with me, your shepherd's rod and staff protect me."***

And in 1 Peter 5:10 we read, ***"And the God of all grace, who called you to his eternal glory in Christ, after you have suffered a little while, will himself restore you and make you strong, firm and steadfast."*** (1 Peter 5:10)

Blessings

R Mulder

Rev Reeva, Rev Darron, Rev Isaias and the Parish Council