

The Methodist Church: Coronavirus Guidance

At this time, the UK Chief Medical Officers consider the risk to individuals from Coronavirus as low.

The Methodist Church is monitoring the situation and has issued the following guidance to ensure the risks are reduced, recommending practical precautions to prevent the spread of infection.

Revd Paul Wood, Interim Director of the Ministries Team, commented: “Our prayers are with all those who have been affected either by the illness or the measures to prevent its spread”.

“The advice for churches is for good hygiene with regular hand washing and for particular care to be taken in the preparation of sharing the elements at Holy Communion”

Precautions

Wash hands with soap and water often or use hand sanitiser gel. This is particularly important for servers at Holy Communion.

Churches may wish to use the traditional small glasses for communion to reduce the chances of infection.

Where a common cup or chalice is used, attendees with coughs and sneezes should be encouraged to receive Communion in one kind only. That is the bread only. The practice of ‘intinction’, dipping the bread into the wine, should be avoided as this may spread the virus.

Ministers should consider whether it is appropriate to share the peace during services, especially if some members feel they are unable to participate.

It is probably a good time to remind Communion Stewards that communion wine once poured out should never be returned to the bottle to be reused later. Any remaining elements should be reverently consumed or *put to ground*.

The symptoms of Coronavirus infection are a cough, a high temperature and shortness of breath. Those with such symptoms who have returned from China, Thailand, Japan, Taiwan, Singapore, Republic of Korea or Malaysia in the last 14 days, or who have been in contact with someone confirmed as having the Coronavirus, should call 111 for further advice.

Additional information is available from the NHS website

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/>