

Guidance for those preparing and distributing Holy Communion

Anyone handling any items (Stewards or Celebrant), either during the preparation or distribution of Holy Communion must sanitise their hands thoroughly or wear gloves. They must also wear masks, unless speaking.

Before the service people should be encouraged to sit downstairs. One communion service sheet should be placed on every single seat and on every pair of seats.

1. Preparation of the elements

- Maintain social distancing while preparing the elements and wear masks.
- Gluten free wafers must be used and should be spaced on a plate so that they can easily be individually handled during distribution by the Celebrant. The wafer used by the Celebrant should be kept separately and only used by the Celebrant.
- Communion wine must be poured into individual glasses, placed in the wooden tray(s).
- The trays of wine, the chalice and the wafers are to be covered as usual with a clean cloth.

2. Distribution of the elements

- During dedication of the elements they must remain covered except for the Celebrant's elements.
- The Great Prayer of Thanksgiving should be spoken over covered elements and standing a little away from them.
- Do not speak over the elements once their cover is removed.
- Only the Celebrant is to drink from the chalice which needs a very small amount of wine in it.
- The elements will be brought to each person downstairs by the Celebrant and a Steward.
- Guided by a marshal, people in the gallery wanting communion should move downstairs taking care to remain socially distanced and form a socially distanced line in the vestibule where they will be given the elements. They should use the left hand (when facing the pulpit) set of stairs going down and the right hand set to return.
- Only elements prepared as described above should be used.
- Those distributing the wafers should drop the wafer into the hand of the communicant.
- Those distributing the wine should hold the glass at the top so the communicant can take it by holding it at the bottom.
- Those distributing the elements must wear gloves and a mask.
- Distribution of the elements should be done without touching hands. The Celebrant passing the wafer and the Steward distributing the wine should each carry a hand sanitiser. If they accidentally touch hands with a recipient then both the Celebrant/Steward and the recipient should immediately sanitise their hands.
- No speaking e.g. 'the body of Christ' / 'the blood of Christ' when elements are given out.
- Stewards and Celebrant must maintain social distancing while distributing the elements.
- Communion glasses should be placed directly onto a normal tray with a cloth on it to reduce the noise of the glass being put on the tray. The tray will be carried by a second communion steward.

3. Clearing away after the service

- Those clearing the elements away must wear disposable gloves and face coverings. Disposable PPE items and all cleaning materials should be bagged up and put in with the general waste. Shields can be re-used in the normal way.
- Collect the communion service sheets (with gloves on) and store in a pile in the vestry where they will not be touched until needed again (the next month).
- All unused wafers are to be disposed of reverently
- All unused wine is to be disposed of reverently
- Communion glasses and plates should be thoroughly washed using hot soapy water, thoroughly rinsed in hot water and dried. They will not be needed again for a month.
- The cloths used for covering the elements should be washed in the normal way before the next service.