**Please see below sections of the pastoral letter sent to clergy in the Adelaide Diocese**

**by Archbishop +Geoff Smith at 4pm on May 14th 2020**

Just before I set out some directions based on the government regulations, I encourage parish clergy

not to rush ‘back’ to try and reinstate worship arrangements as they were before COVID19. My

sense is that while there might be some pressure to do that either from parishioners or from inside

ourselves, my sense is that our arrangements during the lockdown have worked well and people are

appreciating what has been done.

While there has been some easing of restrictions, complying with the current restrictions is not

simple and requires significant planning and effort. Just as some businesses have decided not to reopen even if they can because the continuing restrictions make re-opening too hard or not commercially viable, so parishes might well and very reasonably decide to continue basically in

‘lockdown mode’ until a further easing of restrictions.

We might actually be able to provide better ministry using our lockdown arrangements than we can in some kind of hybrid stage 1 arrangement. It is better for us to take the time necessary to plan and evaluate prior to re-opening rather than to rush in unprepared.

I have attached for your information Fact Sheets issued by the South Australian government which

are from the sa.gov.au website in case you have not seen them. <https://www.covid-19.sa.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0012/195879/FINAL-DPC_RoadMap_FINAL.pdf>

The directions contained in today’s pastoral letter are drawn from those fact sheets, plus conversations I have had with the Deputy Chief Public Health Officer Dr Chris Lease, and conversations with the Pastoral Leadership Team of the Diocese.

The directions in this letter aim to comply with directions from the government of South Australia

for two reasons:

1. As a significant group in the community we need to do our part in keeping the

wider community (including our own parishioners) safe, and complying with the government

directions is part of that, and just in case that is insufficient;

2. There are substantial fines for those who don’t abide by the directions issued by

the government.

You’ll be aware that churches are now allowed to be open for private prayer and small services of up

to 10 people plus the officiant/s are allowed. The directions which follow are in the light of these

stage 1 restrictions.

1. As I said in last week’s letter, I have engaged with the Deputy Chief Public Health Officer

concerning Holy Communion and I am still waiting for his response; so, until further notice

Holy Communion is not to be celebrated as part of the relaxed restrictions.

2. Churches that can comply with the health and hygiene requirements may be open for

private prayer. In order for Anglican churches to be open for private prayer there must be no more than ten people in the building at any time and the building must have sufficient floor space to allow

4 square meters per person. People in the church should remain at least 1.5 meters apart.

If a parish wants to open its church for private prayer it must:

a. Limit entry and exit to one door

b. Have at least two people on duty at the entrance who welcome those who are

entering and:

i. Ask those entering whether they have any symptoms of illness and if so,

respectfully decline entrance to the church

ii. Ask those entering to cleanse their hands with sanitiser provided by the

parish at the entrance

iii. Collect the name and contact details of those entering the church

iv. Explain the physical distancing requirements (1.5 meters between people).

All surfaces which may have been touched need to be cleaned regularly. Information which

should be followed concerning cleaning can be found at the link for Safework Australia –

[click here.](https://swa.govcms.gov.au/covid-19-information-workplaces/industry-information/general-industry-information/cleaning?tab=tab-toc-employer#heading--1--tab-toc-how_to_clean_and_disinfect)

The Synod office is going to produce standardised signage to assist in communicating the

requirements for churches, in the meantime, churches might find locally produced signage

setting out the directions helpful.

3. Churches that can comply with the health and hygiene requirements may be open for small services (not Holy Communion) of no more than ten people plus the officiant/s. The square

meter, physical distancing and cleaning requirements apply as in (2) above.

• Some form of booking arrangement should be considered so that no more than 10

people are at the service and people avoid the embarrassment of being turned away

at the door.

• Contact details of those attending must be collected

• Hand sanitizer must be available at the entrance to the church and attenders

encouraged to use it.

• Books should not be used, unless they are cleaned after the service. Single use paper

service sheets can be used or preferably projection screens.

• No food or drink is to be provided.

• There should be no passing of the peace nor passing a collection plate or bag.

While small services are now allowed my advice is that it might well be best not to conduct

services on Sunday. The reason is that Sunday services are more ‘public’ with a much higher

chance of people just turning up expecting to participate in a service. It would not be good

to turn away someone who had come to church wanting to worship, and it would not be

good having to be the person who turns them away.

Mid-week services however can be more easily managed with a booking process and are

less likely to run into the same problem.

Hall Hire

The Synod office will be issuing guidance around hall hire in the next Information Update.

I fully realise that the requirements of re-opening are onerous and if churches are going to re-open

the tasks and responsibilities should be shared among the leadership and people of the parish. If

there are not enough people of the parish who are prepared to undertake the responsibilities then

the activity should not happen.