

## Re-Opening Mickfield Evangelic Church for Public worship 26<sup>th</sup> July 2020.

### Risk assessment & method statement for factors associated with COVID-19. (updated 31/07/20)

#### 1. Scope

This document provides a framework for the return to public worship for Mickfield Evangelical Church. It identifies risks associated with meeting together and offers solutions to reduce the risk of passing on the Covid infection to acceptable levels. It aims to be consistent with Government guidelines on the matter

#### 2. Introduction

Mickfield Evangelical Church (MEC) will be re-commencing public worship in the morning on 26<sup>th</sup> July 2020 after a break of more than three months. This re-commencement of worship at the chapel premises in Mickfield does not represent a true return to 'normal' worship. Our intention is to allow members of MEC to meet should they wish to do so while offering an online alternative should members feel they would rather not meet in person. This dual approach we believe will cater for the majority of broad ranging opinions within the church family.

#### 3. Key principles of our return to meeting together

- 3.1 We will meet outside weather permitting in the summer months. For this purpose we will use a marquee but leave the sides off, thus allowing groups to set-up outside the marquee footprint. This is effectively 'outside'
- 3.2 When the weather forecast is for in-clement weather, we will not meet; rather we will resume our existing way of running the service as an online presence only. The decision on whether to proceed with meeting will be made no later than Friday Mid-day. The church e-mail system will be used to advise worshippers of our decision not to go ahead with our public service.
- 3.3 In the winter months we will review the situation as it is quite likely that government guidelines will have changed by then, however we would make provision for more than one service to ensure that minimum social distancing values could be maintained inside the building.
- 3.4 The act of communion will not be undertaken using church provided utensils and the elements will not be passed around, however we may choose to have communion using elements brought by individuals. This to be decided but it is thought unlikely that we will resume any form of true communion service before September
- 3.5 There will be no congregational singing. We intend to utilise pre-recorded material as we currently do for the online services.
- 3.6 There will be no items passed between groups.
- 3.7 A loop system can be provided but we will need some notice to set this up. Currently we propose modest audio amplification only
- 3.8 A basic public address system and visual aid display will be provided
- 3.9 The service will be streamed live to Facebook then loaded to youtube for retrospective viewing

- 3.10 Those who are clinically vulnerable or shielding will be advised not to attend , rather to watch the service online.
- 3.11 Hand washing facilities in the form of hand sanitiser will be provided. The building will not be open for hand washing as this generates a greater risk than it prevents.
- 3.12 There will be a one way system in force. Worshippers will be directed as to the correct route to enter and exit the worship area. They will also be encouraged to keep the one way system clear at the conclusion to the service.
- 3.13 There will be no offering box provided, and should gifts be forthcoming, the use of online giving would be encouraged
- 3.14 Following the conclusion to the service, a brief period of fellowship will be allowed under the distancing guidelines. This to be outdoors. The church building will be closed for socialising and casual access apart from managed access to the toilets. Worshippers will be encouraged to depart fairly promptly.
- 3.15 Venue Management: A venue manager will be appointed. The venue manager will ensure the following:
  - 3.15.1 That people arriving at the church are allowed onto the site in a regulated way, i.e. people would leave their vehicles family by family.
  - 3.15.2 That contact details are recorded for everyone entering the site. This is for test and trace purposes. The venue manager will appoint someone to take down details verbally from each worshipper. Details to include name & preferred contact tel number or email address if these are not already known. In this regard, Mickfield Evangelical Church have exercised due diligence but the responsibility for progressing Test and trace resides with the individual.
  - 3.15.3 That seating is arranged appropriately for the groups present e.g. family groups could be seated together, but groups themselves would be at least 2Metres apart.
  - 3.15.4 Suitable hand cleansing materials will be available
  - 3.15.5 Toilets are utilised such that only single occupancy occurs. Latest guidelines require us to wear face covering while indoors. This will be advised by the venue manager.
  - 3.15.6 General social distancing measures are adhered to.
  - 3.15.7 Food and drink will not be provided, however worshippers could bring their own refreshments (flask, biscuits etc)
  - 3.15.8 On departure, that people return to their vehicles in a similar sequential manner to their arrival.
  - 3.15.9 The venue manager may delegate some of the above to other church members e.g make the social distancing , hygiene and contact details register measures separate responsibilities but will ultimately be responsible for minimising the overall risk to worshipers .
- 3.16 Service chair person: The service will be conducted by a chair person, the role of the chair person will be to:
  - 3.16.1 Remind worshipers of the guidance governing social distancing and hand washing etc with the existing COVID risk in mind
  - 3.16.2 Keep a watching brief to ensure social distancing measures are maintained while the service is in progress.
  - 3.16.3 Call up other people involved in the service e.g. speaker or someone leading prayers in an appropriate manner.

- 3.16.4 Plan the service such that start, duration & conclusion to the service are measured and definite.
- 3.16.5 Outline the departure process in conjunction with the venue manager.
- 3.17 Children's leader: The childrens leader will, should the need arise be responsible for running the childrens talk or activity. The activity should be planned to ensure children are as far apart as possible and do not mix. This may be inside or outside. The current directive is that masks should be worn indoors and therefore the preferred location for Sunday School will be outside. A similar situation exists for crèche.
- 3.17.1 At other times children must remain in their family groups
- 3.17.2 Children unfortunately must not be allowed to stray into other groups or play together in the way they are accustomed to.
- 3.18 Cleaning: A cleaning rota is maintained as part of normal church life. Certain parts of the church building are out of bounds to worshippers during this period of slow return to normal practices:

The Office, The store room, The kitchen, the crèche room, The 1<sup>st</sup> floor classrooms and staircase.

Other areas of the church have limited access:

The main hall, entrance lobby, Toilets M, F and accessible.

The areas out of bounds will not be cleaned. The areas in use will be cleaned using normal cleaning materials but special attention will be given to surfaces (touch sites) which will have been touched such as door handles, taps, toilet seats, flush buttons, etc

Cleaning should be left to as late in the week as possible and in this regard the virus is not expected to survive on any surface for any more than 5 days absolute maximum so towards the end of the week (thursday or Friday) would be the optimum time for cleaning. Cleaning staff would be expected to thoroughly wash hands prior to undertaking cleaning duties.

We will not use the fabric covered chairs. The plastic chairs will not be touched used or touched during the week therefore there is no need to clean these between services.

#### 4. Other risks

Risk	Likelihood	Severity	mitigation
Too many people arrive	low	high	Either some form of pre service registration. Last resort would be preventing entry. Use car park as temp holding area.
Weather is bad on a planned outdoor service	moderate	moderate	People should come prepared for rain, e.g. bring own gazebo, chairs, brollies etc
Neighbours decide to cut grass	Moderate to high	Moderate to high	Site marquee as far up the old field as possible
High risk or 'shielding' individuals arrive	low	high	A separate area will be marked out which will avoid any close contact with others.
People 'forget' the need to distance	high	moderate	The venue manager and all church leaders will keep a watching brief
Children do not stay with their family groups	high	Low to moderate	Parents must keep an eye on their children
Pinch points	moderate	low	Provide an entry and exit track into the field such that there is no direct meeting.
Sensitive material is inadvertently streamed online	Low to moderate	Moderate to high	The person providing the streaming must be aware of this risk and be prepared to halt the stream. Data protection principles must be observed. No filming of worshippers. Fixed camera pointing forwards. No entrance or exit visible on the stream

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