



**Christ Church Stocksbridge  
Green Moor Methodist Church  
Crane Moor Methodist Church**

**NEWS LETTER**

**For Sunday 19th September 2021**

Dear All at Green Moor, Crane Moor and Christ Church

We are pleased to hear that folk in Green Moor and Crane Moor are making progress in opening up for worship and we trust this continues safely as more restrictions are gradually relaxed.

Here at Christ Church, the Leadership Team met last night to discuss the next steps in our journey towards restriction free worship. After a full and wide ranging discussion we feel, that as a church, the responsible thing to do as an organisation, is largely to keep to our current procedures. Namely, hand sanitisation, distancing and mask wearing. We also recognise that none of this is precise, or always logical and is often inconsistent. We are often inconsistent. We also know that masks are not about protecting oneself, but about protecting others, and in that, they become an outward sign of our sense of caring and respect for others, and in particular the more vulnerable and fearful. We understand that in the "outside world" these techniques are now mainly left to personal choice, though we are still advised to observe them as reasonably practical. However, whilst we cannot make these things mandatory, and indeed we do not wish to, we feel that there are a large number of our congregation (though we recognise not all) who, having made the big step in attending worship in person, feel uncomfortable about relaxing things any further. The Leadership Team feel that in deference to them and in the light of increasing numbers of cases, it is sensible to wait and see how the picture emerges as the schools start back. We propose therefore to keep the status quo until the church meeting in October, when further discussion can take place there.

At Frank's suggestion, who has been on the more cautious end of the spectrum, we have agreed that all the choir members can come together if they wish, and they will be having a meeting about this.

As far as communion is concerned, we have taken a wide range of views into account, and on balance (given that many people are now eating out and so are prepared to receive food and drink prepared in a restaurant kitchen and have it served at their table,) feel that it will be possible to prepare the wine and the bread and distribute it in safe way and in accordance with recommendations from the Methodist Church. The people preparing communion will wear gloves and masks. The wine will be served in the individual glasses as usual but there will be fewer on each serving tray and the congregation will be asked to take the cup rather than being handed it. The bread will be prepared similarly but cut into small pieces and placed, separated, on larger plates and the congregation asked to take it off the plate. The server should be able to keep a one meter distance, given the seating arrangements. Folk who feel uncomfortable with this can continue to bring their own bread and wine which will be blessed altogether in the usual way. So the next communion service will be conducted more "normally".

The Meeting Place has now started back as one group on Monday mornings as we did originally. The first one went off well and people appreciated it, though the numbers were reduced from pre-

pandemic levels. We will see how things develop. We are thinking that Busy Little Hands may start early in October, but the details have yet to be agreed. We are pleased to say that The Lunch Club has also got off to a good start.

The literacy project is going forward and all the interviewees, despite our fears of being interviewed and wondering what was going to happen, "passed" and were welcomed with open arms. Just waiting for DBS checks now and hope to start before the end of October.

Ian is exploring how, as a church and the churches in the valley, we might respond to the Afghan refugees who may find themselves coming to Sheffield. Watch this space.

We are pleased that many of you have been able to get away for holidays and that you have come back safely, fortified for the next stage of our pilgrimage together. The various rotas are available in the vestry, so please check if you think you are on any of them, and arrange for a substitute / swap if the date is not convenient.

On a personal note, Madeleine and I thank you all for your good wishes and prayers, for us and for Edward, Jade and Connie, as we battle the virus. It really does help to know we have you all on our team. A big THANK YOU from us to you.

PS. On Sunday, it will be helpful for choir members bring a copy of the activity sheet with them as they will not be able to see what is on the screen, but the grid is on the activity sheet, so you can see what we are talking about !

Best Wishes and every Blessing



John

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