



## Church in Wales guidance note

Subject: Coronavirus (Covid-19) guidance  
Date: 13 March 2020 (Edition #3)

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This is the third edition of guidance issued by the Bench of Bishops in relation to Coronavirus (Covid-19). The guidance is being kept under regular review

The Government has now moved from the contain phase to the delay phase in its steps to limit the impact of the Coronavirus pandemic. We therefore wish to advise you of the following updated guidance.

We have already advised that:

- All involved in the administration of communion should wash their hands carefully and should use hand sanitiser immediately before the Preparation of the Table and Eucharistic Prayer;
- The sharing of the common cup at the Eucharist should cease;
- The physical sharing of the peace should be replaced with a non-contact greeting (which might include the British sign language for “Peace be to you” or the namaste gesture); and
- Blessings offered at the Communion rail should not include touching the head or body of the person presenting themselves for blessing.

In addition, we now believe the following precautions to be appropriate.

- There should be no common provision of food or refreshments in bowls, on trays or from shared packets after services;
- Tea or coffee may continue to be served, providing that cups are kept separate and are washed thoroughly after use;
- The collection plate should not be circulated around the congregation, although other methods of making a collection, which do not require the circulation of a plate or bag, may be used.

The UK government has not yet advised a cessation of large gatherings, although the Scottish Government has banned gatherings of over 500 people from next week in order to free up the emergency services. This current advice means that services, including the Chrism Eucharists, can go ahead as planned. However, the situation may alter, and clergy should remain vigilant for changes in guidance. If it does become necessary to cancel services at short notice, this will be communicated by e-mail.

All clergy who exhibit any of the following should cease from parish visiting, and the conduct of public worship: a persistent and regular cough, fever, symptoms of a cold.

Congregations should be advised that should they exhibit cold or flu-like symptoms, they should refrain from Church attendance while those symptoms persist. They should follow government guidance as to when to self-isolate which may be found here <https://www.gov.uk/government/topical-events/coronavirus-covid-19-uk-government-response>

**Bench of Bishops, 13 March 2020**