

Hello,

There may be some who have not yet read last week's Update where I outlined the things that we will need to do before we can re-open the building for Sunday services. This week I've been working with others to tease out more detail about what needs to be done, even as we waited for your responses.

I have received responses from a few people who are willing to attend a meeting about the huge cleaning regime we have to follow in order to provide a COVIDSafe environment. We do need many more if we are going to be able to clean and disinfect all the frequently touched surfaces before and after each service or event

The Ministry leaders are now working on their plans and some have started to come in so that we will be able to prepare the whole-of-church COVIDSafe and other plans required. Without the COVIDSafe plan, we are still restricted to 20 people attending as outlined in the list of what we can and cannot do below.

Here are the current **published** restrictions:

Places of Worship

What can I do?

- From noon on Friday 19 June 2020, places of worship and religious ceremonies will be able to have up to 100 people (including church leaders and others involved in the services or ceremonies) or one person per 4 square metres, whichever is lesser.
- Choirs or musicians can perform, and are to be included in the 100-person limit.

What can't I do?

- If a COVID Safety Plan isn't in place, gatherings will need to remain at a maximum of 20 people with one person per 4 square metres.

What are my responsibilities?

- Places of worship must have a COVID Safety Plan if they wish to increase gatherings up to 100 people or one person per 4 square metres, whichever is lower. Guidance has been developed to assist with the development of these plans.
- Carefully manage the entry, exit and flow of people through the premises.
- Places of worship (excluding for funerals and weddings) should seek first name and contact number voluntarily in a visitors book.
- Physical distancing of 1.5 metres between each group or household is required.

- Increase the frequency of cleaning for high touch areas and restroom facilities.
- The use of collection plates should be avoided during services.
- Limit the use of books, if possible. If not, ensure they are cleaned between each use.
- Try to keep to a minimum number of choir members or musicians in each service, and they should remain physically distanced from the congregation or audience. There should also be 1.5 metres of distance between each member of the choir or band

You can see that there are a few new features in the descriptions of what we can and cannot do. We are still waiting for the [Public Health \(Restricted Activities – Gatherings, Business or Undertakings\) Emergency Direction 2020 \(No 2\)](#) to be updated to provide us with **more written details**. For example, the last dot point in the list above talks about choir members and raises the question: Does this mean that the rest of us cannot sing – like the NSW rules? Or not?

My brief message today is to:

1. make sure that you do not go to the Garratt St Centre this Sunday because the government has announced that 100 people can attend
2. to ask, those who are able, to let me know if you are able to form the team of cleaners that is required
3. remind ministry leaders that their plans are needed – or to let us know that you are not planning to re-open until much later in the year

I give thanks with a grateful heart for all that you have, are and will be doing.

Many of you have served and given faithfully to our local church (or other churches where you have worshipped) for many years and I do not expect that any will put their health or well being at risk, or spend a moment's regret, because they are not able to help this time. I do ask that you will pray the Lord will send those for whom he has the task planned.

I'd encourage you all to take a moment to pause, to come before the Lord in adoration and wonder at who he is, and what he does for us (the new Israel), as you consider your response to this update to this mailbox.

*Praise him, all beasts and birds, mice and men,
kings, queens, princes, and princesses,
young men and maidens, children and babes,
old and young alike, everyone everywhere!
Let them all join in with this orchestra of praise.
For the name of the Lord is the only name we raise!
His stunning splendour ascends higher than the heavens.
He anoints his people with strength and authority,
showing his great favour to all his godly lovers,
even to his princely people, Israel,
who are so close to his heart.
Hallelujah! Praise the Lord! {Ps 148-12-14} [TPT]*

Please remember that I am only a phone call away if you have any concerns and that you can call of the Leadership Team or your Christian friends if you are anxious or need to talk things through.

Blessings,

Ian Reid (Revd)
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