

COVID-19 PROTECTION GUIDELINES

ST URSULA'S CHURCH, BERNE

28 May 2020

Reference Documents:

- <https://backtowork.easygov.swiss/musterschutzkonzept/>
- <https://www.ref-so.ch/aktuell/information-und-empfehlung-fuer-kirchen/#link/fa906e0e>
- Coronavirus: Guidance for Church Officers from Diocese of Europe
- Covid-19 return to church: St Ursula's Council document

These Measures serve to:

- a. prevent or reduce the spread of the novel Coronavirus (COVID-19)
- b. reduce the number of infections, break chains of infection and prevent or reduce local outbreaks of the disease
- c. protect persons particularly at risk

These protection guidelines will be regularly updated.

1. HYGIENE

Measures

Hand disinfectant is available at all entrances to the church and to the hall.

Each reader will have the reading on a large piece of paper that covers the lectern, which they lay on it, and remove afterwards and take with them. No touching of the microphone is permitted.

Access to soap and water is readily available. People are encouraged to regularly and thoroughly wash their hands.

Paper towels are available for drying hands etc. They are disposed of in plastic sacks which are binned after each service.

Any papers will be one use only, collected personally from the entrance and disposed of after the service directly into the paper bins.

A limited number of face masks are available for people if needed; however the congregation should bring their own masks if they wish to wear one.

No physical contact (e.g. hand shaking) is permitted. Objects will not be passed from one person to another.

The kitchen is closed off and people are requested to bring own water containers if required.

No tea, coffee or other refreshments are offered after the service.

Each priest will have their own microphone that is afterwards sterilized and put in its own bag marked with their name

Hearing aids for the congregation to be sterilized after each service

2. DISTANCING

All participants are to maintain a distance of 2m at all times

Measures

The number of chairs has been reduced to maximum allowed.

Pre-registration is required and a seating plan will be produced weekly to optimise space.

The chairs are placed at the required 2m distance from one another. If members of the same household attend a service they will be permitted to sit together.

The number of people in the church and in the hall will be monitored.

The entry to and exit from the church will be regulated so that people do not all enter and leave at the same time.

Parents are responsible for their children in the church, halls and grounds, and distancing must be maintained.

There is no transport currently offered by the church. Private individuals offering lifts to others will be requested to wear masks in the cars.

Singing is currently not allowed because of the higher risk of transmission of the virus.

There will be no collection taken during the service. Instead people are encouraged, wherever possible, to donate on line or via TWINT. There will be a box for cash donations at the entrance to the church which will be counted by the treasurer after three days.

The doors will remain open before, during and after the service. One single person will be responsible for opening and closing the doors.

For the time being, there will be no communion services.

No refreshments will be offered after the service. People are discouraged from gathering for chatting. Instead a Zoom “virtual coffee time” is available.

Parishioners can request to be seated away from young children.

3. CLEANING

Measures

The church and halls are kept aired. The windows and doors are opened for at least 10 minutes before and after each service, and weather permitting during the service.

All bins will be emptied after every service as part of the cleaning process. The church will not be used again until a cleaning has taken place.

Rubber gloves are to be worn at all times during cleaning, especially when dealing with rubbish.

After each service the door handles, light switches, floors, seats etc will be carefully cleaned as well as the bathrooms and any areas used.

4. VULNERABLE PEOPLE

Measures

Especially vulnerable people are not excluded from church services; however, they are encouraged to protect themselves from possible infection in all ways.

On-line services are available as an alternative to attendance.

5. SICK PEOPLE

Measures

Sick people (whether with COVID-19, or otherwise) must stay at home.

The regulations for quarantine and self-isolation according to www.bag.admin.ch/isolation-und-quarantaene are to be followed.

6. SPECIAL SITUATIONS

Junior Church and Crèche will be available at a later date in line with the BAG guidelines for schools.

7. INFORMATION

Measures

These protection guidelines are displayed on the entrance doors. They are also available on the church's website.

The current BAG poster is displayed at all entrances and in the toilet area.

8. MANAGEMENT

Measures

The Churchwarden has been appointed to ensure that these protection measures are implemented and enforced.

A record will be kept of everyone attending a service. These records will be kept for 14 days and then destroyed.

Everyone who intends to come to a service is encouraged to register in advance. This makes it possible to check the distancing and avoid the disappointment of turning someone away at the door if the church is already full. The church office will administer the pre booking.

ADDITIONAL PROTECTION MEASURES

Measures

All upholstered chairs have been replaced with easy to clean plastic chairs.

Each priest will carry a small sanitizer in their pocket.

People not registered are to sign in with their own pen, registered people will be checked in by the greeters from a list.

CONCLUSION

Passed by the Church Council on 2nd June 2020

Signed: _____

Churchwarden (Martin Browne)