

Rev Elizabeth Cairns
Mullavilly Rectory
89 Mullavilly Road
Tandragee
Co. Armagh
BT62 2LX
Tel: 028 38840221
revecairns@gmail.com

Mrs Julie Magowan
(Honorary Secretary)
157 Mahon Road
Portadown
Co. Armagh
BT62 3SG
Tel: 07743 126880
julie_magowan@yahoo.co.uk

Mrs Wendy Walsh
(Honorary Treasurer)
20 Mayesfield Villas
Portadown
Co. Armagh
BT63 5FJ
Tel: 07764 935348
mjwdwalsh@aol.com

Mullavilly Parish Church ~ 1st July 2020 ~ Update for the return to In-Church Worship

Dear Parishioners,

Psalm 95 – “Come let us worship and bow down and kneel before the Lord our maker”

It is with great anticipation that I write this letter to you, with the news that we will be moving forward with the re-opening of our church building for worship on a Sunday. We have a lot to be thankful to God for, none more so, than the privilege it is to be in this position of being able to join together for worship and prayer again. Following the Government and Executive announcements, and adhering to and putting into place Central Church Guidelines, we will have all in place for the first Sunday in August. In order for this to happen, the Select Vestry will be working away behind the scenes to ensure that we meet all the requirements that have been issued to us, to keep everyone safe while we meet together. The health and well-being of our congregation, Select Vestry, Clergy and Readers must remain paramount at all times.

At the outset it is important to say, that it will not be ‘business as usual’. Things will be different as far as services are concerned, and in what we are able or not able to do. We therefore ask for your patience, understanding and help in taking these tentative steps forward. We will do our best to keep you up-to-date with any changes as we go along and information will also be posted on our Parish Website and Facebook page. It is also important that everyone in your household reads this important information and is aware of what is expected.

I realise that this a long list, but it is vitally important that we inform and provide you with all the necessary information.

1. Our first Sunday back in church will be **Sunday 2nd August at 11am.**
2. Anyone who is feeling unwell in any way, is advised NOT to come to church. The same applies to those who fall into the ‘At Risk’ groups, or anyone displaying symptoms of Covid-19. However, the decision to attend church rests with each individual but we ask you to do so with due regard for yourself and for other parishioners.
3. In order to keep everyone safe while at church, all those attending will be required to follow the guidelines and the recommendations as given by the Church Wardens and Select Vestry members. Furthermore, signs will also be in place to advise and inform every one of the guidelines and requirements in place.
4. **Everyone** will be required to sanitise their hands when entering the Church building and the same when leaving the building.
5. Due to having to leave 72 hours between services without completing a deep-clean of the building, there will only be ONE service on a Sunday until restrictions are lifted and we are permitted to do otherwise.
6. **EVERY** Sunday that you attend, your name and contact telephone number must be recorded in a file for ‘Contact Tracing’ purposes, should it ever be needed. Therefore, each Sunday you are requested to bring with you a piece of paper with your name and telephone number printed in capital letters on it, and place it in the basket at the baptism font. This will be held for the relevant length of time required and then destroyed when no longer needed.
7. On arrival you will be shown to a pew by one of our Select Vestry as we will be filling the church from the front first. It is highly likely that this will not be your normal seat and whilst sitting in a particular seat is important to some folk, we ask that you would follow the directions and sit in a pew allocated, to facilitate others who will be attending.

8. Family groups may sit in the one pew. Otherwise, distancing of 2 metres must be adhered to between others and only every other pew will be used.
9. There will be no singing of hymns during the service, although our organist will play prior to and at the end of the service. There will be no choir processing in/out. This remains under continuous review.
10. The congregation are asked not to shake hands with each other and to avoid physical contact.
11. A mask may be required initially when attending. Members of the congregation will be required to bring their own mask with them if they feel they choose to wear one.
12. Please bring your own tissues with you (and home with you again after the service).
13. As we are not permitted to use the Church Hymn Books, Books of Common Prayer or Bibles, the service will be displayed on the screen. It must also be noted that because of the restrictions, we have been asked to keep services shorter and subsequently they may not follow exactly the outline as per the Book of Common Prayer. However, if you wish to bring your own books with you from home that is acceptable, but not advised.
14. After the Service, a Church Warden or Select Vestry Member will advise you when to exit your pew (those sitting at the back of church will leave first). Please remember to sanitise on the way out.
15. Your Church Collection or Free-will Offering Envelope may be left in the basket at the Baptism Font on the way out of church.
16. The Rector will not be able to greet members of the congregation at the church door as they leave so as to avoid creating a 'bottle-neck' or large groups forming in a small space.
17. There will be no refreshments served in the Church Hall after any of our Services.
18. It has also been recommended that groups do not congregate outside of church at the door, the gate or in the carpark and that everyone adheres to the social distancing requirements.
19. Due to the layout of our church, the size of our pews and the fact that we only have one entrance/exit, numbers permitted in the building will be assessed on an on-going basis. They will be assessed using Government guidelines, along with Church protocols, for church services. This remains at 2M. When we have reached our maximum number, it may be that we will need to introduce a system whereby everyone will have the opportunity to return to a Church Service but we will let you know how this will be managed if required.
20. If someone needs the use of toilet facilities during the service, a Church Warden will be available at the back of the church to open the Church Hall.
21. Sunday School, Church Mice, Junior Bible Class and other activities will not resume in the Hall until further notice and guidance has been received. However, we will be in touch with families of Sunday School children in due course, as we are preparing a programme of on-line teaching for them from September.
22. We are looking into the possibility of relaying the Sunday Service by Facebook Live. However, we are not sure if this will be feasible due to Internet Connections in Church. But again we will keep you informed if this is happening for those who are not able to join with us initially. Those unable to come out to church will be able to access the 'Armagh Diocesan On-Line Service' and we will direct people via our Facebook page to that. A different Church in the Diocese is responsible for this each week.
23. For Baptisms and Weddings, please speak to the Rector for further guidance and advice.
24. Funeral protocols remain the same at the time of writing this letter, with immediate family only at the graveside. Again, this is under continuous review.

I know this is a long list of guidelines, but it is hoped that it helps to explain how best we can all be able to join together again in Church for worship, and keep everyone safe at the same time.

I look forward to seeing you all again very soon, and please continue to pray that as we make this transition back to Church, that we will ***'come into His presence with thanksgiving, and into His courts with praise.'***

Your Friend and Rector

Rev. Elizabeth Cairns

Website: mullavilly.armagh.anglican.org

Facebook: www.facebook.com/Mullavilly/