



WEST HAWTHORN UNITING CHURCH

COVID-19 1 March 2021



Policy at WHUC during the COVID-19 pandemic

The West Hawthorn Uniting Church acknowledges that this can be a particularly stressful time for our community, and as we progress through 2021, many will still feel vulnerable, frightened and isolated. Please remain caring and respectful of each other at all times.

“Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love. Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace.” Ephesians 4: 2-3

Note that over coming weeks the advice from our Federal and State authorities will still evolve and change, sometimes quite rapidly. To keep up with the latest advice please visit:

<https://www.coronavirus.vic.gov.au/coronavirus-covid-19-victoria>

Check current regulations concerning wearing **masks**. As of 11:59pm on 17 February 2021 it is no longer mandatory to wear a mask in the church or halls. Social distancing rules still apply, as do maximum numbers for each space.

At our church:

**** Registering attendees.

QR codes are available and are to be used by everyone using our property.

We require you to keep records electronically. A ‘greeter’ will be required on every door by which the public can enter. Their role is to ensure that everyone entering the building registers via the QR code. For attendees who do not have a smart phone or tablet device, the greeter will need to register them on the greeter’s smartphone or tablet.

Property –

There will continue to be additional attention to hygiene, disinfection of frequently touched objects such as door handles, sinks and taps. There are adequate facilities for hand washing. Hand sanitiser and disinfectant wipes are available. Posters have been placed around the church centre.

Throughout the centre there are limits to numbers of people who can use our spaces. There are indicated throughout the centre. The 2 metre rule applies,

Playgroup – Currently in recess, and that will continue for the immediate future.

Meetings and other activities – Avoid unnecessary meetings. Look at alternatives such as email communications, use of zoom etc and postpone non-essential gatherings and functions when appropriate.

Groups using our facilities must appoint COVID monitors or greeters who ensure all participants are registered (QR code – see above), obey social distancing rules, and comply with current mask rules.

Food and drink

If meeting on site please note:

No sharing of food, drink, crockery, utensils, vessels or other equipment permitted. It is recommended that single use items are used to serve food or drink. It is recommended that one person serves or distributes food or drinks. For example, one person uses the urn for hot water for tea, another serves food to individuals using a utensil/tongs.

Worship – Members are asked to stay home if feeling unwell. Avoid hugs, kisses and handshakes. For *Passing The Peace*, consider facing the person with hands pressed together at the heart and a slight bow of the head.

Holy Communion – Care will be taken when preparing bread and wine, with individual glasses for juice and pre-cut bread. Those preparing the elements will wash hands and wear gloves. The minister presiding should cleanse hands thoroughly and visibly, immediately before handling the bread and wine. Anyone assisting should do likewise.

Pastoral care – Opportunities for face-to-face pastoral contact may diminish. Home visits may not be welcomed. Phone and email contacts will be encouraged. Hospitals and aged care facilities may be quarantined, preventing access to patients and elderly members of the congregation. Be especially aware of needs and vulnerability of frontline medical staff, including hospital chaplains.

Stay calm – treat each other with respect and understanding.

Keep Calm but don't soldier on. Anyone can catch this virus and be required to self-isolate and follow medical advice. Please take care of yourselves at this time.

This policy is based on statement and advice from the Victorian government, and from the Synod of VicTas, NSW & ACT