



The Methodist Church – Cardiff Circuit (2/09)

www.cardiffmethodist.org.uk

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To all staff, Circuit preachers and Senior Church Stewards

Dear All,

I write to you with reference to minimising the risk of spreading Swine Flu. As a Circuit staff we were discussing the subject at our recent staff meeting and it was felt some guidance would be helpful. I hesitate to write with some of these comments because they are open to misinterpretation; please can I ask that you deal with these issues sensitively and caringly. Where you have members in the congregation who are impacted by these comments can you seek to ensure that their concerns and needs are met and that they are cared for in practical ways? If we take these minimal steps they can be implemented with little interruption to our normal pattern and yet should be effective in reducing the risk of contributing to any spread in the Swine Flu pandemic. I attach the relevant page from the Methodist Church Web-site which can be viewed on:

<http://www.methodist.org.uk/downloads/news-swine-flu-august09-240809.pdf>

But I also give what I view are the key things we should do to minimise the risk of spreading Swine Flu.

In worship:

- In our worship it could be more helpful if, for the duration of this risk period that we refrain as congregations from physical expressions of the peace.
- Use individual communion cups and ensure that the bread and wine is distributed by those administering communion and not passed from member to member.
- Those handling the elements in preparing for, and during, communion should use antibacterial gel on their hands before taking part.

General guidance:

- If you feel as though you have a heavy cold coming on, or feel generally unwell, then please do not attend church. This includes preachers, communion stewards and church stewards.
- As churches, ensure we have antibacterial gel available for people to use.
- Ensure bins are emptied frequently and consider making tissues available.
- Where catering facilities are provided ensure all involved in preparing and serving food follow strict hygiene procedures to reduce the risk of cross infection.

To those involved in Pastoral support of those with possible Flu:

- Please consider whether a visit is essential. Would a telephone call be as effective?
- Where someone has flu can we seek to ensure they have the support they need – someone to keep in touch, to pick up medicines and food etc

I recognise this puts extra responsibility on church stewards and it raises the question of what response is made if a preacher cannot turn up. I suggest you assess the local circumstances and then decide. I am including, for churches, a copy of a reader's service and more are available from the circuit office. Many churches have a wealth of resources available in the local congregation and faith sharing on an occasional basis can be enriching. It is also possible to decide to join with a neighbouring congregation if this was thought appropriate.

It might be that the situation never arises but I hope that by following this guidance we can continue to show our care both for individuals and the communities in which we seek to live out our Christian faith in a responsible manner.

Yours in Christ

We are a Fair Trade Circuit

