

St Thomas à Becket to reopen in July

Dear friends,

We are very happy to be able to tell you that we will be reopening St Thomas à Becket for a short service of Morning Prayer on Sunday, 5th July, 10.30 a.m. As a result of the ongoing crisis, churches are required to offer shorter services for a greatly reduced number of people so that hygiene and safety regulations can be strictly observed. Full Holy Communion services are not yet possible. Until our locum arrives, Morning Prayer will be led by members of the congregation. If there are too many people for the 10.30 service, it may be possible to offer a second service at 11.15 a.m.

Good news on the locum front – Rev. Dr Nick Fisher and his wife will be coming to Hamburg from the UK in mid-July and staying with us until mid-September. It will be wonderful to have a priest to help us again and short Communion services (with wafers only, no wine) should then be possible. Fr Pete Wright will continue to prepare his virtual services until Rev. Dr Fisher comes.

Now here come the necessary rules and regulations:-

1. As we must, by law, restrict the number of worshippers so as to leave the required space between people, no more than 30 will be able to take part in Morning Prayer.
2. Do not come if you have any cold or flu symptoms. Older parishioners and those with chronic medical conditions are advised, both by the Nordkirche and our Bishops Robert and David, to stay at home. Please don't come if you are concerned about any possible risks.
3. You must leave your contact details so that you can be contacted should an infection occur. Please bring your own pen.
4. You must wear a face mask at all times. Please disinfect your hands when you enter the church. Disinfectant will be provided.
5. There will be a printed service sheet available. Please take one. You do not need anything else!!
6. There must be at least 2 m distance in every direction between worshippers, although families who live in one household may sit together. The sidespeople will help you get seated. The galleries may not be used!
7. Singing is not allowed because of the increased risk of infection.
8. There will unfortunately be no refreshments after the service as we are not allowed to serve food or drink or gather in close-knit groups at the back of the church. Please keep your distance when greeting friends, however hard this might be!
9. The collection will not be taken during the service. There will be a basket at the door for your donations as you leave the church.
10. Junior Church will not yet be able to take place, nor will it be possible for families with babies and small children to use the west room. Children may not run around during the service. Families with young children are therefore advised not to come to church until the situation has improved.

Although restrictions are gradually being lifted, the emphasis is on gradually. It is not, and cannot be, business as usual. We are sorry that we can't accommodate the whole congregation yet, but it is our top priority to ensure your health and safety and we are sure you understand.

The wardens and the Church Council