

The Bishop of Carlisle
The Right Reverend James Newcome
Bishop's House, Ambleside Road,
Keswick CA12 4DD

To: All clergy/chaplains

Dear Colleague,

Covid Plan B – Revised Church Guidance Issued

Further to my email of yesterday (and as promised) may I point you to revised guidance issued by the Church of England nationally in light of a move to the mandatory wearing of face masks in places of worship as from today (Friday 10 December).

The document - [COVID-19 Opening and managing church buildings](#) – has now been updated to reflect the legal stipulation that people must wear face coverings in churches, unless exempt, in light of the emergence of the Omicron variant. Whilst the latest Government advice does allow for masks to be removed for singing, my advice is that you continue to give strong consideration to the wearing of masks at all times in church.

May I also draw to your attention the rules around NHS Covid Passes, namely “While the NHS COVID pass will become mandatory for entry into venues where large crowds gather, this requirement will **not** apply to our places of worship. Communal Worship, Weddings, Funerals and other ceremonies to mark key life events will all be exempt.”

Finally, and bearing in mind the threat posed by the Omicron variant, may I again remind you that whilst the common cup may be shared, we wish to make clear that, given continued potential risks to health, it remains permissible for the president to be the only person who receives Holy Communion in the form of wine.

Again, please be assured that should the situation change in any way I shall make further contact.

With my very best wishes,

+James