

Saint Peter's Church

William Street, East Maitland

Serving the Communities of Ashtonfield, East Maitland,
Four Mile Creek, Louth Park, Metford, Pitnacree & Tenambit



5 June 2020

LETTER FROM YOUR PARISH PRIEST

Dear Friends

It is with both excitement and trepidation that I write to inform you that we have received permission from the Bishop to recommence services of worship at St Peter's from the weekend of 13th/14th June. Excitement because it will be wonderful to share with you in worship again in the same place and trepidation because our time together will be unlike what we were used to before COVID-19, and we will have to adjust to a different way of being together.

We have approval to hold services in St Peter's Church on Sunday mornings at 7.30am and 10.30am, on Saturday evenings at 6.00pm and on Wednesday mornings at 8.00am. The extra space between the Sunday morning services is to allow time for the required cleaning of the church between services and so that there is not cross-over of people leaving the first service and arriving for the next service. At each service there will be a limit of 50 people who can attend.

You will also need to book a place at your preferred service in advance by either phoning or emailing the Parish Office. The Parish Office is open Tuesday – Friday. The closing time for booking into a weekend service will be midday on Friday. The closing time for booking into a Wednesday service will be midday on the day before (Tuesday). You will only be able to attend the service that you have booked for and you will need to phone or email to book **every week** for **each service** you would like to attend. When you book your place at a service Maryka will ask for your name and contact telephone number to go on the register of attendees for each service.

There will be a process for arriving at church and you will be taken to allocated seating. This means that we will probably not sit in our usual places. We will also be sitting in designated positions and this includes members of the same household observing social distancing in church. Our services will not have communal singing and we will have communion with bread only. There will also be a procedure for moving up for communion and again for leaving the church building.

Things will be very different and whilst it will be wonderful to be worshipping together again in St Peter's it will take some adjustment. I am confident that we will be able to make this transition together well. There will be times when we will need to be patient with each other and in all these things I pray that we will be gentle with each other in this time of transition.

Attached to this letter is a document which goes into some of the details more thoroughly. I ask that you read it carefully. We look forward to hearing from you as you begin booking your place from next Tuesday. I am really looking forward to seeing you in church.

With the assurance of my prayers
Your Priest and brother in Christ

PROCEDURE FOR ATTENDING SAINT PETER'S CHURCH UNDER COVID-19 SAFE RETURN TO CHURCH FRAMEWORK

1. Services are strictly limited to 50 people, all of whom are required to register in advance. Your name and phone number will be recorded on the Service Attendance Record Sheet.
2. Church Service Times will be as follows:
 1. Saturday at 6pm
 2. Sunday at 7.30am and 10.30am (10.30am service to also be livestreamed)
 3. Wednesday at 8am
3. If you plan to attend a Church Service you are required to register to attend in advance. **You cannot attend a service unless you have registered in advance.** This can be by phone or email as follows:
 - a. Phone the Parish Office on 4934 5303
 - i. Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, 9am – 3.30pm
 - ii. Friday 9am – 12noon
 - b. Email the Parish Office at office@eastmaitlandanglican.org prior to 12noon on the Friday prior to the service.
4. Please arrive no more than 15 minutes prior to the service. On arrival at church entry will be via the West doors where you will be welcomed and your name checked off against the Service Attendance Register. You will be directed to one of two Hand Sanitising Stations where you will be able to pick up the Liturgy Booklet for the day's service. We ask that you take this booklet home with you at the end of the service.
5. A collection plate will be available at each Hand Sanitising station.
6. Social distancing of 1.5m will be strictly enforced. Every individual is required to sit 1.5m apart from others. Ushers will direct you to your seat – please comply with directions. The ONLY exception will be families with small children who are asked to attend the Sunday 10.30am service.
7. Communion will be given from the steps at the front of the aisle. Ushers will direct you to/from your seat. Communion will be received in bread only.
8. At the end of the service you will be directed by the ushers to leave in an orderly manner and you will be asked to use the hand sanitising station as you exit.
9. There will be no socialising or refreshments at the end of each service.
10. Please do not congregate at the end of the service – leave the church promptly and do not gather outside. We ask that the car park and nearby street parking is cleared as quickly as possible at the end of the service.

We thank you for your compliance with these regulations that have been set in place to allow parishioners and ministry staff to stay safe as church services resume in our community.