



Archbishop of Sydney

23 June 2021

Dear brothers & sisters

Greetings in the strong name of our Saviour Jesus!

Thank you for your prayers for Cailey and me as we have stepped into this new role in the life of our diocese. We count it a great privilege and look to the Lord to be our helper and guide.

I am writing to you regarding today's announcement of new COVID-19 measures.

Although the latest Public Health Order has not yet been published, from media releases we know the key points of the new restrictions for the Greater Sydney area, including the Blue Mountains and Wollongong (now also including Shellharbour LGA) -

- The one person per four square metre rule has been re-introduced for all indoor and outdoor settings, including weddings and funerals
- Masks are compulsory in all indoor non-residential settings, including places of worship, workplaces, and at organised outdoor events
- Singing by audiences at indoor shows or by congregants at indoor places of worship is not allowed
- Visitors to households will be limited to 5 guests — including children
- Residents or workers in the City of Sydney, Waverley, Randwick, Canada Bay, Inner West, Bayside, and Woollahra local government areas, cannot travel outside metropolitan Sydney for non-essential travel.
- Restrictions on children and youth include no singing, the 4 square metre rule for group activities, and children in the 7 named LGAs cannot travel outside Greater Sydney for camps. Details are here. <https://sydneyanglicans.net/covidchurchworkerfaqs#YouthAndChildrensMinistry>

In relation to song leaders, there has been no updated guidance from the Department of Health so I suggest we use the previous guidance when congregational singing was prohibited, namely -

- Up to 5 song leaders can sing indoors. They are to be 1.5 metres from each other, facing the same direction and at least 5 metres from the audience. The congregation should not participate in the singing.

I'm grateful to Bishop Gary Koo and Ms Vikki Napier for their role in liaising with the government and ensuring that the Sydney Anglicans COVID-19 FAQs are updated. Feel free to contact Vikki with specific questions (vikki.napier@sydney.anglican.asn.au).

Our COVID FAQ page is <https://sydneyanglicans.net/covidchurchworkerfaqs>

No doubt, there is an element of disappointment and fatigue with the return to more restrictive measures. For some of you, and those in our churches, it will be very frustrating, especially for those planning school holiday trips. For others, it may even be frightening. Your ministry of the Word, and in pastoral care is all the more precious as, 'we who are wearied by the changes and chances of this fleeting world, may rest on the Lord's eternal changelessness' (to paraphrase the Evening Collect).

Thank you for all you are doing for the Lord and his people.

In Christ

Kanishka Raffel

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