

Protocol for The Church Centre and The Church Office cleaning during the Covid 19 pandemic May 2020: for staff return to work and live streaming activity only

Agreed by the VZW chair and a VZW board member¹ on date

1. Health and safety issues regarding the return to use of Hornzeelstraat 24 as a church office and/or the rehearsal of, or live recording and streaming of, services from week commencing June 1st are governed by Belgian legislation. There is a provision in the Security Council's rules², for recording religious services with up to 10 people including the technicians, for use online. A number of key documents provide the regulations and guidelines for this protocol:
 - a. the Belgian government Policy document (Version 2020-05-04v2), **Safe at Work: Generic guide for combatting the spread of COVID-19 at work**³
 - b. guidance from the Central Committee of the Anglican Church in Belgium (May 16 2020), **Coronavirus-Covid-19 – Exit strategy and the resumption of church services and activities and an update received July 2nd**
 - c. letter from the Diocese in Europe (May 2020), **Anglican Churches in Belgium Guidelines for Reopening**
 - d. European Agency for safety and health at work (April 2020): **Covid 19 Back to the workplace Adapting workplaces and protecting workers**⁴.
2. Due to the availability of building space and the guidelines as listed above, it is not envisaged that St Paul's Tervuren will attempt to meet for gathered worship for some time yet. However with the opening up of restrictions it is planned to start livestreaming one service per week from Hornzeelstraat 24, 3080 Tervuren, known as **The Church Centre**, in particular the use of **The Church Centre Hall**. In addition a number of essential administrative tasks will be carried out in the upstairs church offices, known as **The Church Office**. All other acts of worship and meetings will continue to be pre-recorded videos created by congregation members filming in their own homes or meetings over video conferencing. **Note:** there will be no sharing the peace during the livestream or celebrating the Eucharist. The rest of this document contains the practice of ensuring that the livestreaming of services in The Church Centre and occasional work in The Church Office proceeds safely and in line with regulations.
3. The responsibility to ensure that all requirements are complied with lies with the two churchwardens, who act as 'managers' for the VZW, however this may be delegated to the following people:
 - a. Chaplain
 - b. Administrator
 - c. Worship leader

¹ I still need a reference for the technical sentence for the role of what are termed 'managers' in a VZW

² Belgium National Security Council measures <https://www.info-coronavirus.be/en/faq/#005>

³ https://www.feb.be/globalassets/publicaties/veilig-aan-het-werk---generieke-gids-om-de-verspreiding-van-covid-19-op-het-werk-tegen-te-gaan/generieke-gids-v2-2020-05-04_en---low.pdf

⁴ file:///C:/Users/Start/Downloads/COVID19_EU_guidance.pdf

4. All who are likely to participate in the above activities, and all staff attending The Church Office must be provided with accessible information, clear instructions and appropriate training on the measures, ensuring that this information and these instructions are properly understood and followed. The instructions need to be repeated regularly for new participants. A page summary will be printed and displayed throughout the premises.

5. **Before leaving home:** anyone who feels ill stay at home; the toilet should be used and washed. Those arriving by public transport (train, bus) must follow the instructions of the transport companies.



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6. The Church Centre Hall is 105m² which permits a team of a maximum of 10 people, allowing for between 1.5 and 2m social distancing to be in place, for singers this is 3m.
7. People must enter the doorways one at a time distanced, at least 1.5 metres apart. People must not linger to socialise after the rehearsal or recording or meeting is completed.
8. **Upon arrival:**

- a. please maintain social distancing – sadly no handshakes, hugs or kisses 😞
- b. participants must wash hands. This can be with alcohol gel unless visibly soiled, if soiled use liquid soap and dry on paper towel
- c. one person should wear gloves to switch on the electrical switches on the mains cupboard to avoid any alcohol contacting the electricity points. These should be taken off carefully and disposed of into the lined bin by the door which has a foot opener.

9. **Cleaning:** in order to facilitate the livestreaming, music groups will need a separate time to rehearse. Therefore the hall will need to be cleaned twice a week, once between rehearsal and the livestream and again between the livestream and the rehearsal. This will include:

- a. **on arrival** using disposable paper towel, cleaning with disinfectant cleaning alcohol, all table tops, window and door handles and light switches
- b. using the disinfectant spray or wipes provided toilet door handles, taps and toilet seats/lids/flush will be wiped after each use
- c. the employed cleaner will in addition, use disposable paper towel, cleaning with bleach the toilet, flush handle, washbasin, toilet brush and taps weekly
- d. safety glasses and household rubber gloves for those using bleach and similar cleaning products must be worn
- e. other surfaces need to be wiped down or sprayed with cleaning alcohol which is then left to work
- f. the kitchen will be out of bounds



- g. where possible the toilet should be used for emergencies only. If used, hands should be dried after washing with a paper towel and this towel used to turn off the tap. The paper towels should be disposed of into the lined bin by the door which has a foot opener
- h. waste bins should be double lined with a plastic bag so that they can be emptied without contacting the contents. A supply needs to be left next to the bins

- i. all fabric furniture will either be removed or indicated that they cannot be used. A trolley of the plastic chairs should be left at all times in the main hall. Any chair to be used needs to be disinfected before and after each use
- j. all doors will remain open to minimise touching door handles, windows can be opened for ventilation and when weather allows, the patio sliding door also
- k. each person will be informed to bring their own alcohol hand gel and where possible their own masks, in addition, alcohol hand gel, masks and gloves will be provided at the entrance and additional equipment for the weekly cleaner.

10. Setting up:

- a. There is sufficient space for participants to be the recommended 1.5m away from each other and more if needed. The space between each person needs to be doubled for those who are singing. Positions will be marked out on the floor using coloured tape and a record of who attended which session will be taken and entered by the ministry leader on ChurchSuite
- b. If people need to be closer together than 2m (e.g. the team managing technology equipment) then facemasks must be worn
- c. Gloves will be worn when setting up equipment. Items that will get regularly touched, such as music stands, mic stands and microphones will be wiped down after each use and not shared
- d. Musicians will bring their own instruments, except for the keyboard which will be wiped down after each use. No wind instruments may be played.

11. When leaving:

- a. Whoever is responsible for final cleaning after an activity should wear gloves to clean, dispose in the binbag and then use gel before leaving
- b. All rubbish should be taken home tied in the double binbags and disposed of in the domestic rubbish
- c. On arrival home: hands should be washed.

12. **The decision to return to work in The Church Office for the chaplain, administrator, bookkeeper and ministry team will be made by the chaplain and wardens together in line with the Belgian Government and Diocesan guidelines.**

13. In the case of needing to work in The Church Office the above applies with the addition of the following requirements:

- a. attention must be paid to the hygiene and cleaning of smartphones, keyboards and computer mice, mice pads, printer and photocopier machines before and after use
- b. staff are asked to bring any drinks and snacks with them and to take them away at the end of the session
- c. ensure adequate and regular ventilation of work areas, including leaving the door to the corridor ajar and windows open while facilities are occupied.

14. **Reviewing and Ending this protocol**

The protocol will be reviewed as frequently as Belgian Government or Diocesan guidelines change or use of the facilities changes. In normal circumstances it will be reviewed annually

15. **Finance**

Any additional costs shall be approved by the treasurer and/or Chaplaincy Council, in line with churches own financial guidelines, and managed by the Kerkfabriek.

Appendix 1

Checklist for those responsible for cleaning items that have been used

	Action: please initial alongside each cleaning action completed	After each use	Twice Weekly
1	Table tops	✓	
2	Plastic chairs	✓	
3	Window handles	✓	
4	Door handles	✓	
5	Light switches	✓	
6	Music stands	✓	
7	Microphone stands	✓	
8	Keyboard	✓	
9	Other electrical equipment used for music or recording	✓	
10	Office equipment: computer keyboard & mouse; printer; copier	✓	
11	Washbasin taps	✓	
12	Toilets		✓
13	Toilet seats, lids and handles	✓	
14	Bins cleaned		✓
15	Bins emptied	✓	
16	Floor		✓
17	Check and replenish supplies of handgel; gloves; masks; paper towel; bin liners; additional cleaning materials		✓

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Appendix I: Recommencing gathered worship

The following instructions and guidance are based on a series of documentation issued by the Diocese in Europe Guidance for Church Officers on public worship and the Central Committee of the Anglican Church in Belgium which in turn are compliant with the Federal government in Belgium. They have been adapted for St Paul's use in buildings which are borrowed or rented. The protocol is designed so that as much as is humanly possible, the safety, protection and well-being of all is assured. St Paul's gathered worship will only be held if principles of hygiene and physical distancing can be firmly adhered to as follows:

1. Ensuring hygiene prior to the start of a service or meeting

- a. All those responsible for the running of the service or meeting must be briefed on the hygiene protocol prior to taking part. That includes clergy, singers and musicians, audio visual technicians, preachers, welcomers/greeters and those volunteering in any additional capacity
- b. Scrupulous cleaning with disinfectant liquid of church facilities which are borrowed will need to be carried out before and after each use. Where chairs or pews are wooden, disinfectant wipes will be used. This should be in accordance with the main body of the St Paul's Protocol for The Church Centre and The Church Office cleaning during the Covid 19 pandemic May 2020 and take into account any additional requirements made by the parish church or other borrowed building which is being used. Door handles and hand railings need to be a particular area of focus
- c. Note, in large parish churches there will be many additional surface areas out of reach and/or which will not in any normal use be touched. As long as they are away from participants and congregation members these do not need to be cleaned by each user group. Cleaning personnel should be carefully briefed/trained, supplied with proper gloves and disinfectants and (if working more than singly) equipped with masks
- d. If a Communion service is being held, particular attention should be given to cleaning vessels, any shared vestments and cloths used in the service. For further detail see section 6, General Liturgical Instructions and guidance.
- e. In some buildings, depending on location, it may be appropriate to air the building by opening a window(s) ahead of the service.

2. Hygiene practices for individuals attending Church

- a. Those with symptoms of Covid19 or other respiratory or flu-like illness, or an elevated temperature, or who are particularly vulnerable to infection should not attend public services, but join worship, as available, through online streaming or other media broadcast
- b. Anyone who has attended church and subsequently develops symptoms of Covid 19 should contact their health care provider first and then inform the Church office if they test positive. Further advice would then be sought from the Anglican Council as to additional measures that need to be taken.
- c. For individuals attending church: carrying of tissues and using them to catch coughs and sneezes, and taking them home in a small plastic bag to dispose of in the regular

rubbish collection continues to be important. In addition to this, it is recommended that each individual or each family carry a small bottle of hand sanitizer

- d. The use of face masks by the clergy and by all those with lay volunteer responsibilities is highly recommended to reduce transfer of respiratory droplets into the environment. Wearing of face masks is mandatory when entering and exiting the church building for congregation members from the age of twelve attending services and meetings in any of the Tervuren gemeente parish churches. It is then optional to remove the mask during the service while maintaining social distancing. In order to ensure people to feel more comfortable if they choose to continue to wear a mask, one area of the side seating will be retained for them. At least one member of the leadership will sit there and wear their masks throughout.
- e. Hand sanitiser will be provided at the building entrance and everyone entering the building will be asked to use it to clean their hands
- f. Toilets are not in general use. If emergency use is requested, the same rigour must be applied as in the main body of the St Paul's Protocol for The Church Centre and The Church Office cleaning during the Covid 19 pandemic May 2020.

3. Welcoming into Church

- a. A system for registering attendance in advance via ChurchSuite or the website is in use. This allows appropriate preparation for each service or ministry activity and also enables the contact tracing for Covid 19 cases if necessary. It is recognised that limiting or refusing entry to a church is always undesirable and difficult for chaplains
- b. For those involved in leading the service named seating places may be indicated by a card placed on the seat which must be thrown away afterwards.
- c. All welcomers /greeters should wash their hands before leaving home and on arrival with an alcohol-based sanitizer. There should be no handshaking, kissing or other physical touch
- d. A designated welcomer stands at the entrance to explain everything before congregation members enter
- e. Churchwardens are overall responsible to ensure that ordered entry, seating, movement for communion if taking place, and exit is maintained. If church is filled to permitted capacity, no further entry is possible
- f. Attendance of each person on arrival at the service should be noted by checking off the registered list of attendees. No pen or pencil must be shared
- g. For participants who arrive who have not registered in advance, the welcomers must ask them to remain away from the people arriving, preferably outdoors, before being seated if sufficient spaces are known to remain. If there remain sufficient seats in accordance with the distancing requirements they may be admitted and counted up to the required number. Their names must be added to the registration list. Registrations must be checked against people arriving with a personal, not shared, pen or pencil. This measure is needed only to facilitate any Covid 19 contact tracing Pre- and post-service
- h. Where possible, entrance and exit doors should be secured in an open position from before the time when people gather for the service until after the last worshipper has left.

4. Seating in church in accordance with physical distancing requirements

- a. The number of people permitted into the worship space must strictly adhere to separation guidelines – this means that for each venue where St Paul's congregation meets, the useable footprint of the building will have a maximum number of people for the square metreage, working on 4 square metres per person ⁵
- b. Seating arrangements in churches should ensure that there is a two-metre distance between persons in all directions during a service, whether this is standing or sitting. This is the recommendation and is safest, though the law and practice in some jurisdictions may allow for a smaller distance. This is the requirement that should also determine the seating capacity of a church. Note: guidance from the ACC states that the maximum number at a service from 5 July is raised to 200 people, as long as there is sufficient space given the 2m distancing and the maximum number at a service from 1 August is raised to 400 people, as long as there is sufficient space given the 2m distancing. However with the venues currently available to St. Paul's at present (5/7/2020) the numbers must remain as they are
- c. Seating patterns should not be changed during the service - this is particularly important during a prayer time within a service or for a specific prayer meeting. Huddles cannot be formed to pray together and the social distancing must remain
- d. The seating areas will be indicated in a way to aid 'distancing'
- e. Families and individuals who live in the same household can sit together if they are living together
- f. Volunteers will guide congregation members arriving, to their seats
- g. Church balconies should not be used, as they are difficult to keep safe
- h. Outdoor services are now permitted, as long as they respect all the rules applicable to indoor worship, including physical distancing of 2m.

5. Music: singing & instruments

- a. An organist or other musician or a small group of musicians safely distanced is possible
- b. There is to be no congregational singing. Congregational singing is problematic because singing appears to increase significantly the transmission of potentially infected droplets. A single cantor or small group of singers/choir (3 to 5 people) could sing, keeping greater distance from each other and the congregation
- c. Again, to reduce the possibility of transmission of potentially infected droplets, wind instruments should not be used to provide music or musical accompaniment.

6. General Liturgical Instructions and guidance

- a. At the beginning of a service or prayer meeting the leader should make the following statement as appropriate to the event: *"We are glad to offer this service/prayer meeting/other from Name of church. During the coronavirus pandemic, we are completely respecting and observing the special measures imposed by the National*

⁵ For St. Jan's Tervuren (800 sq m) the maximum number permitted is 200 and for St. Katharina in Duisberg (550 sq m) up to 137 worshippers can attend. Note: these numbers include children.

Security Council to reduce the impact and spread of the coronavirus. We are observing the hygiene and physical distancing measures in force. We are meeting together in worship in faith and hope, and at the same time we are following the measures necessary to keep ourselves and the whole local community safe"

- b. Liturgy should be shown on screen or printed and made available to be picked up rather than being distributed by hand. All printed material used by individuals must be taken away by them and disposed of in their own normal rubbish disposal at home
- c. Use of worship and hymn books is not permitted. Congregation members may be encouraged to bring their own Bibles
- d. The congregation is encouraged to join in with spoken prayers and liturgy
- e. A slightly shorter liturgy may be appropriate in order to keep the service to a maximum of one hour. Increasing the number of services may be helpful in addressing the safety and capacity questions
- f. Readers, preachers, leaders of intercessions etc., should take care not to touch lecterns or pulpits
- g. There should be no Gospel or Communion procession
- h. During a Communion service, instead of shaking hands with neighbours at the peace, a sign of reconciliation and greeting can be conveyed in a different form, which should continue at a distance
- i. Holy Communion is distributed in the form of bread/wafer only. Both elements will be consecrated, but the wine should not be distributed. [It is a clear principle of Anglican theology that the sacrament of Holy Communion is present and complete in either of the consecrated elements]
- j. For the time being, it is preferable that only the presiding chaplain handles the vessels and administers Holy Communion. Given that it will be in one kind for now it is much easier to control hygiene if this is one person's responsibility
- k. Chaplains presiding at the Eucharist should wash their hands in soap and water, or with an alcohol-based sanitizer, just prior to commencing the liturgy of the Sacrament
- l. The bread to be consecrated for the whole assembly should remain covered during the eucharistic prayer
- m. The words of distribution of the consecrated bread should be pronounced by the chaplain to the whole assembly corporately, so that the actual distribution of communion happens in silence
- n. *For those adults and children who would normally receive a blessing only instead of receiving Communion, the chaplain will pray a general prayer of blessing for all congregants and not for individuals*
- o. The need for the chaplain to use a face mask (except when preaching, for the sake of the hearing impaired) and a new pair each time of latex-free, gloves is emphasised. If the chaplain, for theological reasons, finds using gloves difficult, extra measures in terms of hygiene just prior to the administration of communion to the people need to be adhered to, by hand washing in soap and water, or using alcohol-based sanitiser. At all times, the chaplain in administering the sacrament must avoid contact with the hands of the communicants

- p. The bread/wafer is safest distributed with communicants approaching in a single line standing with a sensible distance between them. Church wardens will need to make appropriate and feasible arrangements for this
- q. When Catholic churches are being borrowed, note that use of the Holy Water stoups remains discontinued.

7. Children's ministry

- a. Children's Splash programmes and Attic youth programme remain on a virtual platform
- b. Crèche for infants remains suspended
- c. Single use worksheets and packets of crayons will be provided for use by children during church services. Families will be encouraged to bring their own crayons as no sharing of pens and crayons can be permitted. Children must remain with their parents throughout the service
- d. An area will be set aside in the church where parents of infants may wish to sit, at a distance of 2 metres per family unit. Parents will need to bring their own toys.

8. Formation programs and governance

- a. Home groups/ Bible Studies should remain on virtual platforms. Groups may in any case wish to take a break for the summer
- b. All meetings of governing bodies (Chaplaincy Council, Friends V.Z.W., Kerkfabriek, M.I.G. etc) should continue taking place using virtual meeting technologies.

9. Other significant services

- a. Wedding ceremonies in church are allowed, following all the mentioned measures. However the Covid-19 crisis provides opportunity to recognise anew the separation of responsibilities between church and state in regard to weddings – the legal recognition of a marriage on the one hand and the religious solemnisation on the other. The former can be safely conducted at the Town Hall with a minimal number of participants. The latter ought to be a festal event with significant numbers of guests in joyous (and often exuberant) spirit. The Bishops do not feel that the restrictions that understandably remain in place enable marriages to be solemnised in church in a manner which is appropriate to the occasion and which fulfils all our public health responsibilities. So couples who wish to have their marriage blessed in church are encouraged to wait until church buildings and the communities that staff them are restored to full operations
- b. Baptisms and healing ministries: baptisms must be conducted in ways that observe the restrictions on gatherings. Infants should be presented by members of their household living together. The parents, and not the chaplain, should hold an infant being baptized. A shell, cup, or other instrument should be used for the sprinkling of water. Chrismation, if it is offered at all, should be by means of oil dipped in a small cotton swab. Anointing the sick, as well as healing services involving the laying on of hands, is suspended
- c. Funerals: it is important for families to have the opportunity to say farewell to a loved one in church, as is now permitted. Each church community will have to observe strict social distancing, cleaning and hygiene requirements and capacity constraints. Whether a funeral service was in church or at the crematorium - families

may wish to organise a memorial for a larger gathering at a later event, as and when capacity constraints are relaxed.

10. Offerings/Collections

Offerings are to be placed in the box at the exit. Those who count the collection at the end of the service should wear a new pair of clean disposable gloves, or ensure they have hand-washed beforehand with soap and water. It is much preferred to use this as an opportunity to encourage online giving and direct debits.

11. End of the service or meeting

- a. The welcome team who explain the situation at the entrance is then present at the end to invite people to exit the building after the end of the service following the specific church directions for entrance and exit. This should be done sensitively. Those who remain for private prayer should be guided to the exit when they have finished
- b. Gathering for fellowship and refreshments in or near the premises is not permitted. Congregation members should disperse as quickly as possible
- c. Thorough cleaning in line with St Paul's Protocol for The Church Centre and The Church Office cleaning during the Covid 19 pandemic May 2020 must then be carried out prior to leaving.