**A few words from the Session Clerk on how Covid restrictions affect services in EK Old Parish Church**

**(Elders’ message 1 May 21)**

You may have noticed a further relaxation in the rules for public worship with the prohibition on the use of the balcony now removed.

Along with the earlier removal of the limit of 50 on the number of worshippers, this has increased our safe capacity for Sunday worship.

*Other restrictions – 2 metre distancing, wearing of face coverings and prohibition on singing remain however.*

The safe capacities in the sanctuary have been calculated as **60** for downstairs and **50** for the balcony.

In theory this should give us adequate capacity over the coming weeks, but it’s probably unrealistic to expect 50 members to be happy to be allocated seating in the balcony since that’s not a number we would have expected pre-pandemic. Until we see how the increased seating capacity works out, we will continue to have Glebe Street available as an alternative to the church.

All of this makes our secretary Louise’s job in sorting out Track & Trace lists a bit more complicated. When numbers requesting a place for Sunday services get close to capacity she will have to work out who’s sitting downstairs, and who’s in the balcony, or if some members would prefer to go to Glebe Street.

I would ask to you bear with us over the next few weeks till we all become familiar with these changes and to continue to watch out for emails/texts on Friday detailing your specific seating arrangements.

If, for any reason, accommodation in the balcony is not practical, it would also be very helpful if you gave advance notice of this to Louise.

Many thanks in anticipation of your cooperation and understanding.

*Alistair Walker*