**COVID-safe script**

**(written by Chris Duxbury; edit this to reflect your own congregation)**

**BRUCE:** It is great to be back at church Laura!

**LAURA:** Yes, Bruce, it is great!

**BRUCE:** No one shook my hand this morning as I arrived, they must have got up from the wrong side of the bed!

**LAURA:** What do you mean?

**BRUCE:** Well, it is not very friendly, not shaking someone’s hand.

**LAURA:** I can see what you mean, but things are different now and we have to do things differently. We have to be careful with touch. Touching is one of the main ways that people can pass on CONVID.

**BRUCE:** But, I don’t have COVID and we are not in Victoria!

**LAURA:** Yes, but to help keep everyone safe there are things that our government and church want us to do. That is why we can be here today, because we have followed the regulations and have our own safety plan, which is designed to keep everyone safe and healthy. Afterall, Jesus says that we should love our neighbour as our self. And, I am sure that we all do things to keep safe and healthy.

**BRUCE:** Oh okay, but how can we say hello to people and welcome them, without shaking their hands? There are huggers in this congregation too?

**LAURA:** Well, you can touch elbows.

**BRUCE:** What!!

**LAURA:** I will show you. *(Laura shows touching of elbows technique)* And there is even a way of saying hello with touching feet! Then there is always simply saying “hi” or “hello” or some other verbal greeting!

**BRUCE:** Well, I guess that makes sense. So, I guess we won’t be passing the peace by shaking hands?

**LAURA:** No, but we can all look at the person next to us and say “The peace of the Lord be with you.”

**BRUCE:** And what about the offering, we often just pass the plate along the row? There is a lot of touching there.

**LAURA:** Yes, you are right Bruce, so there is now a box that is over there *(point it out)* as you arrive.You can put it in there. This will cut down on ‘cross contamination’.

**BRUCE: ‘**Cross contamination’?

**LAURA:** Yes, that’s what we have been talking about. We can pass on germs just by touching something that someone else has touched. That is why we sanitize our hands as we come in and leave, and why everything has been disinfected by the cleaners, to cut down the likelihood of cross contamination. In order to stop the spread of viruses, you have to be cautious about touching surfaces. All the surfaces that people touch need to be cleaned, like the door handles, hand rail, benches, the lectern, microphones, light switches, tables and chairs. That is why from now on people who are setting up the chairs have to wear gloves and then remove them in a special way. That is why the chairs and tables are to be left out after the service and cleaned by the cleaners before this room is used for other activities.

**BRUCE:** That’s a lot of cleaning Laura.

**LAURA:** Yes, it sure is. But as I said before, we need to do our part to get it right. That is why we don’t want people to come to church if they are not feeling well. That is why our front-door greeter is asking them how they are, and if they have been in contact with someone with COVID, or if they have been out of the state in that last two weeks.

**BRUCE:** Mmm… yes I guess I would feel pretty bad if I passed on something to someone else. And I guess we are lucky that we can come back to worship our God together. It is great just being together, even if it is in a new way. I was disappointed about being told we can’t have a cuppa here, but with what you have just said it all makes sense.

**LAURA:** As long as we following the government directions on the total number allowable in our space, and people keep the 1.5 metre distance between each other, then people can still have a chat after worship, like we always do, just without morning tea. Some churches are having morning tea, but we need to remember that this space is shared with other groups every day of the week, so not having morning tea for the time being is another way of keeping everyone safe. You should see all the regulations about having food in churches, it is much easier that we don’t have to worry about that!

**BRUCE:**  Good to chat with you Laura. *(puts out his elbow and they both touch elbows)*