

Attending Worship During COVID-19 – What To Expect!

We are really looking forward to beginning to use our buildings again for gathered and public worship. This is a first step and we are doing all that we can to work with the national guidelines and ensure we are as safe as possible. We do this to protect one another and the most vulnerable in our communities. Our churches won't quite feel like we are used to, because we can't just jump back to the 'old normal' right now. To help you prepare for what our worship will be like, we thought it might be useful to share the following ideas with you:

Before you arrive:

· There will be limited capacity in our buildings. This will be based on a safe spacing between households. If we reach this capacity, we may be able to gather outside for worship – you might like to prepare for this by bringing with you a folding chair or an umbrella!

· We ask you to consider your own risk of attending an indoor gathering. While we will be taking a number of steps to keep you safe, we cannot make this risk-free. You might want to look at the NHS guidance on whether you are at higher risk of coronavirus and be guided by their advice: <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/people-at-higher-risk/whos-at-higher-risk-from-coronavirus/>

· You are welcome to wear a mask / face covering. Please remember that face coverings protect others from your germs – they are not very good at protecting you from other people's germs. They are not a replacement for good social distancing, hand hygiene, and self-isolating if you have symptoms.

· We ask you NOT to attend the service if you have:

o A new cough

o A temperature

o Lost your sense of smell or taste.

When you arrive:

· A welcomer will let people into the building in households groups. You will be asked to sanitise your hands on arrival, then go immediately to a seat in church. The next household/bubble can then be let in. Please stay 2 metres apart as you approach the building.

· In each seat, there will be a form to ask you to record your contact details. We ask you to fill this in and return to an envelope at the door as you leave the Church. These will be kept

for 3 weeks after the service and given to Track and Trace if someone from the service later tests positive for coronavirus. They won't be used for any other reason and if they are not needed for this purpose, they will be securely disposed of after 3 weeks.

- The seats in church will be arranged in groups at 2m intervals from each other. We ask you to go straight to a seat and remain there for the duration of the service.
- The doors will be open to allow some ventilation so you may notice it is a little cooler than you expect.

During the Service:

- The words you need for the service will be on a sheet placed in the pews before the service. This is your personal copy. Please take it home with you after the service or place it in the bin at the back of the church.
- Due to risk of aerosol spread, there will be no singing during the service.
- We will stay seated.
- We ask that when you are saying the responses that you speak quietly and prayerfully – again to reduce the risk of droplet spread.
- We are not able to take an offertory collection during the service, but there will be a plate at the back of the Church if you are able to make a gift to the Church as you leave.

At the end of the service:

- After the service has ended, the welcomer will ask people to leave a row at a time from the back. Please wait for the welcomer to ask you to leave.
- Please do not stop to chat while leaving the building. Once out of the building you are welcome to talk in small groups of not more than 6 in the churchyard. Please do not block other people's exit from the building. Please remember to stay 2m apart from people from other households.
- If you test positive for coronavirus up to three weeks after the service, please let us know.

We are aware that all of this sounds quite process-driven and legalistic, but it is our best attempt to follow the guidance and keep one another safe. If you would like to see a copy of our detailed risk assessment, please do ask.

As always, when we are together in worship, our focus will be God, and we pray that this time will be peaceful, inspiring and filled with his Spirit.