

Information Sheet for People Entering the Church Building for a Sunday Service

I rejoiced with those who said to me, "Let us go to the house of the Lord." (Psalm 122 v1)

Re-opening our church building will inevitably be a time of mixed emotions – joy at being able to come together to worship in our church building; sadness for the loss or absence of some members of our church communities; uncertainty about what the future “new normal” may be.

This information sheet is written as a series of questions, to offer support to you and let you know what to expect when entering the building. If you have any other questions that are not covered in this sheet, please contact Tim Dumbleton or one of the church elders.

Will the services continue to be live streamed?

We will continue to stream our Sunday morning services to avoid large gatherings in the building and to continue to reach those individuals who are self-isolating or particularly vulnerable to COVID-19 as well as to those who have joined worship for the first time online during the lockdown period.

Do I need to do anything BEFORE I enter the building?

Make a self-assessment of your own health. Anyone showing symptoms of COVID-19 (a new continuous cough, a high temperature or a loss of, or change in, their normal sense of taste or smell) should not attend the church building due to the risk that they pose to others. You should self-isolate at home immediately with other members of your household. If you test positive for COVID-19 and have been in the church building during the previous 21 days, you should contact the church office immediately so that others who were in the building can be contacted.

Will there be a pre-booking process?

Yes. The maximum capacity of people able to enter the main part of the building is approximately 60. Chairs will be arranged in small groups to accommodate households. In order to ensure we do not exceed the maximum number of people entering the building, a booking system has been set up.

If you wish to attend the building for the service, please **email** the church office by Thursday evening to make the booking for the Sunday service. You will need to provide your name, a contact number and the number of people wishing to attend in your household/group. You will receive an email informing you if space is available. Please only phone if you have no access to email, and then either on Monday or Tuesday mornings.

As you can appreciate, to fully understand demand and the numbers from individual households wishing to attend is difficult, so there will need to be understanding by all whilst we adapt to the restricted capacity. This process may change depending on demand and in light of any changes to government guidelines.

I have booked to attend a service, but can no longer attend, what should I do?

If you need to cancel your booking, please let Colette know as soon as possible so that the space can be offered to others.

Will the School car park be open?

Yes, the usual car park at Portway School will be open to park in. Everyone is encouraged to use the car park wherever possible to reduce traffic congestion outside the Church building.

What hygiene precautions do I need to undertake?

Notices will be placed around the building reminding you about hygiene and physical distancing measures. Supplies of hand sanitiser will be available in the porch/inside the main doors, it is important that it is used both going in and going out of the church building. Where possible, please bring your own hand sanitiser for use.

Should face coverings be worn?

Face coverings are required by law in places of worship, and in other public indoor settings. There are valid exemptions for some individuals and groups to not wear a face covering these are:

- Children under 11
- Those unable to put on or wear a face covering because of a physical or mental illness or disability
- People for whom wearing or removing a face covering will cause severe distress
- Anyone assisting someone who relies on lip reading to communicate

If you are exempt from wearing a face covering for one of the reasons stated above, and wish to identify yourself as so, small stickers will be made available for you to wear during the service.

You can take off your face covering to participate in the Lord's Supper and will be instructed to do so at the appropriate time.

Those who are leading and assisting in the service (for instance reading, preaching, or leading prayers) do not need to wear a face covering when participating at the front, but must do so at all other times whilst in the building.

The guidelines say face covering – can I wear a shield instead of a mask?

No. The Government guidelines state that a face covering is *'something which safely covers the nose and mouth..... securely fit round the side of the face.'*

This means that visors alone do not count as face coverings for the purpose of the new law. You can buy reusable or single-use face coverings. You may also use a scarf, bandana, hand-made cloth covering.

I have children, can they enter the building?

We warmly welcome all children and young people into our building as they explore and grow in their faith. Young children should be supervised by the parent or guardian and appropriate hygiene precautions followed. Children under the age of 11 do not need to wear a face covering.

Due to the physical restrictions of our building (particularly downstairs) we are unable to hold Seeds, JAM and other youth activities currently. This will be reviewed on an on-going basis.

All toys, toy bags and soft furnishings, have been removed so please bring your own toys/ entertainment with you. Items should not be shared with others outside your own family.

The rear hall will be available as a breakout room for parents who wish to take their child out during the service.

I am considered as at extra risk, can I come into the building?

Those at extra risk and the 'clinically extremely vulnerable' should be aware of the risks of attending public worship; this includes people who are aged 70 or older, regardless of medical conditions. The Government advice for these individuals is to stay at home as much as possible, however the decision to attend the church building is yours alone and you will be welcomed if you attend.

Will Bibles and Song Books be available?

Items that are hard to clean, or difficult to determine if they have been used will be temporarily removed from use. This includes the church Bibles, song books and other literature. Therefore, please bring your own Bible with you.

Do I need to do anything different when I enter the building?

Please arrive by 10.20am to ensure there is a spread of people entering the building over a 5-10 min period. This will also allow time for registration and moving to your seats before the live stream starts.

In line with government guidance we will keep a temporary record of visitors to the building for 21 days to assist with NHS Test and Trace. Your name and contact number will be taken when you make your booking and kept for 21 days after the service. This will help with requests for that data if needed for contact tracing and the investigation of local outbreaks.

You will be asked to move straight to your seats to avoid bottlenecks at the doors, and to ensure everyone remains socially distanced. Furthermore, in line with Government guidance, wherever possible people should minimise conversation with anyone outside of the group they've come with.

Will the layout of the building be different?

The usual parts of the building will be open; however, a one-way flow will be in operation. The way into the building will be via the doors next to the Co-Op on Blenheim Parade. The exit is via the doors facing Portway School. If you need to go downstairs, please use the stairs at the Portway School entrance for going down, and the stairs at the Co-Op entrance to come up.

Posters and signs will be placed around the building to help you navigate your way around. Stewards will also be on hand to assist you.

Can I sit wherever I like?

People from the same household or "bubble" must sit together; children must stay with their parent/guardian during the service. Everyone else will always need to observe appropriate physical distancing (2 meters). Chairs will be placed at the appropriate distance, so should not be moved during the service. Where possible, please sit on a group of chairs with minimum number of seats needed for your group. Stewards will help with ensuring you are sitting at a safe distance from other people.

What will the format of the service be?

The service will largely be in the same format as the current services being streamed online. Although as we begin to explore different ways of doing things, formats may change. Several activities will not immediately restart, these include SEEDs, JAM, GIG and IMPACT, but work is on-going to explore ways of restarting these ministries.

Will there be singing?

Singing is not permitted. A range of worship songs will be used throughout the service including rerecorded songs and reading aloud the song text. The playing of brass or woodwind instruments is not permitted. Those playing other instruments will be appropriately physically distanced, and the music will be at a lower volume.

Will there still be the Lords Supper?

The Lord's Supper will be held on the first Sunday of the month. You will be invited up one row at a time to receive the bread and wine. As you are invited up you will be asked to use hand sanitiser to clean your hands. Bread will be dropped into your hand by the server (who will be wearing a mask and gloves). You will then move along and take an

individual cup from nearby and return to your seat holding both elements. Once everyone has been served and returned to their seats, the congregation will be instructed to remove their face coverings and will join with those watching via live stream to take the Lord's Supper together. Face coverings must then be put back on. At the end of the service used cups will be placed on a table at the back of the hall and removed for cleaning.

I have been asked to participate in the service, is there anything I should do?

If your involvement in the service requires you to move onto the front platform during the service, before stepping up onto the front platform and when leaving the area, please use the hand sanitiser provided to clean your hands. Face masks can be removed at this point if your involvement in the service includes public speaking.

Will the Toilets be open?

All the toilets (including baby changing area) will be open, but there will be a maximum of one person in at a time (excluding parents with young children or others who need assistance). Paper towels and hot air dryers will be available to dry your hands, please dispose of the paper towels securely in the bins provided.

Will there be Tea and Coffee after the Service?

Tea and Coffee will NOT be served. If you require refreshments during the service, you will need to bring your own. Sharing of food and drink outside your own household is not permitted.

What happens at the end of the Service?

In line with government advice, we are unable to have a gathering of people in a confined space, such as using the rear hall for extended periods of chatting & fellowship. Therefore, immediately after the service the stewards will instruct you to leave the building one household at a time. Please do this promptly, observing the one-way system, and ensure you remain socially distant from other households.

It is important to ensure that you disperse quickly and do not block or obscure the areas around the building for those leaving behind you, and those in the community who maybe using the pavements.

I have items I want to share with others; can I bring them into the building?

Please minimise the number of items you bring with you. The sharing of items between individuals from other households should not be undertaken within the building. Sharing is an important aspect of being a church family and this is encouraged, but please plan to do this away from the building.

What if I become unwell whilst in a church building?

If you become unwell with symptoms of COVID-19 in the church building you should go home immediately and follow the stay at home guidance. If you need clinical advice, you should go online to NHS 111 (or call 111 if you don't have internet access). In an emergency, call 999 if you are seriously ill or injured or your life is at risk. You should not visit the GP, pharmacy, urgent care centre or a hospital.

Other people who may have been in contact with you should wash their hands thoroughly after the interaction, but they do not need to take any other specific action unless they develop symptoms themselves or are advised to do so by NHS Test and Trace. If they do develop symptoms, they should follow the stay at home guidance.

A lot seems very different from before; will changes take place as time goes on?

Whilst changes have had to be made to how the services are conducted and how we move around the building, these will be continually monitored and adjusted in line with national guidance and lessons we learn as a church

family. This is a new experience for all of us, we all will have to consider how we all use the building, serve and protect one another. There will be opportunities for everyone to shape how our building is used in the future.

When will the other ministries held in the building be reopened?

At this time work has only been undertaken to open the building for a weekly service. As we learn lessons from re-opening the building other ministries and groups will be considered. Guidance and lessons learnt from the initial risk assessment will be made available; it will then be the responsibility of each group/team, with the support from the existing Risk Assessment Team to undertake a risk assessment of their own group before restarting.