

COVID-19: Returning to St Mary's#

We're really excited that we will be able to open again for services and look forward to welcoming you soon. Please be reassured we are doing everything we can to ensure everyone's safety at this time S.

Question: Will this information change?

Answer: We are keeping up to date with Government and Church of England guidance and how we meet as a church family may change – we will keep you up to date.

Should I come to a service?

Question: When should I stay at home and not come to a service?

Answer: You shouldn't come to church if you, or someone you live with, has coronavirus symptoms or a positive test for coronavirus. You must stay at home to avoid the risk of spreading the virus at church to friends, the wider community and particularly the vulnerable. Symptoms are a new continuous cough, a high temperature or a loss of taste or smell. If you develop symptoms, you should stay at home for 7 days. If someone you live with develops symptoms, you should stay at home for 14 days. [You can ask the NHS for a coronavirus test.](#)

Q: Should I come to a service if I am clinically vulnerable?

A: If you are extremely clinically vulnerable or shielding you will have been advised not to attend large gatherings, so we advise you to continue to follow government advice and not come to church at the moment. The service will still be recorded and available on YouTube.

Q: Should I come to a service if I am aged over 70?

A: If you are over 70 you remain at increased risk of serious illness if you contract COVID 19 and the government advise that you are to stay at home as much as possible and minimise contact with others outside your household. This means that we recommend that you don't attend church in person but continue to watch the recording online. However, it is your decision should you wish to attend.

Q: Can children come to church?

A: Children are very welcome to come to church but must be supervised by parents or guardians and adhere to the same hand hygiene and social distancing practices. Please be aware that there will be no Sunday Club during the service, and the children's corner has been packed away. You are welcome to bring your own activities with you for your children to use during the service. Sunday Club will continue online.

What will happen at a service?

Q: What will be different about the service?

A: It's important that we all look after each other, and particularly those who are clinically vulnerable, so coming to church will not be the same as it was before. There will be no singing, communion or refreshments after the service.

Q: How can I look after myself and others whilst I'm at church?

A: Maintain social distancing and continue to follow public health advice at church. Stay 2 metres away from those outside your household at all times during the service. Sadly, this means we can't greet one another with a hug or a handshake. Avoid touching surfaces. Avoid touching your face. Cough or sneeze into a tissue, or your arm if you don't have a tissue available.

Q: How should I travel to church?

A: If you can, avoid public transport and sharing cars with others from outside your household. More [guidance on travel is available on the government website](#).

Q: What will happen when I arrive at church?

A: When you arrive you may need to queue outside, 2 metres apart, as you wait to enter the church. You shouldn't need to touch anything – the doors will be propped open. You will be asked to use hand sanitiser as you enter church, before being shown to your seat. If we are using them, you will then be asked to take a service sheet. We won't be handing out hymn books and there are no Bibles in the pews. You will need to take your service sheet home with you, and we would ask that you bring your own Bible with you if you can. Members of the welcome team will be available to help you know what to do.

Q: How should I move around church?

A: As you move around the church, stay 2 metres away from others you don't live with. The pews are now all 2 metres apart, so that should help you to know how far away from others you should be. There is going to be a one-way system around the church. There are arrows on the floor and the welcome team will be there to help people navigate their way round. You will move towards the front of the church via the side aisles and then back to the rear of the church via the central aisle. You will need to follow this one-way system to enter and exit the church and move around during the service.

Q: Where should I sit?

A: The pews have been rearranged so that they are all 2 metres apart. There are also marks on the pews every 2m. This is to help you sit 2m away from other people. The welcome team will show you to your seat.

Q: Will there be a cash collection?

A: There will not be a collection during the service, and we ask that if you would like to give, you do so online if possible. If you would like to give cash, the collection box will be available on your way out.

Q: Can I use the toilets at church?

A: The toilets will be open. Please use hand sanitiser before you enter and please make sure you wash your hands thoroughly afterwards. Please be aware that the gents and the ladies doors will need to stay open so that people don't need to touch it after they've washed their hands. If you don't want to touch the flush or the taps you can use the paper towels provided. If the toilet is

engaged, you'll need to wait in the pews allocated for the toilet queue in the main church. Please sit in the marked spaces and wait for the person to have started back to their seat before entering the corridor to the toilets.

Q: What will happen at the end of the service?

A: Please stay in your seat and a member of the welcome team will come and ask you to leave, one row at a time. Please move out into the churchyard so that people can exit without a bottleneck forming. If you chat with others outside your household outside, you must stay 2 metres away from them.

Q: What should I do if the fire alarm goes off?

A: In the event of a fire alarm, leave the building by the nearest fire exit. You do not need to follow the one-way system. The priority is to get everyone out quickly, but maintain social distancing if you can. Maintain social distancing at the assembly point, which is across the road at Burfield Close.

Q: What should I do if I become ill during a service?

A: If you experience symptoms of COVID 19 during the service, please tell the welcome team and go home immediately. [Ask the NHS for a coronavirus test.](#)

Q: What should I do if I develop symptoms of COVID-19 after attending a service?

A: Please let the church office know if you develop symptoms or receive a positive coronavirus test result within a week of attending a service. The welcome team will record attendance to help the NHS test and trace service.