

What to expect. August 2020 Version 5.0



Psalm 122:1 - I was glad when they said to me, 'Let us go to the house of the LORD!'

The good news is that St Peter and St Paul Church, Wincanton is opening for public worship once again. This is being achieved by adhering closely to the Coronavirus guidelines set by our Government and the Church of England. We will need to expect things to be different and provisional. We do not know how long worship will need to be organised in this way, or whether the guidance will loosen or even tighten in the weeks and months ahead. The most important thing is that we worship together as safely as we can adhering closely to the available guidance. As we have been we will endeavour to keep up to date with this guidance and inform as things change.

Until at least the mid-September- We are going to start simply and with one act of worship taking place in one of the two churches on a Sunday (St Michael's, Pen Selwood and St Peter and St Paul's, Wincanton). To comply with the guidance, we have had to simplify how we do some matters particularly how many people are involved. Everything everybody usually does is deeply valued, but this is a necessity whilst we bed in the necessary changes in approach. Our first worship services will be simple services of the word, but we will hope to move to sharing communion (*A separate "What to expect" document will be produced for taking communion*).

We will review and make decisions about the worship schedule beyond Mid-September depending on how things go. What follows gives us a brief guide of what to expect.

Preparing to come

- It is your decision whether you should be coming to worship at this current time based on your wellbeing. Please be across the latest Government guidance for you, particularly if you are in a vulnerable or extremely vulnerable group. In short, God will understand if coming to worship is not the right decision for you for this season. We will be continuing to provide online reflections (written and video), emailing newsletters and worship resources, and the biweekly mail shot until at least the end of August.
- If you have any symptoms associated with Coronavirus or are self-isolating, please do not attend church for public worship.
- Please bring with you anything you may need (no shared resources will be available – kneelers, cushions, books, toys).
- Face coverings are now required as follows from the Government guidance:- *From 8 August, face coverings are also required by law to be worn in a greater number of public indoor settings including places of worship, museums, galleries, cinemas and public libraries. There are valid exemptions for some individuals and groups to not wear a face covering in these settings. In particular, those who are leading services or events in a place of worship, and those who assist them (for instance by reading, preaching, or leading prayer) do not always need to wear a face covering, although one should be worn especially if physical distancing cannot be maintained (i.e. distributing consumables). This exemption does not apply to worshippers, who should wear face coverings consistent with the requirements for any other public space.*
- Prepare a slip of paper with your name and phone number on it.

Arriving

- Come to the South Door of the church.
- Put your slip of paper with contact information in the box by the entrance – this is within the requirements of the National Track and Trace system. If you have not brought one – we will need to ask you for your name and phone number when you arrive. These details will be destroyed after 21 days.
- Please sanitise your hands on entry and follow the one-way systems in place.
- Put any offering you may wish to give on the plate by the entrance. Giving by standing order remains the safest option for everyone, but you may give with notes / cheques / giving envelopes if you wish at the service as you come in.
- Please sit in one of the spaces where there is an ‘Order of Service’ and keep socially distant from others not in your household. Please ensure you sit at least one meter into any pew away from the aisle.
- Please stay in your seat and prepare to worship quietly.
- A maximum number of worshippers have been identified in our current risk assessment of 50.

Worshipping

- Please speak quietly when giving responses.
- We are not allowed to sing currently – so any music included will be recorded.
- Microphones cannot be shared so it will not be possible to use as many voices as normal during worship.
- The Government guidance is that worship be ‘conducted in the shortest reasonable time’.

Leaving

- Please take the order of service you have handled home with you for disposal.
- Please leave the church quietly as directed by one of the persons leading at the end of the service.
- Please sanitise your hands on exit.

Sources of the guidance – if you wish to read for yourself are: -

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-for-the-safe-use-of-places-of-worship-during-the-pandemic-from-4-july/covid-19-guidance-for-the-safe-use-of-places-of-worship-during-the-pandemic-from-4-july>

<https://www.churchofengland.org/more/media-centre/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-churches>

If you wish to discuss aspects of this – please get in touch with Alison in the first instance. She should be able to explain our reasoning – but has no control over what the guidance from the Government / Church of England requires of us. For all our safety in these challenging times, we need to work within the confines of this guidance.