

What to expect when you come back to church on a Sunday morning

It will be wonderful to be back together, but it may not feel quite the same at first. Please watch our Facebook videos to give you a bit of a feel before you come. And be open to what God has in store for you in this different way of being!

I really don't want this to sound like a list of prohibitions, but we can only open church if we are able to do it safely. It might be helpful to think of these things as loving actions, rather than as an infringement of your freedom. Yesterday I heard a clergy person likening the putting on of masks and visors to putting on our vestments for a service – a holy act of getting ready for worship. I rather like that: so perhaps we make our PPE part of putting on our Sunday Best ready to worship.

We have wanted to keep church looking and feeling as much like church as possible, so we haven't gone for big yellow 2m signs on the floors, or police tape to rope areas off. This means we rely on you to maintain a social distance and to follow the guidance for a safe return to church. There will, from necessity, be some notices around. Please read these notes carefully as they will show you not only what to expect when you return, but also what we expect of each other

Who can come in?

You are encouraged to remain at home if you are vulnerable. You must also stay at home if you have any symptoms of Covid-19, if you have been advised to stay at home through NHS Test and Trace, or if you have recently travelled to somewhere that requires a quarantine on return. If you become ill after attending church, please let us know as soon as possible.

Children continue to be very welcome in church but will need to remain with you in your seats. Any children's activities will be prepacked and then safely distributed to you in your seats.

Capacity

We have measured each of the churches to comply with 2m distancing rules and will indicate which seats can safely be used by placing a green and white card on them. The measurements assume people sitting on their own at 2m spacings, although you may sit with someone else in your household/bubble - and this will increase the capacity a little. (Please note that weddings, baptisms and funerals have an upper limit of 30 even where the church can accommodate more).

The capacities are as follows:

Weston under Lizard: 26	Blymhill: 23
Lapley: 14	Wheaton Aston: 19

We don't want to use a booking system if we can help it but, if we find we are turning people away because we are full, we will introduce one. Please arrive in plenty of time to have your details taken, to sanitise and to be seated before the service begins.

Wearing masks/face coverings

The government guidelines require face coverings to be worn and we know that wearing one is considered good practice in terms of protecting others around us. I believe that mask wearing is part of our Christian call to love our neighbour and so I respectfully ask that you do unless you are exempt on medical grounds.

Arriving at church

When you first arrive, we will ask you to wait until we let you enter, and to maintain a 2m distance from others at all times. You should sanitise your hands on entry and then quickly take your seat. Please remain in your seat throughout the service and leave, maintaining 2m distance, as instructed, sanitising on your way out. A one way system may be in operation.

NHS Test and Trace

We are required to take your name and number for NHS Test and Trace purposes. In giving us this information you are giving us permission to use it solely for this purpose. Information will be kept for 21 days and then destroyed.

Comfort

Seat cushions, runners and kneelers have been removed in Blymhill, Lapley and Weston-under-Lizard. You may wish to bring your own cushion with you.

The loos at Wheaton Aston and Lapley will be available, but we ask that you put the lid down to flush, then sanitise the taps and flush after you've finished. Please let us know if any deeper cleaning is required.

Worship resources

We cannot share our usual resources due to the risk of cross contamination. Anything you need for the service will have been placed on your seat beforehand and we ask that you take it home with you afterwards.

Singing

We are not permitted to sing at the moment, or to raise our voices. Please make your responses in a normal speaking voice and not shout to be heard over music etc.

The Offertory

We cannot pass the plate for the collection during the service. Please deposit any offerings into the box on the way into church.

The Peace

We will share the peace with one another, without leaving our seats or touching one another. We can use sign language, a wave or bow, or simply smile in greeting.

Communion

The priest will celebrate communion consecrating and receiving both bread and wine. They will then don a mask/visor, sanitise their hands and bring communion to you in your seat. Communion will be distributed in one kind (bread) without touching your hands. If a blessing is requested, this will be offered without touching your head.

If you are wearing a mask, please be careful removing and replacing it. You may wish to have your own sanitiser with you to sanitise before and after communion.

Refreshments

We regret that we cannot serve refreshments after the service.

Fellowship

I know that being together in fellowship is one of our great joys and strengths in being church. However, sadly, we must still follow the wider guidelines for gatherings – so should remain at 2m from anyone who isn't in our household or bubble. I know how hard this is, but please maintain this distance both in church and as you leave. Continue to call and support one another as you have done in the last few months.

Cleaning

Where church has not been in use for 72 hours prior to a service, normal cleaning will have taken place. If it has been used in the preceding 72 hours, there will be a 'Covid Clean' prior to reopening.

We really look forward to welcoming you back when you are ready.

Please be in touch if you have any questions.