A large brick building with a mountain in the background

Description automatically generatedWelcome Back into Church

As most of you will know, we have been able to open St Mary’s for private prayer for the last couple of weeks and we are very grateful to the volunteers who have enabled this to happen. We are now able to hold services of public worship in our church buildings again and so from **Sunday 2nd August** we will be holding the following Sunday services:

**9.00am: A said service of Holy Communion,**   
alternating between Book of Common Prayer and Common Worship.

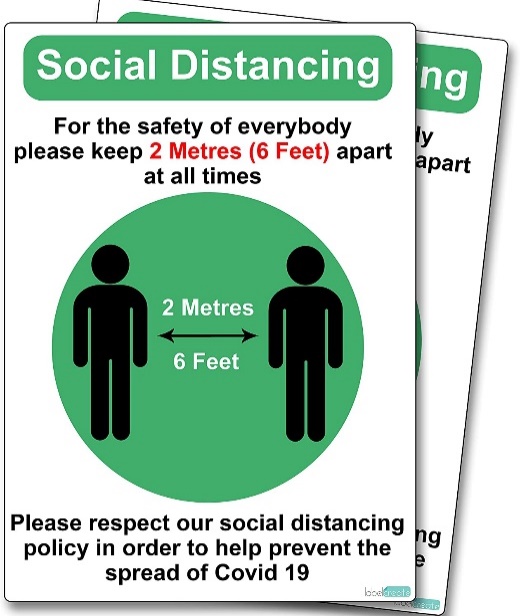
**10.30am: Online Zoom service,**   
alternating between Morning Worship and Breaking of the Bread

It would be helpful to have some idea of how many people to expect at church on a Sunday morning. Therefore, we have put together the following information to let you know what to expect and to help you decide whether you are likely to come.

General Information

The church will be cleaned, according to current Public Health England and Church of England guidelines, once a week and after any additional services, such as funerals. After each opening for private prayer any areas that may have been touched are being wiped down with disinfectant wipes.



No one should attend the church if they have any symptoms of COVID-19 (fever, sore throat, cough, muscle aches, fatigue, loss of taste or smell) and everyone entering and leaving the building must use the hand sanitizer provided. If you do need to cough or sneeze, please make sure you do this into a tissue or your sleeve and use hand sanitizer afterwards.

Places of worship are expected to observe 2m social distancing wherever this is possible. The present government guidance is that the wearing of face coverings is strongly advised for all those attending services, except when receiving Communion.

Over 70s

The decision about whether to come is yours. Government guidance continues to be that those over 70 should take particular care to minimise contact with others outside their household; so, it will be very important to continue to observe social distancing guidelines and other precautionary measures. From 1st August, for those who have been shielding, the advice is to remain cautious and stay at home where possible and, if you go out, to adopt strict social distancing and minimise contact with others outside your household or support bubble.

Children

We welcome children at these services; however, unfortunately, at present there will be no access to the children’s corner. Children would need to stay in the pews with their families. Families are welcome to bring their own books and toys with them for the children to use during the service.

Toilets

We will not be able to clean the toilets between each person, so we would ask that you avoid using them if you possibly can. If you do use them please use the disinfectant wipes to wipes any surfaces you have touched and wash your hands thoroughly.

What to expect when you arrive for a service

Please make sure you observe the social distancing guidelines on your way into church and at all times that you are in the building and use the hand sanitizer provided.

There will be no collection taken during the service. Bowls for your donations will be on the welcome desks, for you to make a donation as you enter, if you wish.

In order to keep the amount of cleaning needed to a manageable level, we will be using the seating in the centre aisle blocks of pews only, in the first instance. Seating in the side aisle pews will be used for ‘overflow’ seating and to accommodate larger households (see below).



Sit where you see this logo

You will be asked to sit in specific seats, which have been assigned to aid social distancing and you will be asked to fill in seats from the front, in order to minimise walking past others. Households/ ’bubbles’ will be able to sit together in groups or two or three. If your group is larger than this and you wish to sit together, you may be asked to sit in on of the side aisle pews.

At your seat you will find your service booklet and any other leaflets you will need. Paper leaflets must be taken home with you when you leave. The service booklets should be placed in the designated box as you leave and these will be quarantined until the next service.

At your seat you will also find a pencil and a leaflet asking for your contact details. In line with government guidance we are advised to keep a temporary record of visitors to assist NHS Test and Trace. Unless you have already given us permission to hold your contact details, the information you provide on these slips will be destroyed after 21 days. As you leave church you should drop the slip and pencil into the box provided.

What will be different from a usual service?

The main differences you will notice in the new service are:

Unfortunately, at present, there can be no singing, no physical sharing or the Peace and no prayer ministry.

Communion can only be given in ‘one kind’, i.e. the bread. Only the President will take the wine. There will be a general invitation to receive Communion, but the President won’t say any further words when they give you the bread.

When you come up to receive Communion, there will be a ‘one way’ system. You will be directed to come up the centre aisle to the Communion Table at the front of the Chancel, where you will receive the bread and then you will make your way back round to your seat via the north aisle (i.e. past the pulpit). Please remember that you must maintain social distancing as you come up for Communion.

Before you take Communion, you must use the hand sanitizer again and there will be a table at the front of church, as you approach the table, for this.

What to expect after the service

Please remain in your seats until you are invited to leave by a steward, one row at a time, starting from the back. This is to minimise any bottleneck at the back of church as people leave.

Unfortunately, government guidance advises that worshippers should not interact socially with anyone outside the group they are attending with, so you will need to exit building as soon as the service is finished and no refreshments will be served.

Remember to put your service booklet and contact slips in the appropriate containers and take any paper leaflets home with you. Everyone leaving church must use the hand sanitizer.

How can you help?

Please let Helen Hughes know if you anticipate coming to the new service in church and if you would be willing to volunteer as a welcomer for this service. Phone 01630 653505 or e-mail [stmarysmd@btinternet.com](mailto:stmarysmd@btinternet.com)

Thank you all and I look forward to seeing some of you in the flesh soon! Grace and peace. Catherine.