



St Clement's
Church

OXFORD

Returning to Church:

what to expect: update #3

We have been meeting in church for Evening Services since 19th July - learning how to gather physically again, keep safe together and follow government and Church of England guidance.

We're ready now to take the next step - so from **23rd August onwards, we will be meeting together in Church for both Morning and Evening Services.**

Here are some details, so you know what to expect ...

Our Services:

In Church

- 23rd August - Outdoor Service including Communion at 10.30am (we'll go inside if it rains) Please bring your own chair or rug if you can, but we can gladly supply chairs where needed. You are very welcome to stay for an outdoor, socially distanced picnic after the Service if you would like. Please bring your own food and drink. There will be a resource pack for parents and carers to use with their children during this Service.
- 30th August - 10.30am Service in Church. Junior Church will meet this week. Freya will be in touch with families to give more details nearer the time.

There will be a reflective Service at 6.30pm each Sunday evening.

As we learn from these initial Services, we plan by the beginning of September to pilot the following monthly Service pattern:

	10.30am Morning Service	6.30pm Evening Service
1 st Sunday of the month	All Age Worship (Children and youth join us in the Service; children's resources provided for families)	Quiet, reflective Communion Service
2 nd Sunday of the month	Communion Service (Junior Church and Youth Church meet)	Quiet, reflective Evening Worship
3 rd Sunday of the month	Morning worship (Children and youth join us in the Service; children's resources provided for families)	Quiet, reflective Communion Service
4 th Sunday of the month	Communion Service (Junior Church meets)	Quiet, reflective Evening Worship

Of course, Services will be rather different from before Covid-19. So, for example:

Service Details: Services will continue to be shorter than before lockdown, and we'll be as prayerfully creative as we can in worshipping in our new circumstances.

In morning Services, everything you need during the Service will be displayed on the screens. For evening Services, we'll supply service booklets.

We are not able to use the Church Bibles, so bring your own if you can.

Music: Whether inside or outside, sadly we cannot sing aloud in Services. However, we can worship through declaring Psalms and words of praise and thanksgiving; as well as listening and silently responding to recorded hymns and songs, or to a single singer, and (non-wind!) instruments.

Children and Youth: The Service pattern above includes St Clement's Junior and Youth Church. You are welcome to contact Freya or Dave for more information. Inside Church, we've had to remove the soft play area. However, in its place, we're providing seating and resource pack tables for families with crèche and primary age children, to help you worship and enjoy the Service, as family groups sit together in Church.

Online

Our final Sunday morning Zoom Room gathering will be on Sunday 16 August. We're looking forward to seeing each other in person for socially distanced conversations in the churchyard after Services!

However, as we pilot the new monthly pattern in Church, we are aware that for a variety of reasons, some may need to avoid physical gatherings. So we plan to provide a simple online Service each Sunday on our Youtube channel.

Over coming weeks, there'll be some reshaping/simplifying of those online Services - not least as Dave and Freya, who have been key to producing and editing our online services, hope to resume some of St Clement's mid-week missional youth and children's activities.

But we know that online provision has been greatly appreciated - so please do pray with us for continued creativity and inspiration to allow us to adapt to new sustainable patterns for our worship, both in church, and online... **...and if you'd like to volunteer to help us, whether in church or with online editing and production - we'd love to hear from you: do let us know!**

Practicalities:

COVID symptoms and shielding: Please do not come to Church if you or anyone in your household has a temperature, a persistent cough, loss of taste or smell. Similarly, please do not come if you are shielding or have been given medical advice not to go into public spaces.

Numbers: The exact number we can welcome into Church will depend on how many people come and whether they come alone, in a couple or in a family group. We are not booking ahead, so arrive in good time, and be aware you may need to wait to come in.

Entrance and stewarding: We are operating a one-way system, so please come in through the main doors under the tower (unless you need to use the ramp at the side for access) and leave through the side door. You will be asked to sanitise your hands as you enter the building. Welcomers will guide you to a place to sit.

Social Distancing: Please keep 2 metres away from people outside your household.

Registering: In order to assist the NHS Test and Trace programme, you will be asked to complete a form. Your details will be kept for 21 days, and then destroyed. The information you give will not be used for any other purpose.

Face Coverings: are now required by law to be worn in places of worship.

There are valid legal exemptions for some individuals to not wear a face covering in these settings. You can find more details [here](#).

One of the exemptions is for those leading Services and those who assist them (for instance by reading, preaching, or leading prayer) - though leaders still need to wear a face covering where physical distancing cannot be maintained (for example in distributing communion).

This exemption does not apply to worshippers, who should wear face coverings consistent with the requirements for any other public space.

Toilets: Toilets will be available for essential use.

Refreshments: Sadly we're not able to offer anything to eat and drink at the moment.

Leaving church: Welcomers will guide you to leave, one pew at a time.

Please continue to observe social distancing in the churchyard when chatting and be sensitive to those who may not want to stay.

Finally - please be assured that much prayerful thought continues to be given to the way forward for St Clement's worship and missional activities.

As we continue to pray, to listen to each other, and to respond to government and Church of England guidelines, our patterns of worship and welcome will continue to develop and respond to the challenge of this extraordinary time.

We'll keep you updated along the way. And please do join us in praying for our Church community and parish as our pattern of shared Worship continues to evolve.

Thank you!

If you have further questions or comments, please contact the Parish Office at parish.office@stclements.org.uk