

Information on Starting services in Church again

New Government Guidelines to take effect from 4th July 2020 state that church services can resume from 5th July.

In order to restart we need to do a little bit of planning to ensure we get things right and that people feel comfortable/safe/confident about attending church services.

The usual rules on entering church will still continue to be in place:

- Anyone showing symptoms of COVID-19 (a new continuous cough, a high temperature or a loss of, or change in, their normal sense of taste or smell) should not come to church due to the risk that they pose to others; they should self-isolate at home immediately with other members of their household.
- Use the hand sanitizer on the way in,
- maintain a safe distance from each other – 2 meters - the 1
- meter rule only applies if other measures are in place such as facemasks, screens or if you are facing different directions.
- People from the same household can sit together.

Our initial plan is to hold one Communion service per Sunday and move around the 4 places of worship in the benefice. Given that numbers attending each service may be restricted can we ask that you avoid visiting another church if possible. Of course, no one will be turned away but please try to be aware of what sort of seating capacity each church may have if “social distancing” is applied. As August is only a month away and some people will be away on holiday (myself included) this pattern of services will run until mid-September when it will be reviewed.

July

5th Milton. 9.30 am

12th Fifield. 11 am

19th Shipton. 11 am

26th Idbury. 11 am

August

2nd Milton 9.30 am

9th Fifield. 11 am

16th Shipton 11 am

23rd Idbury

30th Fifield

September

6th Milton 9.30. am

13th Fifield. 11 am

All the above services will be Holy Communion - Bread only, the celebrant will use hand sanitizer at the start of the service, at the offertory and immediately before the distribution of communion.

Currently singing is not permitted but this does not mean we cannot have music in our services.

Following a service in church, there will need to be a thorough cleaning, each church will need to make its own arrangements as to how this is carried out.

Rotas:

We will need to ensure that we have the following roles allocated ahead of each service:

- 2 sides people
- Sacristan
- 2 readers
- intercessors
- flowers (if possible)
- church warden or deputy

It would be helpful if someone could take a note of those attending in case there is a need to “track and Trace”.

I have been asked whether face masks should be worn in church for services and unless the government says otherwise, I would suggest *please wear a mask or covering, if you would prefer to*.

For Sunday worship the guidelines state that the number of people attending is not restricted to 30 as in the case of weddings and funerals. The number of people who can attend is based on the capacity of the place of worship following a risk assessment. Each church will need to carry out a risk assessment to determine the safe number of people that can be in church.

In order to make things run as smoothly as possible each Church will need someone to greet people (from a distance) as they enter the Church, outside or just inside if possible. A sidesperson to show people to their seats.

Orders of service to be laid out on a table – given that the service sheet will be used only once a month they will be safe to use again after having spent a month in storage. The giving of Communion will need to be carried out in a safe manner and we will need to guide people up to receive communion to avoid people getting in a “huddle” at any pinch points in the building. To this end at Milton, Shipton and Idbury there will be a one-way system so that communicants don’t need to pass each other in the aisle. At Fifield communicants will be called up by a sidesperson or church warden, pew by pew, and return to their seats before the next pew is called.

Online services to continue alongside the services in church, during July.
No online services during August as Geoffrey is on holiday.

A note on Weddings and Funerals

Banns can be read from the 5th July

Weddings are restricted to maximum 30 people including clergy, vergers, organist.
Each Church to work out seating plans.

Funerals

Restricted to maximum 30 people and each church to work out seating.

Date: 1 July, 2020 Rev Geoffrey Clement