

Worship after lockdown at St Peter's Church, Maney November 2021



Dear friends

We are now back to attending worship in the church building twice a week. These services are at 10.30am on Sundays and Thursdays. We will however continue to live stream the service on our Facebook page so you will be able to watch from home.

We are delighted to have been able to reintroduce singing as well as refreshments after the service, However, in order to keep everyone safe, we have kept in place some of the restrictions.

Please do read the following information carefully and don't hesitate to be in touch with me or our churchwardens (Paul Jenner and Rosemary Coombes) should you have any questions.

Before you arrive:

We ask you to consider your own risk of attending an indoor gathering. While we will be taking a number of steps to keep you safe, we cannot make this risk-free. If you are at risk, you can still join in the service from the safety of your home by watching live on Facebook, @StPetersManey.

We ask you NOT to attend the service if you have:

- a new cough
- a fever
- lost your sense of smell or taste
- been asked to isolate

What to bring:

You will need a **face covering** to enter the church building. Please wear a face covering that covers your mouth and your nose. Please remember that face coverings protect others from your germs – they are not very good at protecting you from other people's germs. They are not a replacement for good social distancing, hand hygiene, and self-isolating if you have symptoms.

We also ask that you bring your **own hand sanitizer** to make receiving communion easier for you.

The windows will remain open throughout the service to allow some ventilation so you may notice it is a little cooler than you expect. You might like to bring something warm to wear.

The children's corner is now open with a limited number of toys and books, you might therefore like to bring toys and/or activities for your children. We warmly welcome all children to our services.

When you arrive:

Please access through the North door (the main entrance). The link doors to the hall will also be open as an accessible entrance.

We can accommodate around 100 people at present, keeping every other pew vacant. A welcomer will be at the entrance. You will be asked to use hand sanitizer on arrival, you will be handed an order of service, and then please go immediately to a pew in church.

The pews are clearly marked to show which are in use and which are not. If you are coming in households/bubbles, you are able to sit together. Within the new guidelines, you are also able to sit with another person who is not from your household or bubble. I think this is a wonderful step forward as it will enable those who sit alone to sit with a friend or companion. If you would like to do this, please arrange it with the person before the service so that both of you are comfortable with sitting together. Please do consider sitting slightly apart for additional safety.

We ask when you have chosen your pew, you remain there for the duration of the service, other than to come out for communion. **Please do not sit down and then move to a different seat.**

Gentle music will be playing to help you pray as you wait for the service to begin. We ask that you do not gather for conversation.

During the Service:

The service will be livestreamed on our Facebook page, but those watching at home will only be able to see those in the chancel e.g. the priest, choir, someone leading the prayers etc. If someone comes to the front of the church, please note you will be on camera.

Due to risk of aerosol spread, we will continue to wear face masks throughout the service. This is particularly important during singing.

When we share the peace, we will not move from our places – we will simply wave and smile to those around us. We have also learnt how to share the peace with British Sign Language, we will continue to do this too.

The children's corner and Sunday Club are back up and running, We warmly welcome all children to join us for worship.

Toilets will be open. If someone is in the toilet, please wait outside until they come out. Wash your hands for 20 seconds before leaving the toilets and dry using a paper towel, then use hand sanitizer as you come back into the church building.

During distribution of communion:

Only bread will be distributed. The priest will wear a mask and sanitize their hands before distribution.

You will be invited to queue by a warden, please only come out when they have indicated that you can do so. As you queue, please keep a 2m distance from the person in front of you. Please use hand sanitizer before you receive the bread. You will remain standing to receive and your arms should be outstretched to keep as much distance as possible. Please keep behind the line indicated on the floor in front of the priest. There will be no words spoken so we will say the words of distribution as the priest receives, and all will reply "Amen" before coming up for communion.

When you have received your bread, please step away from the minister before carefully removing your mask by the part tucked behind your ear and then consume the bread and replace your mask. Sanitize your hands as soon as possible. For those who do not have their own sanitizer, there will be some available.

For those who come for a blessing, the priest will sign the cross without using words. You can indicate that you would like a blessing by keeping your hands down.

If you are unsteady on your feet, please remain in your seat and the priest will bring bread to you. Unfortunately, we cannot use the pews to steady ourselves and we cannot offer an arm to help you.

Please return to your seat following the one way system in place.

At the end of the service:

After the ministers have processed out, please leave the church building leaving distance between the people in front of you. If you are staying for coffee, please go straight to the hall. Please do not remove your face covering until you are seated.

Finally:

Let us remember to protect one another. Although we rejoice that many of our church community are now fully vaccinated, that is not the case for everyone. Some people are unable to receive the vaccine, others are yet to receive a booster.

Even though we have been given the go ahead to 'hug cautiously', I will not be advocating hugging or hand shaking in or outside of church just yet. Even when that is possible, it will be worth ensuring people feel comfortable with being touched.

We are so excited to welcome everyone back and continue to pray for a time when restrictions will no longer be necessary. Until then, we gather as we are able and give thanks to the God who created us and walks alongside us for the journey.

We look forward to welcoming you and continue to pray for you all. If you have any questions or concerns, please do contact us.

With our continuing prayers,

Becky, Emily, Paul and Rosemary

Rev Becky 25/11/21