

# **Worship after lockdown at St Peter's Church, Maney May 2021**



Dear friends

As the rules are further relaxed following Lockdown 3, we will be returning to in person worship in the church building on 23<sup>rd</sup> May 2021. I am so looking forward to seeing many of you. We will continue to live stream the service so you will be able to watch from home.

I want to make you aware of the processes we have in place to ensure we are worshipping safely within government and Church of England guidelines. The services will be very similar to how they were during the summer of 2020, however we are delighted that we will also be including choir singing.

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 in contact with anyone who has had a positive covid test within the last 10 days
- 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.

Since the children's corner will be closed, you might like to bring toys and/or activities for your children. We warmly welcome all children to our services.

There will be an order of service in your pew so you don't need to bring anything else.

### **When you arrive:**

The doors will open 20 minutes before the service. 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 30 households or bubbles at a service with one pew for each household. If we are full when you arrive, we will ensure you have a space saved for the following Sunday we are open. We very much hope this will not be the case. You may need to queue outside as people come into church, please keep a 2m distance.

A welcomer will be at the entrance. You will be asked to use hand sanitizer on arrival, scan the NHS QR code if you have the App, and then go immediately to a pew in church. You may be asked to wait while the person in front scans the App.

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.

There are no bibles or donation envelopes in the pews, you will not be handed anything by the welcomer, everything you need will be in your pew. At each space there will be an order of service, your notice sheet, a track and trace form and a pen. Please write your details on the track and trace form if you do not have the NHS App. This will enable us to contact you within the guidelines of the track and trace system. We will shred these forms after 21 days in line with the guidelines and data protection.

### **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.

Due to risk of aerosol spread, there will be no congregational singing during the service. However, there will be music from the organ and singing from 3 members of the choir. The choir will be seated 2m apart in the sanctuary (by the altar) so will be at a safe distance from congregation.

When we share the peace, we cannot 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.

Sadly, the children's corner will not be available and there will be no Sunday Club. However, we warmly welcome 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 can 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 priest has processed out, the warden will ask people to leave a row at a time. Please wait for the warden to ask you to leave.

Please take your order of service home with you and place the track and trace form in a box on your way out, leaving the pen in the pew.

Please do not stop to chat while leaving the building. Once out of the building you are welcome to talk in small groups of not more than 6 in the church grounds. **Please do not block other people's exit from the building or people walking through the church grounds.** Please remember to stay 2m apart from people from other households.

If you test positive for coronavirus up to three weeks after the service, please let us know.

### **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 those between the ages of 40 and 55. Those under 40 are still awaiting their first dose. It is true that the younger you are, the less likely you are to be hospitalised with Covid. However, Long Covid is a huge problem among younger people, particularly middle-aged women. Therefore, please continue to show respect and keep social distance until we are in a position to be sure that we are safe not to do so.

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, Paul and Rosemary

**Rev Becky 12/5/21**