

Guidance for Congregation Members of St Matthew's Church

Background

We have carefully considered and produced the risk assessment for St Matthew's and have put various measures in place to help keep you as safe as possible. Clearly there is a risk involved in coming to a service at St Matthew's (or anywhere else at this time). Please use the points-based personal risk assessment below to help you decide whether or not it is safe for you to come to church.

This guidance will be changed from time to time in line with Government advice.

Setting Out

If you are feeling unwell, please stay at home.

You are to bring and wear a face mask throughout the service. The only exception is if you are reading or leading prayer you can take your mask off for the duration of that activity.

Holy Communion will only be distributed in one kind with no sharing of the common cup. The president alone should always take the wine, consuming all that has been consecrated; other communicants should receive the bread only, in the hand. As the Liturgical and Faith and Order Commissions have made clear, this is still 'complete communion'. You are welcome to bring your own wine for consumption during the service.

We need to be able to identify everyone attending the service for track and trace. If you have a smart phone you can use the church's QR code. Otherwise if you are a regular attender you will be ticked off a list. If you are not please bring a piece of paper with your name and phone number on it, so you can be quickly contacted in the event of anyone present becoming identified as possibly being infected. This information will be kept securely for three weeks and then shredded.

The service

Please arrive in plenty of time for the service. If necessary please queue up outside no less than two metres apart in the direction of the sundial.

Please place the piece of paper with your name(s) and contact details in the box provided. (If you forget to bring this, then a member of the Welcome Team will write your details on a piece of paper and put it in the box for you). If you are a regular attendee please make sure a member of the Welcome Team ticks you off their list.

The Welcome Team will check your temperature, using a hand-held device, and sanitise your hands. If you are found to have a high temperature, you and anyone you are with, will not be allowed into church.

Please take great care not to touch anything inside the church except the chair you will be occupying.

The words of the service will be displayed on the screen. If you need a service sheet you may pick up one in the foyer, being careful not to touch any other sheets. You must not leave it in the church but take it away with you.

No collection will be taken during the service. There will be a collection plate just inside the church together with the card donation machine, for any cash or contactless donations, for which, as always, we are most grateful. Other means of giving can be found on our website.

Music will be provided by the organ and the choir will be singing the hymns. Unless we are advised otherwise, singing by the congregation will not be allowed although humming will be actively encouraged.

Please keep your children with you, as there will not be any children's groups. Please ensure that your children are as fully aware as possible of the risks associated with the Covid-19 virus. Written material for children will be available; please bring your own pens, pencils etc. We will make the service as child-friendly as possible and no longer than around one hour.

The toilets will be open, although the Hall, Kitchen, Lady Chapel, Gallery and Choir Vestry will not be available. Please wash your hands thoroughly and use the hand driers.

At the end of the service please leave the church via the main door, maintaining social distancing. Do not linger in the foyer. Weather permitting, we will gather in and around the Prayer Garden to have any refreshments, if you have brought them. Groups of people mingling should not be larger than 6 people. If the weather is poor, do not linger in the church but leave, being careful to maintain social distancing at all times. Those who wish to converse with a member of the pastoral team should leave last.

Please take all your possessions, including any service sheets you have used, with you.

We look forward to seeing you on Sunday, if you are able to make it; if not, there will be a live streamed service available via the church website from 10.00am on Sunday (or 8.30am on the first Sunday of the month) and subsequently available on YouTube.

If, after attending a service, you are tested positive for the Covid-19 virus please contact one of the following:

Penny Goswell - telephone 020 8681 3147 email churchadmin@stmatthew.org.uk or
Stephen Collingwood – telephone 07914 398 807 – email stephen.collingwood@icloud.com.

Please take care, stay safe and may God bless and keep us all.

Revd Simon Foster, Vicar, Stephen Collingwood and Rohini Abhayaratne, Church Wardens,
on behalf of St Matthew's PCC.