



Christchurch United Church

Christ Led : Christ Centred : Christ's Church

We have put together these notes so you know both what to expect and what you will need to do as we commence worship once more. The Minister and Deacons are legally responsible for your safety and want your experience of church to be as happy and stress-free as possible. In line with Welsh Government advice, we wish to emphasise the importance of Personal Distancing and Hand Hygiene.

Please read this first.

We welcome people to worship but **you must not come** if you are showing any symptoms of Covid-19.

People over 70 or who have certain health conditions are considered to be “at risk”. The official guidance for these now says that they should follow all the usual advice issued to the general public while being aware they are at increased risk and paying particular attention to social distancing and hand hygiene. In other words, it’s your choice whether to attend church or not – you are very welcome but take care.

We will ask for the names and contact details of worshippers and keep them for 21 days in order to assist NHS Wales with the “Track & Trace” system should anyone test positive for Coronavirus. However we are seeking to maintain social distancing and think it’s extremely unlikely that a person attending church would be asked to self-isolate, even if someone were to test positive for Covid-19.

At present the church cannot arrange transport for those who do not have cars.

Sadly we are not allowed to sing at present. However we will be using recorded music – you can softly mouth the words or hum along gently to this.

All worshippers are now required to wear face-coverings, unless they have a “reasonable excuse” for not doing so – for example asthma or other breathing difficulties, or the likelihood of it bringing on a panic attack. If this applies to you please have a quiet word with the door steward. None of us likes wearing these coverings but we must comply with the law and we also believe that we have a Christian duty to protect others. Indeed, knowing that everyone else is wearing a mask may give us all a greater peace of mind.

Several doors and windows will be left open for ventilation, so the church could be a bit chilly – please dress accordingly.

Please aim to be seated by 10:55 for everyone’s comfort.

At the start of the service.

Everyone attending the service will enter through the main church doors (*but please see the note below with regard to children, young people and families*). There may be a queue to enter the building: please maintain social distancing as you wait.

You will be greeted by a Steward or Deacon, who will ask if we can make a note of your attendance if you haven't already given us permission to do so.

Please use the hand sanitiser and wipes available in the porch, and carefully bin the waste.

We will not be giving out any hymnbooks. The words of all the hymns, songs and prayers will be projected onto the screen so you can join in – softly! We recognise that some people have trouble reading from the screen, so a few printed sheets will be available for you to pick up. You may bring your own Bible if you wish.

Please go to your seat as directed by the stewards, remembering that the seating has been rearranged for social distancing and your “usual” pew may no longer exist! We will encourage worshippers to first fill the seats at the front of the church and furthest from the centre aisle. Household groups and those who are in “bubbles” are asked to sit together as this will make the best use of our limited space.

As you walk through the church please notice where others are sitting, maintaining appropriate distancing and trying not to touch any other pews. Also remember not to shake hands with, hug or kiss anyone outside your household or “bubble”, however much you might want to do so!

The toilets off the corridor to the Hall will be open – please stay physically distanced while using these and wash your hands carefully afterwards. Please do **not** close the door between the Church and the Hall area: leaving it open aids ventilation and prevents too many people from touching the handle.

We will not be taking up an offering during the service. Baskets will be available in the porch: please drop your cash or envelopes into these without touching. Better still, why not talk to the Treasurer about setting up a Standing Order with your bank?

After the service.

Please remain seated in your pew at the end of the service. The stewards will direct people to leave pew-by-pew, starting from the back.

Sadly we cannot serve refreshments for the time being.

There is very little space in the porch so we ask you to “catch up” with your friends in the car park, maintaining suitable distancing at all times and being aware of moving vehicles. Unfortunately we can’t control the weather so you may want to bring an umbrella!

Please do **not** give back or leave behind any wordsheets you may have picked up when you came into church. These must be taken home and disposed of there.

Children and young people.

We welcome children, young people and families to our services, but we will have to operate in a different way for the time being. Until recently it was not possible for us to look at running Junior Church and so we have been running youth worship services in the hall instead. Now we are able to offer Junior Church again and so we will be running a socially-distanced youth discussion group for those in high school and providing a lesson and activities for children aged 3-7. Younger children will have both their own table and their own separate resources per family as well (e.g. colouring pens etc.) to minimise the risks of using shared objects.

All children and young people will need to enter the Hall through its own outside door rather than the Church door and they will not be going into the main church. Hand sanitizer will need to be used on arrival and all children and young people aged 11+ must wear a face covering. Children of school age will not require an adult to stay with them during the lesson unless this is a specific need for the child. Parents with pre-school children will be able to bring them and stay with them in the hall as they join in the lesson. We cannot provide any toys for them but they may bring their own from home if needed. Due to the social distancing and seating arrangements in the church it will not be possible for children to move between the hall and the church so they will remain in the hall until the main service has finished.

We are looking forward to being able to welcome back everyone from our church family at last.

Thank you for reading these notes: some of them may be subject to change at short notice. *Observing these instructions keeps you and others safe.*