



ST. BARNABAS  
— CHURCH —

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### **ST BARNABAS CRAY services to continue online & to resume in the building**

Since the government has said that churches can re-open for public worship if they can do so safely, we will do so for the first time next Sunday, 19 July. We are very much looking forward to being able to welcome you back to the church building.

After much hard work and preparation by various people, the Parochial Church Council (PCC) and I have agreed that we can comply with the law, guidance from the government, The Church of England and the Diocese and that some of us can meet safely for a service of **Holy Communion at 2pm on Sunday 19th July** and **Sunday 23<sup>rd</sup> August at 2pm**. We will then reassess how we might adapt our Sunday services from September. (We will give further information about this in due course).

We recognise that some people will not want to join us for public worship at the moment. There is no pressure for anyone to do so until they feel ready and can do so safely.

In addition to these concise Communion services (around 30mins) we will continue **Church at Home** streamed online via Facebook & Zoom *every Sunday throughout the summer* on **Sundays at 10:30am**. I will also be continuing **Time to Pray** via Facebook on **Wednesdays & Thursdays** from 8am.

We will still be opening the Church building for **Private Prayer on Sundays 2-3:30pm** for any who would like to come. A small number have appreciated this opportunity to reflect, pray and be stirred by God's presence in the silence over previous weeks in a place that holds so much significance.

Some who are **clinically extremely vulnerable** will have been given government guidance on shielding or will have received a letter from their GP and are not currently advised to attend places of worship. We would strongly discourage you from doing so. 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 attend. You should not attend if you are **self-isolating** due to a possible or confirmed case of COVID-19 in your household, or because they have been requested to do so by NHS Test & Trace. Further details can be found via: <https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus>

**Those aged over 70 or with a particular vulnerability** are encouraged to be especially conscious of the current stay alert and social distancing guidance and may choose not to attend. We respect your personal decision and encourage everyone to stay safe.

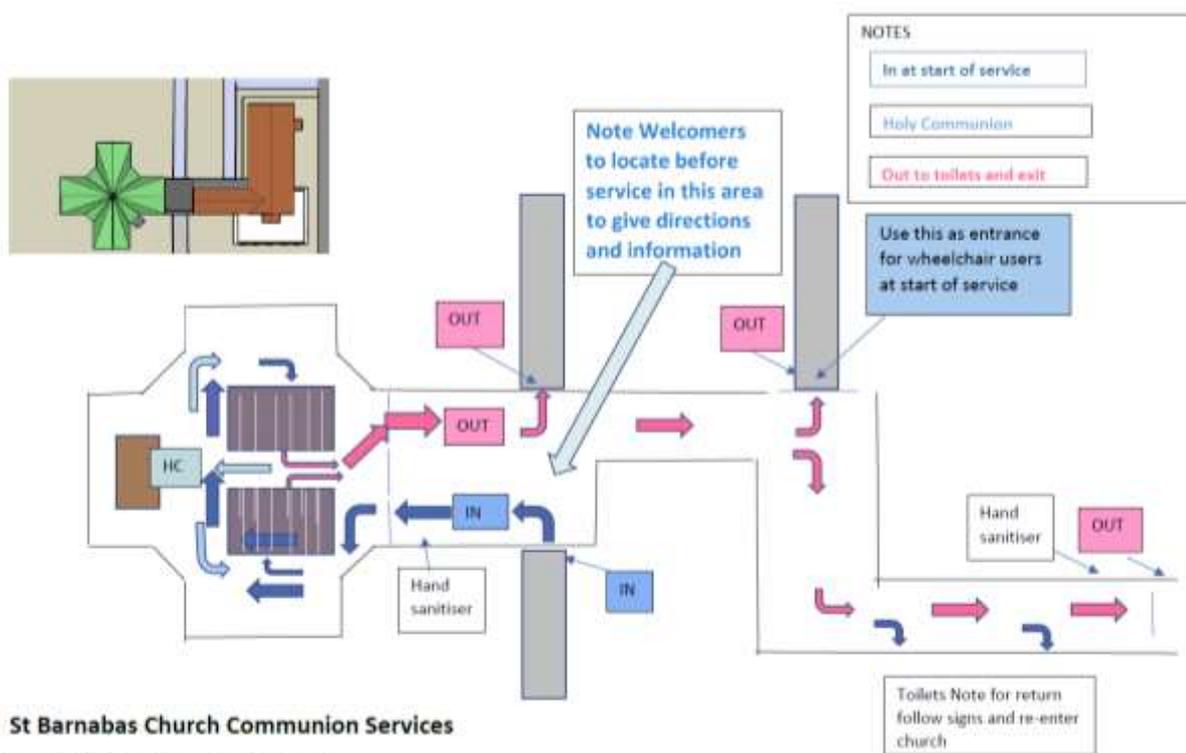
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/staying-alert-and-safe-social-distancing/staying-alert-and-safe-social-distancing>

**We want to explain a bit about some of the safety measures we have in place and what the service will be like.**

We will have the church well cleaned and well **ventilated** according to the guidance. If you plan to attend, please wash your hands thoroughly at home before and after the service. We would also ask you to use your own **70% plus alcohol hand gel** or the hand gel we provide on arriving and departing in the required way.

Please try to avoid touching your face. Cough or sneeze into a tissue which is binned safely, or into the crook of your sleeved arm if a tissue is not available.

We will operate a clearly marked **one-way system** with entry only through the Car Park entrance door (or by the Hall on the roadside for wheelchair users) and exit either via the roadside doors, or the Hall doors by the kitchen & ladies toilets (please see the diagram).



We ask you to **maintain a safe distance of at least 2 metres at all times between households** (social bubbles count as part of one household for these purposes) or 1 metre when walking past someone. The church building will be set out for social distancing with pews and chairs marked and blocked off as appropriate.

Seating will be one pew per household, at a maximum of 2 people to maintain social distance occupying every other pew. If there are more than 2 members of one household we would ask you to sit in the chairs underneath the balconies. We will ask you sit by the ribboned markers on the pews.

In the unlikely event that we reach the maximum safe capacity, we will look at holding another midweek service of Holy Communion, given 72 hours is as long as traces of the virus might remain on surfaces.

Please respect any requests from our Wardens or others.

Please seek to minimise what you touch and avoid moving around the building unnecessarily.

The evidence is not strong for **face coverings**. It seems they provide some protection to others if used correctly but not to the wearer. The use of a face covering should not justify being lax with other precautions. You may wish to use a well-fitting face covering over your mouth and nose. This is a matter of personal choice. If you choose to use a face covering, we recommend reading the government advice about their design and use.

**Once the service is over**, the government advice is that, “participants should be encouraged to move on promptly, to minimise the risk of contact and spread of infection.” If you want to speak to others, it would be better to do that outside rather than in the building. You will recall that when you are outside you can meet in groups of up to six people from different households, following social distancing guidelines but it is safer to keep this to a minimum. We would of course encourage you to continue to keep in touch online and over the phone.

Some may want to remain to pray afterward which you can do for a brief time, and we will remain open until 3:30pm if anyone else wants to come just to pray without having attended the service.

I will ask different sections of the church to leave in order maintaining the one-way system, sanitising your hands again at the exit and avoiding congestion.

We will not be giving out or making available any hymn books, service books or Bibles. You may wish to **bring your own Bible** from home and take it away with you afterwards. All the liturgy will be on the screen. We will not be singing as this is an infection risk. We will also avoid raising our voices and we will not play loud music. The responses in the service should be said with a quiet voice. You may bring your own cushion if you wish. (Please be sure to take it home with you!)

We will not be taking a **collection** during the service. There will be the offering box available for cash donations but we would prefer people to use our online giving option for those who would like to give before or after the service. Please contact Jacqui Lander or David Thomson about setting up, amending or stopping any online giving, or contact Neil if you do not have their contact details.

You should not feel obliged to receive **Holy Communion** if you are worried about your safety. I will set up and put away the items myself. I will cleanse my hands before and after presiding. I will receive bread and wine. Communion for other members of the congregation will be bread wafers only. This will be wafers in a covered container and I will place the bread into your hand. We will aim to do this at arm’s length and without speaking.

If you would like to receive, please come up when directed by a steward and queue in a single line maintaining a two-metre distance as much as possible. We will receive one at a time standing up where the lectern would normally be in front of the Church.

Again, we will use a one-way system in going to the middle aisle first before returning to seats (by turning left or right after receiving) via the outside of the pews without doubling back on others waiting.

**Children and young people** are always very welcome at our services. Children should be supervised by their parent or guardian at all times. Please explain the social distancing and hygiene precautions to your children and ensure that they comply with them. We hope to be able to restart gathering with all age worship in mind from September, and are awaiting more guidance on how and when groups or youth activities could restart in some way next term.

**Toilets** may be used, but only the Accessible toilet and the Gents at this point as the Pre-school are just using the Ladies toilets. If needed at the end of service, it would be preferable to then exit via the doors at the end of the corridor by the kitchen.

Although this is not mandatory, in line with government guidance, and so that we can assist **the NHS Test and Trace service**, like other venues we will seek to keep an accurate, temporary, record of those who attend for 21 days, in a way that is manageable ?by/for us. We will aim to comply with data protection legislation. We will ask you for your name and surname and a contact phone number if we do not already have this information. We will not use this information for any other purpose.

If you have read through to this point, thank you for your patience! To sum up we want to provide the following opportunities for worship:

- **Weekly Church at Home online on Facebook & Zoom Sundays 10:30am**
- **Monthly Holy Communion at St Barnabas Church Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> July & 23<sup>rd</sup> August 2:00pm**
- **Weekly Private Prayer at St Barnabas Church Sundays 2-3:30pm**
- **Twice a Week Time to Prayer online on Facebook from 8am**

I know it is easy to be overwhelmed by precautions or anxiety, but I do want to say how I want all who can gather to do so in an adapted form of worship from all the things we normally value in our gatherings. I am glad for the engagement online, and am determined we do not lose momentum in virtually “bringing the Church walls down” to enable those unable to join us physically, or for those “just looking”, to continue virtual gatherings worshipping and sharing time together. However there is something special about being physically with one another, and especially for those who have not been online. The same values remain – to hear God’s commandments, to receive his word, to pray together, to speak of our own need for confession, to affirm our beliefs and to be moved from passivity to active participation in proclaiming the Lord’s death until he comes. Rather than focus on what we can’t do in this time, I invite you to consider joining me for this symbolic remembrance of Christ’s death & resurrection, for our gathering in Holy Communion (however small) with his people in our Parish to be sent out to live his risen life.

I want to express my sincere thanks to all those who have been involved in our online gatherings, giving input to how we need to adapt technologically and with using our building again. Church life is always a shared effort and I am so grateful for the expertise, time and diligence shown by many people serving behind the scenes.

Government guidance can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-for-the-safe-use-of-places-of-worship-from-4-july/covid-19-guidance-for-the-safe-use-of-places-of-worship-from-4-july>

The latest Church of England guidance can be found at:

<https://www.churchofengland.org/more/media-centre/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-churches>

Government Covid 19 Data protection information is here:

[https://www.gov.uk/guidance/maintaining-records-of-staff-customers-and-visitors-to-support-nhs-test-and-trace?utm\\_source=e159c002-348d-40e9-892a-656cc5916a0f&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=govuk-notifications&utm\\_content=immediate&fbclid=IwAR26f56wAqb7AFWFXzCsgiUtn3gL2lFqanqR9kgy9DycyoRdKIm7Q6NM1y0#sectors-that-this-guidance-applies-to](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/maintaining-records-of-staff-customers-and-visitors-to-support-nhs-test-and-trace?utm_source=e159c002-348d-40e9-892a-656cc5916a0f&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications&utm_content=immediate&fbclid=IwAR26f56wAqb7AFWFXzCsgiUtn3gL2lFqanqR9kgy9DycyoRdKIm7Q6NM1y0#sectors-that-this-guidance-applies-to)

We will of course keep what we are doing under review and make any necessary changes in the light of experience and any changes to the guidance.

If you have any other queries, please do contact me.

I very much look forward to seeing those of you who are able to join us.

Neil Coleman (Revd)

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