

CHURCH RE-OPENING FAQs

How will my health and safety be protected at Church services ?

We are following health and safety advice provided by the Church of Scotland, which includes

The Church building is limited to a maximum of 50 people at any one time and to a total of 35 people in the Sanctuary (no access is allowed to the Sanctuary Gallery). This allows 2m social distancing to be maintained at all times. Maximum numbers allowed are displayed at the entrances to rooms. Seating has been reduced to reflect these numbers and waiting areas are established to allow ordered entry and exit.

The building and fixtures and fittings with which you may come into contact will be cleaned and disinfected before re-opening and this will continue before and after each Church service. Where possible, doors will be kept open to avoid the need to contact handles or push plates. Items that could be handled by multiple people have been removed (e.g. library books, pamphlets, bibles, hymn books, etc.).

Should I attend Church services ?

For many people Church services will not present significant additional risk of infection from coronavirus.

Members of the Vulnerable Group or the Extremely Vulnerable (i.e. “shielding”) Group should follow current Scottish Government guidance (shielding is, currently, paused). Both groups should adhere strictly to wearing face coverings, avoiding crowded places, cleaning hands regularly and keeping 2m apart not just whilst in the Church but also on the way to Church in whatever form of transport used.

Those over the age of 70 should consider carefully whether they should be attending church. If you have been shielding or have underlying health issues you may be best advised not to come to services for the time being . If you do come, our control measures are intended to ensure your health and safety during services.

If you are unsure whether you should come to Church the Church of Scotland have provided a Covid-19 risk assessment tool (based on work by the British Medical Association) which we can make available for your personal use – we cannot offer any medical advice, you should consult your medical advisor.

What Church services will be held ?

Our intention is to potentially hold two short services on Sunday mornings, the primary service at 10.30am with another at 9.00am if there is sufficient demand, each lasting around 30 minutes. There will also be a more family-orientated service at 4.00pm which will be targeted at families with children or young people.

The service at 10.30am will be streamed on-line.

Will I be free to attend any Church service ?

As stated above, we are limited to a total of 35 people in the Sanctuary. When considering attending, please be mindful of this limitation on numbers and only attend one service each week (elders may consider, as an act of service, waiting until later in the week to identify their preferred service).

To attend a service, you are asked to let us know, during that week, which service you would like to attend (i.e. morning or afternoon). Carol Fulton, Session Clerk, will accept phone calls between 5.30pm and 6.30pm, Monday to Thursday (phone 07535 280123). She will ask you for the names of all those in your household who will be coming to Church together with a contact phone number (alternatively you may provide your postal or e-mail address). Please do not attend services without prior notification.

This will not only tell us who’s coming to each service but will also provide contact details for use by NHS Scotland Test & Protect should anyone at the service later test positive for coronavirus.

What precautions do I need to take before attending Church services ?

No-one should come to Church feeling unwell, especially if suffering from the following symptoms which may indicate coronavirus :

- ❖ High temperature (your chest or back is hot to touch)
- ❖ New, continuous cough (you cough for over an hour or more than two episodes in 24 hours)
- ❖ Loss, or change, to sense of smell/taste (you can’t smell and/or taste anything, or things smell and/or taste different from normal)

If you are suffering from any or all of these symptoms you should self-isolate and contact NHS Inform and ask to be tested for coronavirus.

Before leaving home you should wash your hands thoroughly for at least 20 seconds and remember to bring a clean face covering with you.

How long before the service should I arrive at Church ?

Please aim to arrive at the side entrance 15 minutes to 5 minutes before the start of the service.

Where do I enter the Church ?

Entry to the Church will only be through the side entrance into the Foyer Area of the Lower Hall. If you need to wait to enter please maintain 2m distance from other people.

You will be met by a Steward who will confirm your attendance against the list collected during the week and will confirm that you are aware of the Test & Protect Privacy Notice (see copy attached to FAQs).

What precautions do I need to take on entering the Church ?

Please wear a face covering when entering unless you are exempt.

At the entrance you will see several notices, a number of which provide further information about how your health will be protected within the Church buildings.

The Steward will direct you into the Foyer Area where welfare stations are available. Please clean and disinfect your hands using the hand sanitiser gel provided at these stations (regularly re-apply thereafter).

The stations also have small stocks of disposable face coverings (should you not have your own covering) together with small bottles of water and plastic cups should you need a drink.

Whilst waiting to enter the Sanctuary from the Foyer Area please maintain 2m distance from other people.

What will Church services look /feel like ?

Seating has been arranged to ensure a separation of 2m from others in the sanctuary. Stewards will direct you to a seat (you will not be able to select where you sit) to a pre-set order. Seats should not be moved unless directed by a Steward. There will be no access to the gallery.

The Sunday services will be shorter than normal and will not include sung praise but music may be played before, during and after the services. The late afternoon service will be informal and will be a family focused service – families with children will be able to sit together as individual family groups.

Collections will not be taken during the services but an opportunity will be provided on leaving the service to give your offering.

What if I feel ill during the service ?

Seek assistance from a Steward and inform them of your symptoms. We have designated the Prayer Room as our "Covid-19 Emergency Room" if needed and, if possible, you'll be asked to move to this area whilst your condition is assessed.

If your symptoms indicate possible mild coronavirus infection you will be advised to return home, self-isolate and contact NHS Inform or, if more severe, NHS 111 will be contacted by phoning 111. If your symptoms indicate other form of serious illness or injury the emergency services will be contacted by phoning 999.

The Church now has local access to a semi-automatic defibrillator.

Will toilets be available ?

The Prayer Room Toilet and Accessible Toilet will be available although the baby changing facilities in the Accessible Toilet will be limited to the changing table alone (please bring your own changing mat and materials). The installed warm-air driers will not be in service – paper towels should be used to dry hands.

What about after the service ?

Stewards will invite you to leave in an ordered manner to a pre-set order (i.e. last in, first out).

Refreshments will not be served after the services and you are requested not to congregate either inside or outside the Church but to leave directly, continuing to observe social distancing whilst allowing others to leave the building safely.

What if I have other questions about coming to Church services ?

Please contact Carol Fulton (07535 280123) or Colin McDougall (07913 027602)