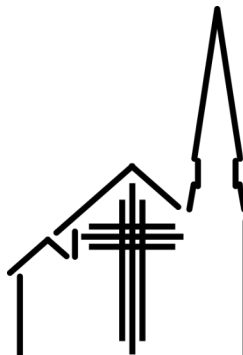


CROSSWALK SPECIAL

EMERGING FROM LOCKDOWN

*What you need to know about our
plans to re-open the church*



Trinity Church
NORTH FINCHLEY
(Baptist/United Reformed Church)

REFLECTIONS FROM THE MINISTER ...

Dear friends,

Sunday 15 March was the last Sunday that we were able to worship in our buildings. For the last sixteen Sunday mornings (at the time of writing) our shared worship has been on Zoom. This, of course, has meant that some, who cannot join us online, have not been able to be with us for worship throughout that period. Covid-19 has had the same kind of impact on the life of churches as it has on all other sectors of society.

We can now begin to plan for a gradual re-opening of our church buildings. However, it cannot be as it was before. Covid-19 is still around, and we have to take all measures that we can to ensure that as we gather together, we do so safely. We need to be attentive to the safety of others, and to our own safety.

Our hope as we begin to return is that we can offer a warm, but safe welcome to everyone who comes into our buildings. However, we also want to ensure that all of those who are not able to return can continue to share in our act of worship, if at all possible. For the foreseeable future we anticipate that when we gather for worship on Sunday mornings, some will be joining from their home, connecting with us on Zoom, others will be gathering at the church.

If we are to offer a warm, but safe welcome to our church, everyone will have their part to play in helping to make this happen. We will depend upon your co-operation.

In asking for your co-operation we ask you first of all to take



the time to read through the information in this publication. It speaks about how you can keep yourself safe and help to keep others safe.

We are also asking for your patience. We know that a number of you are eager to return to church as soon as possible. However, in order to discover what works and what doesn't work, we intend to build up slowly.

In the first instance we want to invite back to church those who have not been able to join us on Zoom. The first service when we do this will probably be on 26 July. (Please note that this will be by invitation only.) We will then gradually open the invitation to others to begin worshipping with us at church.

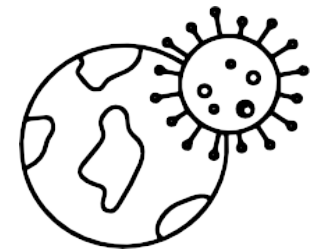
This means that it may still be a few weeks before some of you are able to begin worshipping at Trinity again. And even then, if more people wish to attend church than we have spaces for, we may need to ask some people not to come every week, and to join us on Zoom when they cannot join us at church.

I am sure that we can depend upon your patience and co-operation as we work this out together.

We are going to have to learn to live in this Covid-19 world for some time. I am sure that we can find ways to do so with Christian grace and fortitude.

Yours in Christ,

Paul



If you have any questions or comments about these plans, please contact Paul on 020 8446 7698 or by email: trinitynfminister@gmail.com



WHY IS COMING TO CHURCH SO RISKY?

We all need to understand that there are good reasons for the measures that are being taken to ensure that people are safe when they attend services of worship. We believe that God is concerned for our well-being. He would not want us to put ourselves and others at unnecessary risk in order to worship together. We can worship without taking that risk!

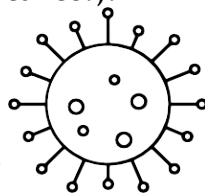
The conditions under which Covid-19 thrives are when people from a number of different households meet together indoors in fairly close proximity to one another for an extended period of time. Because Covid-19 is thought to be spread on aerosol droplets, when people raise their voices and sing it is spread even more. It is also passed on when those people touch one another and touch the same surfaces.

These are the conditions that perfectly describes what normally happens when we meet together on a Sunday morning!

- We have people together from a large number of households who like meeting and getting in small groups and talking together.
- We meet in a large, but confined indoor space.
- We shake hands and some hug each other.
- We share bibles and pass communion to one another.
- We sing enthusiastically (when we know the tunes!).
- Most of us are together for well over an hour.

We are a Covid-19 paradise!

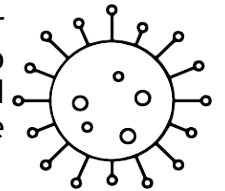
Which is why we need to do things a little differently!



TAKING CARE OF YOUR OWN SAFETY

What we know of Covid-19 is that it has a greater impact on some people than others when they contract the disease. Whatever measures we take at Trinity, we cannot guarantee that we will become a coronavirus-free zone. We can all do all we can to minimise the chances of Covid-19 being spread, but there can be no certainties.

This means that everyone will have to consider their own risks in deciding whether or not to attend church. If you are shielding you should follow the current guidance from the government.



We will fully respect the decisions that people make. That is why we intend to continue making our services available on Zoom for the foreseeable future. No one will be letting anybody down by not attending church in these circumstances.

We will make available further information on helping you to assess your risk.



to be considered.

For some, there will also be additional risks involved in travelling to church. If people travel long distances on busy public transport, the risk of being exposed to coronavirus on the journey to church needs

to be considered. Again, it would be perfectly understandable for someone to decide that it is not right for them take such a risk.



TAKING CARE OF THE SAFETY OF OTHERS

When it comes to your own safety, it is perfectly reasonable for you to make your own judgement as to the risks you are taking. When it comes to the safety of others, we ask you to be much more cautious in taking risks.

We must say to everyone, that if you think that you may have **ANY** symptoms of coronavirus, you **must not** come to church. The symptoms of Covid-19 are:

- A new continuous cough;
- A high temperature; or
- A loss of, or change, in your normal sense of smell

If you have any of these symptoms you should self-isolate and request a test for Covid-19.

If you develop these symptoms having attended Trinity Church, you should notify us immediately, so that we can take the appropriate steps to keep others safe.

While at church, we ask everyone to be mindful of personal hygiene and to respect social distancing.

If you have to cough or sneeze, please remember:

- cover your mouth and nose with a tissue, or the crook of your sleeved arm (not your hand) if you don't have a tissue
- throw the tissue away afterwards
- wash you hands thoroughly for at least 20 seconds using soap and water or hand sanitiser if hand washing facilities are not available.

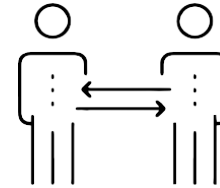


MEASURES WE ARE TAKING TO KEEP YOU SAFE

Before opening we will conduct a full Covid-19 risk assessment. The risk assessment will be published on our website.

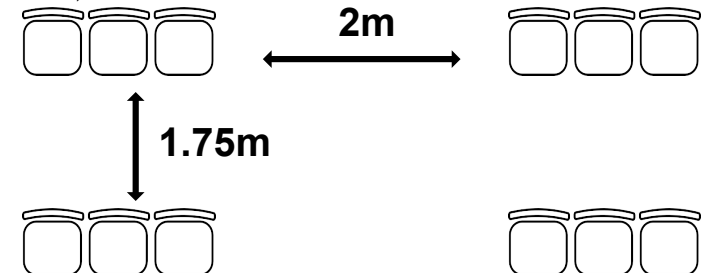
We are taking the following measures to help to keep everyone safe.

SOCIAL DISTANCING



We will encourage social distancing of 2m throughout the building. This may mean that you may need to queue to get into the building. It will help greatly if everyone arrives in good time, so that everyone is not trying to enter the building at the last minute.

The chairs are arranged in household groupings. The groups of chairs are 2m apart to the side and the rows are 1.75m apart. (We believe that this is justified because people are not facing one another.)



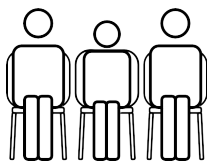
Initially we plan to ask everyone to enter through the main doors of the church, and to start filling the chairs at the front of the church. In this way we can minimise the need for you to walk past others to get to your seat.



SITTING IN HOUSEHOLD GROUPS

Everyone should only sit with the people they live with. The only exception to this is if you have formed a 'bubble' with someone else who also attends our church.

Please try to sit in a group of chairs the right size for your household. E.g. if you are in a group of 2, please try to sit where there are two seats together, rather than sitting where there are three seats together and leaving a spare seat.



This will mean that those people who come on their own will have to sit on their own and will often have to leave an empty seat next to them.

Please do not attempt to sit in empty seats next to people you do not live with.

LIMITED CAPACITY

This means that we will have a limit on the number of people who can attend each week ... even when there are a number of empty seats.

We are exploring ways of trying to ensure that we do not have to turn anyone away.

We hope that you will understand the need to try to keep some control on the numbers of people coming each week, so that we do not find ourselves having to take such measures.



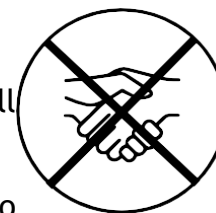
HAND SANITISERS

Everyone will be expected to use the hand sanitiser on entry to the church building.



AVOIDING TOUCH

Respecting social distancing means that we will not be able to touch one another.



This means no handshakes and definitely no hugs!

FACE COVERINGS

From 8 August it became a legal requirement for all of those attending a place of worship to wear a face covering. There are exemptions for children under the age of 11 and for certain medical conditions.



The wearing of face coverings helps to reduce risk when people are unable to keep the full 2m social distancing all of the time, which may happen when people are mingling before and after the service.

We hope that as many people as possible will remember to bring their own face coverings. We will have some available for those who forget.

TOILETS

Everyone using the toilets will be expected to use a hand sanitiser before they enter the toilet, and then to wash their hands thoroughly before leaving the toilets.

We intend to establish a system of only one person being allowed into the toilets at a time to ensure that we can maintain social distancing at all times.

This may mean that you will have to be prepared to queue for the toilets.



NHS TEST AND TRACE

Following government guidance, we intend to assist the NHS Test and Trace service by keeping a record of all of those who attend our services. The information that we need is a name and telephone number (one telephone number per household). The record of attendance will be kept for 21 days.

If, afterwards, we find that someone tests positive for Covid-19 we will pass this information on to the NHS Test and Trace service.

We will also let everyone know if they have attended a service with someone who has tested positive for Covid-19.

BIBLES

We normally give out copies of the bible. We will not be doing this as the surface of the bibles could become a source of transmission. If you wish to follow the bible readings you are free to bring your own bible with you.

WHAT ABOUT THE SERVICE?

SINGING

The main difference in our services is that we will not be able to sing. It is believed that singing can be a way of spreading the virus from person to person.



As we do on Zoom at the moment, we will include a hymn in our services, and play one verse at a time as a meditation through the service.



We will include some spoken responses to prayers. But it is important that people join in with their normal spoken voice, and not raise their voice.

HOLY COMMUNION

The elder preparing the bread and wine for communion will take all necessary precautions to ensure that the bread and wine are prepared safely.

The bread and the wine will be placed on the tables near each of the seats before the service begins so that they will not need to be distributed by the elders during the service.

LENGTH OF THE SERVICE

One of the factors that increases the risk with coronavirus when people gather is the length of time that they are together. Our services will therefore be nearer 40 minutes in length than the hour or more that is usual.

JUNIOR CHURCH AND CRECHE

When we first return unfortunately we will not be able to provide any separate facilities for children. Children are, of course, more than welcome to join us at church. If you have very young children, it might be helpful if you brought some soft or quiet toys for them to play with during the service. We are not able to make toys available for this purpose.

AFTER THE SERVICE

We will not be able to serve any refreshments after the service. We will need to ensure that when we meet and talk to one another after the service we maintain a good discipline of keeping physically distanced. This will probably be our biggest challenge!



A STAGED RETURN

We want to avoid a situation where we have too many people turn up on the first Sunday of opening and discover that the procedures we have put in place to welcome people do not work.

We are therefore planning a staged return so that everything can work as smoothly as possible for everyone.

STAGE ONE - beginning 26 July

We aim to begin with a congregation of about 20 people. We will issue invitations to these services, giving priority to those who have not been able to join our services on Zoom.

If you have not been able to join our Zoom services and would like to attend, please let Paul know.

STAGE TWO

As soon as we are satisfied that our procedures are working well, we will extend the invitation so that we have a congregation of about 30.

During this stage we will begin to find ways to enable different people to attend each week.

STAGE THREE

This is the stage when we will be working at full capacity in the church, when hopefully everyone who wishes to attend church can do so - perhaps not every week, but as frequently as possible.

