

Opening our Churches for public worship

From July, churches are allowed to open for public worship. Here in the Benefice of Milborne Port, Milborne Wick, Goathill, Charlton Horethorne and Stowell we are going to return to Sunday worship slowly. We want to get this right and we will prioritise everyone's health and safety. The zoom services will continue at 10.30am throughout July and August. In addition to this there will be a service each Sunday that we will advertise. Services for a time will feel different from what we are used to, to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

We are beginning with a communion service.

Holy Communion Sunday 12th July 6pm St John the Evangelist Milborne Port

How will this work and how are we minimising the risk?

When you arrive at St John's, please remember to keep to a social distance of 2 metres. To maintain this, you may have to wait to get in. You will be encouraged to sanitise your hands upon entering. People from the same household or 'bubble' may sit together but everyone else must maintain the distance of 2 metres. At present there is no government requirement to wear face coverings in places where social distancing can be complied with. We are not going to make it a requirement. However, you may wish to, it is a personal decision.

There will be a collection plate on the table for your donation but we would prefer it if you could make a donation online. Please ask us for details of how to do this.

Service sheets will be in the pews ready for you. At the end of the service we will ask you to either place them in a box on your way out or take them home with you. The service is from the Book of Common Prayer. If you have your own prayer book you are welcome to bring it with you. Remember to take it home afterwards! Rachel will play the organ for us on entrance, exit and during communion. Sadly we are not allowed to sing yet.

Communion can only be distributed in one kind (i.e. just wafers) and there will be no sharing of the common cup of wine. The wafers will be kept in a ciborium with the lid left on and only Sarah will have touched them. Before distributing communion she will sanitise her hand again.

If you wish to receive communion you will be asked to come out of your pew and form a line maintaining two metres of distance to receive the bread, standing, from Sarah. This is to avoid kneeling and touching the altar rail. We recognise that it will not be possible to maintain the ideal distance of two metres for the brief time that the priest administers the sacrament to you. Sarah will avoid touching your hands. There is absolutely no pressure for you to receive. We want you to feel safe. Please do what is right for you.

We have a duty of care to each other, especially those of us that are more vulnerable. Please be sensible and do not come if you have a cough or any Covid symptom. Please make your own risk assessment. We are not going to tell anyone over 70 not to come.

The service will last about 40 minutes. At the end you will be asked to leave quietly.

You are welcome to just turn up but it would be helpful to know if you intend coming so that we can manage numbers. Please let Sarah know by Saturday 11th.