



3 July 2020

Dear Friends

Return to Services at St Swithun's

There has been much speculation about when and how we might return to 'live' services at St Swithun's, and we want to give you more information on current plans.

We are driven by three objectives: to resume the services we all love and treasure as soon as reasonable; to minimise as far as reasonable any risk to our congregations; and to comply with Government and Diocesan requirements. With these objectives in mind, we propose to resume services in a staggered manner, with the earliest being those congregations who are less vulnerable and who are smaller in number and so can more easily practise 'social distancing'.

The first service to resume will be Family Church. After an interval while we test and refine our processes, further congregations will resume when prudent and practical. For the meantime at least, recorded and streamed Sunday services and daily devotions will continue.

When services resume, they will inevitably be different from before, and we have taken expert medical advice on what to do in this regard. You will be asked to provide your contact details on entry and will have your temperature checked. You will be directed to seating at proper distances. As you take your seats, you will notice that cushions, bibles, prayer books and hymn books have been removed, as these are all possible sources of infection. Feel free to bring your own bibles and cushions if you wish.

Another key difference is that there will be no congregational or choral singing. In line with Government and diocesan advice, we must take this step, as singing is a prime method for spreading virus-bearing droplets and particles over a surprisingly long distance.

Everyone can help to make the return to services smoother and safer. Please make sure that your contact details are up-to-date in Elvanto, as this will speed up registration and, should it be necessary, contact tracing – call the Office if you need help with this. Please co-operate with the ushers by sitting where requested. Please, if you can, download and enable the 'COVIDSafe' app on your mobile phone. Most importantly, if you are feeling at all unwell, please stay away.

We look forward to welcoming you back to face-to-face fellowship where we can worship the Lord together in person again!

Roger and the Wardens