

To the All Saints Church Family 'Back to Church' Questionnaire

Friday 10 July 2020



Dear friends,

I am writing to ask for your input as we make decisions for restarting services in the church building.

It has been almost four months since we were last able to meet physically as a church family. I am keenly missing our weekly fellowship together, and know that very many of you feel the same way.

Last week the government announced the most significant relaxation of lockdown rules since the pandemic began. Most notably, services are now permitted in church buildings again, but this comes with many stipulations and caveats to keep people as safe as possible. (You can access the official Church of England guidance [here](#).)

We need to consider very carefully how to begin meeting in-person for services again, given the social distancing and hygiene requirements. At All Saints, our challenges are exacerbated by having a relatively large number of people in a relatively small church building. In addition, we have four distinct services on a Sunday, and a significant proportion of the church family are in 'at risk' categories.

Given this, the Churchwardens and Staff Team are keen to create a pathway back to church that best serves the whole congregation, knowing that there will be a large range of feelings, needs, hopes and anxieties across the breadth of the church family.

To help us get a clearer idea of the where people's thoughts are on the way forward, you are invited to fill out a short questionnaire. We are asking for one person to respond from each household on behalf of all members, and it should take less than three minutes to complete. If you could do this in the next week or so, it would really help with our planning.

Please click [HERE](#) for the online questionnaire

I met with the Staff Team and Churchwardens this week, and our current thoughts are as follows:

From Sunday 19 July we will begin **screening our online services** at 10am on Sunday mornings in the church building. This is primarily for those who cannot access services on the internet, and for those who would usually be watching alone. If you would like to come, please phone the church office on 01444 482405

For several weeks we have been actively exploring **holding short services outdoors in August**. However, thus far the legalities are frustrating our plans. There are still possible options to explore so please do pray for wisdom and opportunity here.

Although different this year, August is still a time for holidays, so is not the best time to begin any 'regular' forms of services. However, we are keenly resolved that **from the start of September a regular pattern of in-person worship** in the church building will be in place, as legalities and common sense allows.

It should be possible for **services to be streamed live from the church building** in due course, and I am grateful to Hugh Bourne for getting ahead of things on the technical side

The Apostle Paul's words to the Thessalonian church are very apt at this time: *"Since we were torn away from you ... in person not in heart, we endeavoured the more eagerly and with great desire to see you face to face."* (1 Thessalonians 2:17).

Please continue to pray that we will be able to gather together physically – and safely – soon.

Stuart

Stuart Silk, Associate Vicar