

wantage parish

Returning to public worship

*I was glad when they said to me, 'Let us go to the house of the Lord.'
(Psalm 122 v1)*

After many weeks of being unable to worship together it is a great joy that we can return to the public celebration of the Mass from Saturday 4th July. This leaflet is designed to help you prepare for coming to church again and to be ready for the inevitable changes and restrictions that remain. Please read it carefully and if you have any questions contact the Vicar or Churchwardens.

At what times and where will Mass be celebrated?

Our schedule will be as follows:

Mondays	No Mass	(no priest available)
Tuesday	7.00pm	(Holy Trinity)
Wednesday	9.30am	(Parish Church)
Thursday	9.30am	(Parish Church)
Friday	12.00pm	(Parish Church)
Saturday	5.00pm	(Holy Trinity) Vigil Mass of Sunday
Sunday	8.00am	(Parish Church)
	9.15am	(Parish Church)
	10.30am	(Parish Church)

The most significant change is that the 9.15am Holy Trinity Mass will take place at the Parish Church. This is because it will not be possible to maintain social distancing at Holy Trinity with the numbers that normally attend. We will keep this under review and return to Holy Trinity for the 9.15am Mass as soon as possible.

Should I attend?

It will be matter of individual choice and personal responsibility whether you choose to attend Mass. Everyone's individual circumstances are different and only you can make this choice. By following official advice, we have reduced the risk of transmission. It may be that you would feel more comfortable attending Mass during the week when congregations are smaller. If you are shielding you should follow NHS advice.

You should not attend if you are unwell.

Will there be a restriction on numbers attending?

Yes. We have had to close a number of pews at the Parish Church and significantly reduce the number of chairs available at Holy Trinity in order to meet social distancing requirements. We expect our maximum capacity to be about 50 at the Parish Church

and 20 at Holy Trinity (depending on the combination of individuals, couples and families attending).

We don't think it is necessary to introduce a ticketing system at this stage, but we are asking those who normally attend the 10.30am Mass to consider attending one of our other Sunday Masses. Once we meet capacity the Churchwardens may need to refuse entry for everyone's safety and wellbeing.

Will there be changes in the way I arrive and leave church?

Yes. At the Parish Church you will need to enter through the south transept door and then leave through the south-west door (except for those needing to use the south transept ramped/accessible door).

You will be asked to give your name and telephone number to a steward. We have been asked to do this to assist with the Government's track and trace system. The data will be held securely for 21 days and then disposed of.

On arrival and exit you will be asked to sanitise your hands. You will be invited to pick up a booklet containing the order of service and newsletter. These must be taken home with you or placed in the recycling bin as you leave church. You may wish to arrive a little earlier as the procedure is likely to take longer. We ask you not to gather with others as you arrive or leave church so to maintain free movement of people.

At the end of Mass you should leave church one pew/row at a time, beginning with those sitting at the rear. You are asked not stay in church and have conversations. You may greet people outside if you wish, standing clear of the door to allow people to pass you safely.

Can I choose where to sit?

Possibly not! Individual pews at the Parish Church have been taped off – please respect this to ensure social distancing. Please do not move and add additional chairs at Holy Trinity. Depending on the numbers attending you may be asked to sit in a specific place to enable the maximum number of people to attend. You are asked to kindly comply with any requests made by the churchwardens or stewards operating on their behalf. The Churchwardens have the responsibility in Canon Law to allocate seats in church (Canon F7).

What changes will there be in the celebration of the Mass?

At all Masses the peace will not be shared (an optional part of the Mass in any case) and communicants will only receive in one kind (i.e. just the host not the chalice).

At the point of Holy Communion you are asked to wait in your seat until directed to come forward by a churchwarden or steward. Holy Communion will be distributed at one standing station at all Masses. You will need to sanitise your hands before receiving Holy Communion. A hand sanitiser station is positioned at the front of the nave for this purpose.

One of the most notable changes will be the absence of congregational singing at the 9.15am and 10.30am Masses, and of the choir at the 10.30am Mass. Organ music will be used to accompany these Masses. Our usual musical provision will be restored as soon as possible.

Will there be a collection?

Not during the Mass. In line with Government advice we ask this you use the contactless machine available at both churches as you leave church. There will be a basket out for a retiring collection for you give, if you are only able to use cash.

Our preferred way of giving is by Direct Debit. We use the Church of England's Parish Giving Scheme to manage our donations and Gift Aid. The Parish Giving Scheme now has the option to set up new Direct Debits over the phone instead of completing a paper form. To set up a new donation over the phone you can ring Parish Giving Scheme on 0333 002 1271, quoting our parish registration number 270627560. If you would like more information please contact our Treasurer David Law.

Will we be having refreshments after Mass?

Unfortunately, this is not currently permitted.

Should I wear a face covering?

Face coverings are not required. However, we recognise and respect that individuals may choose to cover their faces. This is a matter for personal choice.

The celebrant is required to wear a face covering for the distribution of Holy Communion.

Will the lavatories be open?

Yes. Please observe social distancing when entering and exiting the lavatories.

What about cleaning the churches?

We are asking everyone who chooses to attend Mass to clean his or her pew or seat after Mass. It would be a great help and speed up the process if you are able to bring cleaning wipes with you into order to do this. However, there will a supply available from the churchwardens or stewards. Everyone needs to play their role in making our worship possible in the current restrictions. If you feel that you may struggle to clean your pew or seat please inform a steward.

Can families attend?

Yes. We love having families (including children) present at our services. You will need to ensure that your family maintains the current social distancing requirements. Unfortunately, the children's areas in both of our churches are closed at the moment.

Will you continue livestreaming Mass on Facebook?

It is the Vicar's intention to live stream Mass for the foreseeable future. This will take place at the Vigil Mass on Saturdays at 5pm and will be available for viewing during the following week.