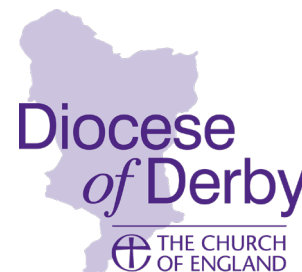


Post Covid-19 restrictions and the liturgy



Frequently Asked Questions

Updated 26 July 2021

How many people can we have in church?

You can have as many people as your church can hold BUT should you?

We recommend that you think carefully about how many you can safely accommodate.

Also think about those who are more vulnerable or anxious. Is there an area that you can maintain socially distanced seating? Make sure you redo all your risk assessments before changing things.

Do we need to wear masks?

No, you don't BUT why not encourage people to do so whilst infection levels are high?

Some people cannot wear masks, others really hate it but most of us have become used to it.

And why not have the doors and windows open so that there is good ventilation.

Can we sing hymns?

Yes, you can BUT why not consider a gentle reintroduction? Perhaps an offertory hymn to begin with as we all get used to singing again, and a Responsorial Psalm if you do them.

Derby Cathedral has announced that they are starting with two hymns for congregational singing each Sunday and have given the option of singing with or without a face mask.

Don't forget how wonderful it has been going outside and singing, it's a powerful witness. So why stop doing it whilst the sun is shining?

Can we physically share the Peace?

Yes, we can BUT remember there may be some people who don't want to shake hands or be hugged.

We have become used to distance. So, we need to respect each other and not put each other under pressure to 'conform'.

Do I need to continue to keep the ciborium covered during the consecration?

No, you don't have to BUT initially you may choose to do so until we feel more relaxed about the rates of infection.

Should I still administer in silence and with a mask on?

You don't have to BUT you may wish, for instance, to wear a mask but say the words of administration to each person and for them to reply.

Do we need to make all the changes immediately?

You can BUT we advise you not to. Make one or two adjustments to indicate that we are moving forward.

There is a long way to go and we need to travel together as communities and in many ways going at the speed of the most anxious and not leaving them behind, whilst encouraging one another in Christ.

What about the chalice, the Common Cup?

You can share the chalice BUT this may be an area of our corporate life where we really have to think carefully and move slowly. There may well be people who whilst missing receiving Holy Communion in both kinds, the consecrated bread and wine, will be anxious about doing so. They may feel a lot of pressure to receive the cup unless we can make it easy for people to make their own decision. Here are some ideas:

- Preach or talk about it in preparation, don't just reintroduce it. There is a great opportunity to do some amazing teaching about this element of the sacrament that we can easily take for granted.
- When you are ready, use standing stations rather than a rail to administer and position the person with the cup at some distance from the person with the bread. This allows people to move past without receiving and without being obvious or embarrassed at the altar rail.
- Make sure that you use a purificator to cleanse the rim of the chalice in between each person.
- Discourage people from holding the chalice themselves to avoid cross-contamination.
- As the Canons of the Church of England require us to consume any remaining sacrament – it cannot be poured down the sink or on to the ground – make sure that you only consecrate the amount you need and if you are running short top it up with water before you run out.
- If you would normally ask servers or vergers or other ministers to ablate the chalices talk to them about how they feel about this. Don't assume they will be comfortable about it.

Can we resume our work with children and young people?

Yes, you can BUT you may wish to do so in September as the new academic year begins. Whenever you choose to begin make sure those risk assessments are in place.

Can we stop streaming, and other forms of social media broadcasting, now?

Yes, of course you can BUT is this something that might be fruitfully continued in some form? Online provision may have become a Fresh Expression of your church's ministry that complements in person worship, or may be a way of continuing a more inclusive model of public worship. Does it enable those unable to join you in church to join you nevertheless? How does streaming fit with your Access Policy? If you do decide to end it how will you share the news with those who have come to rely on it? But on the other hand, if it is not sustainable the PCC has to recognise this and be bold and honest.

Can we resume with bell ringing?

Yes, the Central Council of Church Bell Ringers has issued guidance which is available at www.cccbr.org.uk.

This guidance includes recommendations for wearing facemasks in certain circumstances, and the importance of ventilation in towers. There are no longer restrictions on how long you ring for, or with how many other people.

Can we serve refreshments after the service?

Yes you can, however as we are in Summer, why not consider having refreshments outside in the open air after the service? We know that Covid-19 doesn't spread as much outdoors so is a safer environment.

The Church of England recommends that, whilst there are no longer any restrictions on serving food and drink, that you consider ways to protect those doing the serving and washing up, such as providing gloves and appropriate cleaning materials.

Government guidance that face coverings are expected and recommended in crowded and close-contact settings should be taken into account.

We do hope this information sheet is useful.

You may have other questions, if so please contact your Area Dean or Archdeacon.