

St Margaret's Church, Ifield

Back to Church! What to expect

So, we're opening the church! For some this will be great news but for others it may be sad as not everyone will be able to come in person. For this reason, we're continuing to put services online, so we can still be one church together. If you are able to come church will look slightly different, so here's what to expect:

1. This initial Sunday 12th July will be a bit of a trial run, and going forward we may need to look at allocating tickets to ensure social distancing, so will provide more information as appropriate.
2. Services – *further updates will be provided in due course on the website.*

12th July

08:00 - 08:45 - Said Eucharist (at this stage for the 12th July Only).

This service will be recorded and uploaded onto the website for viewing at 11am or as soon as possible thereafter.

11.00 – 11:45 - Said Eucharist

19th July – Patronal Festival

11am – 11:45 - Said Eucharist – *This service will be recorded and uploaded onto the website for viewing as soon as possible.*

3. Please don't come if you feel unwell or are displaying COVID-19 symptoms (a new continuous cough, a high temperature or loss of taste and smell).
4. When you arrive, you'll be asked to join a 2m queue around the church. Bring an umbrella if it's raining! After we've said 'welcome back' we'll ask you if you feel well. If you feel unwell, unfortunately we will have to ask you, and anyone you have come with, to go home. Assuming you're good to go, we will then take your contact details (we'll keep this record in case we need to supply it for test and trace). You'll then be asked to use some hand sanitizer. You don't have to wear a face mask, but of course if you want to then that's fine. There won't be access to the votive candle stand or the prayer fishing net due to the flow of people and distancing.
5. As you enter church, you will be directed to a seat by one of the sides people. Pews and seats have been moved around. Please wait until the person returns to take you to a seat. If you are coming as a couple, family unit or social bubble, you can all sit together in a pew, there is also sufficient room for pushchairs. If you rely on mobility support, we'll direct you to seats near the front. Once seated, please remain in your pew for the duration of the service, unless you need to leave the church, using the one-way system (exit through the West Doors which will be open).

6. "I need the loo!" Sorry -we've had to close the toilet, as we can't clean this between uses. The good news is that the service should be over in less than 45 minutes.

7. The words will be on the screen but there will be no music or singing, and no physical sharing of the peace, just turning round where you are and smiling at others. There will not be any processions, Crucifer or Acolytes. There won't be a collection during the service, but a plate on the way out by the west door. On the website we now have a 'Donate' button and details about joining the 'Parish Giving Scheme' so you may want to take advantage of these resources.

8. You'll be offered communion in one kind, i.e. the host (bread) only. When you come up for communion please wait in your pew to be directed and come up keeping 2m social distance. We should maintain a clockwise flow so approach on the left by the font and return via the right aisle (Yes there are now 2 aisles in the nave) The priest will not be saying to individuals 'This is the Body of Christ' but will instead drop the bread into your hand and not into your mouth if this is your custom (this process is a directive from the Church of England). Please move away and return to your seat once you have been given the bread. If you require assistance with mobility please stay seated and the priest will come to you.

9. After the service please remain seated until the sides person invites you to leave. Please use the sanitizer station at the back of church, and leave using the west door at the back, and once outside please don't congregate but move away from the church and churchyard. If you have buggies or mobility assistance, we'll ask you to remain until last and leave through the way you entered.

We appreciate these are strange times, but hopefully this is one step closer to being church together.

Every blessing

Rob and Chris