

Risk Assessment for Opening Church Buildings for Public worship

This risk assessment follows on from others that refer to opening the church building where information about cleaning.

The latest is Parish Risk Assessment for The Church of King Charles the Martyr Potters Bar

Updated 01April2021

Version 1 8 July 2020

Version 2 25 July 2020 to include updated advice of Face Coverings in places of worship

Version 3 24August 2020 Opening for two services on a Sunday morning with limited singing, addition of information about recording services

Version 4 28 September 2020 includes update on choir, how Eucharist will work

Version 5 26 October 2020 one service on a Sunday

Version 6 09November 2020 Churches closed for Public worship – live streaming information

Version 7 29November 2020 Re-opening in Tier 2

Version 8 21December2020 Tier 4

Version 9 01April2021 Re-opening for public worship from Easter Sunday

Risk assessment template

Church: King Charles the martyr, Potters Bar	Assessor's name: Atalie Gaines, Vicar Reviewer: Phil Townsend, Church Warden & Helen Schmitz, Church Warden	Date completed: 08/07/2020 Updated : 25/07/2020 18/08/2020 24/08/2020 08/09/2020 26/10/2020 09/11/2020 29/11/2020 21/12/2020 01/04/2021	Review date: monthly
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Area of Focus	Controls required	Additional information	Action by whom?	Completed – date and name
The building and grounds	Gate needs to be open to the car park for access		Wardens/ Steward	
	Car park has been used by families during the lock down for cycling	Notices to let people know that the car park will be in use again and if the gate is open then they will need to be aware that there will be cars using it	Parish Administrator	
	Doors need to be open	North and South porch for entrance and exit. Choir vestry door as emergency exit	Wardens/ Stewards/ Welcomers	
	Rows need to be blocked off and extra	This can be done before hand to ensure that we know where people can sit. Signs to say that people should sit 3 seats away from the next household.	Wardens/ team	

Area of Focus	Controls required	Additional information	Action by whom?	Completed – date and name
	plastic seating available		Vicar	
	Hymn books (there will be no congregational singing at the current time) and Bibles should be removed from rows that are open.	If they are used, they should be quarantined and not used for 72 hours after wards (see 'At the end of worship' below)	Warden/ Stewards	
	Giving	<p>There will be no offertory collection. Please make sure that there is a collection plate at the back of church on the table by the sound desk (although monetary giving is currently discouraged), that the card machine is out and that people are directed to the donate button on the website, text giving or online for one off giving.</p> <p>If cash is given this should be tipped into a money bag and put in the safe to be counted next week by a person wearing gloves before being passed to the treasurer.</p> <p>The cashless machine should be operated by one person, who will put in the amount that people wish to give and then allow them to give contactlessly.</p>	Warden/ Stewards	
	At the end of worship	<p>Chairs at the end of each row need to be turned to block off rows so that they can't be used in the Tuesday morning service (and other times when the church is open for private prayer). Plastic chairs wiped down if used.</p> <p>If there are two services in a day, the rows should be moved forward or backwards to enable a 'clean row' of chairs to be available for the second service.</p> <p>Church of England (CofE) guidance says that 72 hours is enough quarantine time for furniture. All plastic chairs and items that may have been touched should be sanitised.</p> <p>All doors should be locked and handles sanitised where they have been touched.</p>	Wardens/ Stewards	

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	The hall toilet will be available for those who need it but must be sanitised after use by the person using it.	It should be cleaned after each use. The Wardens should inform the cleaner who will be doing a weekly clean. Sanitiser spray should be used with paper towels that are then discarded in the bin. Doors through the link and to the toilets should be propped open to reduce people touching them.	Those who use it Wardens/ Stewards	
How people come and go	People should enter by the North porch social distancing should be kept – this may mean queuing	Stewards to ensure that all sanitise their hands on the way in and out. Stewards will need to encourage people to fill up from the front right of the church whilst maintaining social distancing.	Warden/ Stewards	
	The North porch step is steep for people with mobility difficulties	Those who have difficulty accessing the building this way, may use the south porch which is accessible. Warden on duty and stewards should direct them and enable them to be signed in.	Warden/ Stewards	
	Moving throughout the church	There will be a one-way system in place and people should keep left in any areas where a two-way system has to work (i.e. The Link Corridor as people go to and from the toilet)	Everyone	
	People will need to sign in to enable NHS Test and Trace to be effective if needed	Pens should be used once and then sanitised before being returned to use or used once and put out of use for the next 72 hours. The list will be kept for 21 days in accordance with the Govt Guidance before being destroyed QR codes are now available for those using the building who have access to the NHS Trace and Test App. These should be pointed out to people entering the church and used in conjunction with the sign in list for the church services.	Stewards Vicar Stewards	
	People should sit individually with 3 seats between each	Stewards will need to remind people of this as they come in ensuring that only those who live in the same household or are in a support bubble can sit together so that we can maintain social distancing. 3 seats between each household or bubble.	Stewards	

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	family/ household group.	<p>People will also need to stay put – once they are in a seat they should not move as this invalidates the seat and it will need quarantining. Stewards should help people to find a seat that they can stay in for the duration of worship.</p> <p>For mid-week services and other times, the church is open, people should only sit on the plastic chairs. This should be clear as the ends of rows will be blocked off but signage will indicate this as well.</p>		
	Numbers in the church will be limited to enable social distancing	<p>Warden and Steward to keep an eye on numbers coming in and if it looks like there will be too many people to enable appropriate social distancing OR it maybe that they need to turn people away if necessary.</p> <p>It may be that we are able to add additional chairs at the back at short notice – these must be moved by those who are going to sit on them or by stewards who have sanitised their hands before touching them.</p>	Warden/ Stewards	
	At the end of the service	<p>All are responsible for maintaining social distancing within the building and whilst queuing to get in and on our grounds. Face coverings must be worn whilst in the building.</p> <p>People should follow the ‘Rule of 6’ when outside congregating or mingling with others from outside their household or bubble.</p>	Wardens/ Steward	
	Hands should be sanitised as people leave	Wardens/ Stewards to be aware if the bottles are low and to replace them from the cleaning cupboard in the halls or leave a note for the Halls Administrator/ Cleaner to be refilled.	Warden/ Stewards	
	Face Coverings	Face Coverings are a legal requirement in indoor enclosed spaces and we as a place of worship “are encouraged to take reasonable steps to promote compliance with the law and could refuse entry to anyone who does not have a valid exemption.”	Warden/ Stewards	

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		<p>Those who have a valid exemption from wearing a face covering should be encouraged to sit in the baptistry way from others.</p> <p>Bin to be provided for disposable Face Coverings to be placed it at the end of worship</p> <p>There are exceptions and if you fall into one these categories you are advised by the government to download this picture onto your phone or to print it out to show your exception if you are challenged https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/face-coverings-when-to-wear-one-and-how-to-make-your-own</p>	Warden/ Stewards	
	Any notice sheet, leaflet or prayer book that people have touched they should take with them as they leave	<p>Sung Eucharist Service sheets will be available for use and should be picked up as the congregation enter – these service booklets should then stay with that person to be brought back each week to be used again by the same person. Spares will be available.</p> <p>Morning Worship Service, all the words for the service will be on the screen.</p> <p>Occasional services e.g., Evensong and Evening services booklets will be available. These can be returned at the end of the service as they won't be used again for at least a month. They should be left in a pile by the exit door – and tidied up later in the week after a period of quarantine.</p> <p>For funerals the mourners should be encouraged to take their order of service away with them. The Funeral Directors should pick up the spares to give to the family. One to be kept for display in church.</p>	Stewards Service Leader Stewards Verger	
People participating in leading Worship	Readers and Intercessors microphones	<p>The MAPPA should be set up with the same person reading and intercessing where possible. If this is not possible the two people should use different microphones.</p> <p>If the Priest and the Reader are on duty the person doing the readings must use the microphone on the bible lectern and the intercessor must use another microphone, the handheld microphone on a stand at the other lectern.</p>	Vicar/ Office Administrator Warden/ AV operator	

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	Microphones	<p>Leaders of the service (i.e. Priest and Lay Reader) should pick up their own mics from the sound cupboard drawer and work with the AV operator to make sure that they are working i.e. Batteries aren't dead</p> <p>The readers and intercessors should not have to touch any microphones, they should be switched on before the service and operated by the AV operator.</p>	<p>Priest/ Lay Reader</p> <p>Warden/ AV Operator</p>	
	Readers	<p>The reader for each service will need to bring their own readings printed out or on tablet.</p> <p>The Lectern Bible will be removed for the time being.</p>	Reader	
	Servers	<p>Where servers are usually present for a service, we will reduce the number to 1 per service to reduce the number of people in the sanctuary. Sacristan to organise rota.</p> <p>The servers will be responsible for lighting the candles and lay the altar but not to touch any of the silver or elements that are needed for the service – this will continue to be the responsibility of the priest presiding (see below The Eucharist)</p>	<p>Sacristan</p> <p>Priest</p>	
	The peace	<p>The peace should not be shared with any sort of physical contact other than with those in your own household.</p> <p>We will use the sign language peace. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CoIRm5HQGFg</p>		
Music	How do we offer music? Who can sing?	<p>From the 28th March indoors: a single small group of singers will be allowed to perform, or rehearse for performance, only where essential to an act of communal worship. This should be limited to as few singers as possible. Communal singing should not take place and strict physical distancing should be observed.</p> <p>The Director of Music will organise how this will happen See 'Choir and Music Group risk assessment'.</p>	Director of Music	

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		<p>The Director of Music or his deputy will play the organ before and after the service, whilst setting up for Eucharist and during distribution. The organist is responsible for keeping the organ clean.</p> <p>Any other music that is used whilst we are live streaming or are publishing recorded services should be correctly performed under the terms of our CCLI (copyright license) to ensure that the church is not sued for using music it doesn't have the rights to. Those who are organising worship and setting up the PowerPoint as to check that anything that they use is covered by our CCLI licence.</p>	<p>Director of Music</p> <p>Vicar/ Reader/ Director of Music/ Anyone setting up worship</p>	
	<p>Singing, chanting and the use of musical instruments Led devotions</p>	<p>There should be no group singing by worshippers. Places of worship should take account of the <u>Performing Arts guidance and information from the Royal School of Church Music.</u> https://www.rscm.org.uk/covid-19-resources-for-churches/ Small groups of professional or non-professional singers will be able to sing in front of worshippers.</p> <p>Any instrument played during worship should be cleaned thoroughly before and after use. Carol singing is allowed outside if people are socially distanced.</p>	<p>Director of Music/ Vicar/ Wardens</p>	
Setting up for worship	<p>Setting up for the service inc. all words that the leader will need</p>	<p>The lectern should only be moved by the person taking the majority of the service that morning i.e. Priest, Lay Reader or visiting minister</p>	<p>Priest/ Lay Reader/ Visiting Minister</p>	
	<p>Laptop and other electronic equipment being used.</p>	<p>If needed for the service the laptop should be loaded by Thursday by the person creating the content so that it has 48 hours before the operator touches it. The operator may like to wipe it down with sanitiser before they start.</p> <p>It is the operator's responsibility to get the laptop from the vestry and set it up/ plug it in and ensure that it functions.</p>	<p>Priest/ Lay Reader</p> <p>AV operator</p>	

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	Screen lowering	The AV Operator should lower the screen and be the only person touching the controls of the sound system and laptop on any given morning.	AV operator/ Warden	
The Eucharist	Setting up for the eucharist Setting up the altar	<p>The Priest or other visiting minister should set up for the eucharist – ensuring that they have all they need for the eucharist liaising with the sacristan for him to point out where items are kept, so that only one person is touching them. Sanitising their hands before and after setting up.</p> <p>If a visiting priest is presiding, the warden/ person in charge/ Sacristan will open the vestry and the safe for them to gain access to the silver and elements. The priest should sanitise their hands before touching any vessels or the elements. The priest will need a chalice, pattern, ciborium, Cruets, lavabo jug and bowl, Corporal, purificator, lavabo towel, Altar cloth. These should only be touched and set up by the priest They should then wash these and return them to the safe after the service. The used linen should be put aside for washing and not be reused.</p>	<p>Priest/ Visiting Priest/ Sacristan</p> <p>Wardens/ Sacristan</p>	
		<p>Church of England Guidelines issued 1st July 2020 https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2020-07/Coronavirus%20Advice%20on%20the%20Administration%20of%20Holy%20Communion%20v3.0.pdf</p>		
	Visiting priest	A visiting priest should where possible bring their own vestments and stole – if this is not possible they should borrow one from the vestment chest, returning it after use to be quarantined for at least a week before it is used again by another person.	Visiting Minister	
	Offertory procession	<p>There will be no offertory procession at this time, all the elements needed should be set up before the service by the presiding priest. Giving will be encouraged with a retiring collection using the card machine/ text giving.</p>	<p>Priest</p> <p>Priest/</p>	

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			Stewards	
	Presiding	<p>At this time the congregation will only receive in one kind (the bread) according to Church of England Guidelines. The priest alone will consume the priest's host and the wine. The congregation will receive in one kind. The Liturgical and Faith and Order Commissions have made clear, this is still 'complete communion'.</p> <p>The priest should sanitise their hands before touching any vessels or the elements.</p> <p>Individual wafers should be placed in the ciborium before the service, and the lid replaced during consecration to prevent the priest speaking over them.</p>	Priest	
	Distribution	<p>The congregation will be offered individual wafers, as is our practise here at KCM. The priest will count the number of communicants in the congregation The priest will sanitise their hands and put on a mask before opening the ciborium to distribute to the people. The people will be asked to come to the front to join a socially distanced queue returning to their seats down the side aisles – they will be invited up row by row to minimise the number of people moving about at any one time. Those wearing facial coverings should sanitise their hands to take off their face coverings and before receiving communion, they should then sanitise their hands again as they replace their face covering once they have received. The steward will invite the congregation of both services up to the altar rail after the choir have received. Members of the congregation should move as directed to receive communion. Joining a socially distanced queue to reach the priest. Leaving their face covering on as they receive. The wafer will be placed into their hands, being dropped from a small height to prevent physical contact between the priest and the communicant.</p>	Priest Stewards All Steward	

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		<p>The priest will not say any words out loud at the distribution to prevent aerosol transmission of particles.</p> <p>In order to minimise overall risk, intinction (dipping the bread into the wine) should not be practised.</p> <p>Once parishioners have received, they should return to their seats via the side aisle closest to their seat to avoid walking past other people who are still waiting to receive. Face covering should be worn on the way up to and returning from receiving.</p>		
	Blessings where people are not receiving communion	<p>Blessings will be done at a distance.</p> <p>The priest will not say any words out loud to prevent aerosol transmission of particles but will make the sign of the cross.</p> <p>Those who wish for a blessing should stand at the altar rail. As above</p>	Priest	
	Cleaning up after the Eucharist and service	<p>The presiding minister is responsible for cleaning up and putting away all the items used in the Eucharist.</p> <p>This includes washing the silver and putting it back in the safe</p>	Priest	
Recording and streaming services	All involved are to be made aware that the service is being live streamed and recorded	<p>The congregation will be made aware of this in an announcement at the beginning of the service and in the notice sheet/ weekly email.</p> <p>Signs in the church to make people aware.</p> <p>Those involved in live streaming or joining the service must have the opportunity to opt out and not appear on camera.</p> <p>The camera should be pointed out at the beginning of each service so that those involved in live streaming the service from church have opportunity to sit behind it.</p>	Minister leading service	

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		Those who are at home and on Zoom should be made aware that they have opportunity to turn off their camera/ sound and encouraged to do this if they wish.		
	Recording the service	The service will be accessible afterwards from Facebook, the church website and YouTube. The congregation will be made aware of this in an announcement at the beginning of the service and in the notice sheet/ weekly email.	Vicar/ Warden	
	Facebook, Zoom and YouTube	Live streaming on Facebook is accessible to all. Live streaming on Zoom is by invitation with the link to join us. This must be carefully managed. See below. YouTube is the vehicle for recordings to be posted.		
	Using the Zoom platform	Those who are watching must not share the meeting link or meeting ID on social media, website or any public platform without permission from the Vicar, Host or Wardens. Meeting invitations must be made available by email with the weekly email and KCM Family Church WhatsApp group only. People must be encouraged not to share the joining information wider than the church groups without the permission of the ministry team/ Wardens. The meeting host must password protect the meeting. The meeting host should enable the 'waiting room' to control participant entry to the meeting. Where possible, the meeting host should 'lock the meeting' when the expected participants are present.	Warden/ Host	
	Risk of people joining or making comments	Where possible screen sharing should be set to 'host only'.	Host/ Warden	

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	that are inappropriate on the comments section, speaking out loud or sharing inappropriate images	<p>It is the responsibility of the meeting host to remove any participant from the meeting who may be causing disruption. Or to mute their sound or stop their video.</p> <p>The service leader should be made aware (if possible) during the service.</p> <p>If the person is known the Vicar and Safeguarding Officer should be notified so they can follow up.</p> <p>If not known the person should be blocked and not allowed to access future meetings without a conversation having been had with the Vicar and Safeguarding Officer.</p>	Vicar and Safeguarding Officer	
	Zoom issues	<p>Software bugs or viruses allowing hackers to access the meeting.</p> <p>Any Zoom user must keep their installation of the Zoom software up to date (by accepting all prompts for Low All Zoom user's software update as soon as they are offered.)</p>	All Host/ Warden	
	People joining from their home environment	Participants may inadvertently disclose potentially sensitive information to others by nature of what is visible in their background. Make sure that there is nothing personal in your background, for example photographs of children, etc.	All	
	Leaving Zoom worship	Host to ensure that the meeting is closed after an appropriate time after worship. Host/ Wardens to let the wardens and vicar know of any issues.	Host/ Warden	
At the end of the service	Those in church who have been involved in the service to secure the building	<p>All areas that have been touched should be sanitised and items that have been touch moved out of reach for 72 hours.</p> <p>The building should be locked and secured</p>	Warden	

Church of England Guidance on Worship (updated 26March2021)

https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2021-03/COVID%2019%20advice%20on%20conducting%20public%20worship%20v3.0_1.pdf

RSCM Guidance for Churches on Singing (accessed 31/03/2021)

<https://www.rscm.org.uk/covid-19-resources-for-churches/>

Government Guidance on Tier 4 (updated 21Dec2020)

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/tier-4-stay-at-home>

Government Guidance on Worship (updated 10Dec2020)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-for-the-safe-use-of-places-of-worship-during-the-pandemic-from-4-july>

Church of England Guidance regarding Singing (updated 29November2020)

<https://www.churchofengland.org/resources/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-churches#na>

The Government advice on Face Coverings can be accessed here (updated 21August2020)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/face-coverings-when-to-wear-one-and-how-to-make-your-own/face-coverings-when-to-wear-one-and-how-to-make-your-own>

The Government advice on the Administration of Holy Communion (updated 17August2020)

<https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2020-08/COVID-19%20Advice%20on%20the%20Administration%20of%20Holy%20Communion%20v5.1.pdf>

The Government advice on acts of worship including updated guidance on singing (14August2020)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-for-the-safe-use-of-places-of-worship-during-the-pandemic-from-4-july/covid-19-guidance-for-the-safe-use-of-places-of-worship-during-the-pandemic-from-4-july>

The Church of England Guidance can be accessed here (updated 7August2020)

<https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2020-08/COVID%2019%20advice%20on%20face%20coverings%20v3.0.pdf>