



## Merland Rise Church Re-opening

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## Introduction

The document relates to our Sunday morning service and we will review and update as appropriate. Once we have embedded safe working practices to manage risk, we will look into the feasibility of opening other groups.

Government advice has been followed ([latest advice](#)) and a full Risk Assessment has been undertaken.

We ask that you read this document and agree to follow the guidelines. We encourage sensitivity towards one another, respecting that some will be feeling anxious and others will prefer to continue with the online service for the moment.

We welcome the opportunity to meet in person, but be aware that church will be quite different. Fellowship is extremely important to us, but please do not be tempted to shake hands or hug one another, and only engage in conversation with those from your own household or bubble.

There will be stewards to help and direct at the service, and we ask that you respectfully follow their instructions.

## Timing

Merland Rise Church premises will re-open from Sunday 11 Oct. The service will also be streamed online and will be a maximum of 1 hour.

## Pre-Service Prayer Meeting

For the moment, this will remain on Zoom at 9.00 – 9.20 am.

## In Touch

We will continue to send In Touch electronically and paper copies by request.

## Start time

The service will start at 10.30 am, with entry into the building from 10.15.

The evening service will continue online at 6.00pm.

## Booking and Attendance

You must not attend if you are showing any COVID-19 symptoms (high temperature, persistent cough, loss of sense of smell and or taste), or if anyone in your household or bubble has been told to self-isolate.

Those over 70 have a greatly increased risk of severe disease from COVID-19 and so should weigh the risk of attendance, as should those with underlying health conditions.

Attendance is via online booking only: <https://www.merlandrisechurch.org.uk/book>

**By booking a place, you are agreeing to abide by the conditions set out in this document.**

Booking will be live from Friday evening 3 October. There are 3 Sundays available for booking at the moment. Please book just one service for now. Registration will close at 10 am on the Friday before each Sunday.

By law, for Track and Trace, we are required to hold details of your visit for three weeks.

Please book only the number of places required in the worship area. If you are coming with children who will be in a group, you do not need to book a seat for them i.e. if you are family of 4 with 2 children who are going to KFC, book 2 seats.

If you are serving in any capacity (preaching, worship, p.a., steward, filming, signing, children's group), you will not need to reserve a seat. We will keep a record of your visit from the rota that is produced for your area of service. Please e-mail a copy of the rota to Ruth Warren and do notify her of any changes [admin@merlandrisechurch.org.uk](mailto:admin@merlandrisechurch.org.uk) It is important that we have an up to date record for Track and Trace.

If you are unable to use the online booking system, do ask someone to book for you. If you are booking for others as well as yourself, please do so in a separate booking. You can use your email address, but make sure the ticket is registered to the person who will use it.

If you reserve a place but are unable to attend, cancel your place as soon as possible to allow others to join.

We will review numbers and if there is great demand, will consider adding an extra service either in the morning or the evening.

## Car Parking

This will remain unaffected. Please maintain your social distance whilst in the carpark and do not start up conversations.

## Arrival

Services will start promptly to minimise the amount of time we gather in the building and for the sake of those tuning in via YouTube. Please arrive between 10.15 -10.30am. This will allow time for everyone to be checked in and seated before the service starts.

Unfortunately, latecomers will not be allowed entry.

There will be a socially distanced queuing system outside the front of the church heading along the side of the building towards the car park. If you arrive by car and the queue stretches beyond the side road into Merland Rise, please wait in your car until it dies down. We do not, however, expect that entry into the building will take long.

As you enter the church, your name will be checked against the booking system, you will be asked if you have had any COVID-like symptoms and asked to hand sanitise.

For those with the NHS Covid-19 app, there will be two QR scanning points, one at the registration desk and one in the café.

A steward will then direct you to your seat, where we ask you, as far as possible, to remain until the end of the service.

Please do not shake hands or hug those around you.

## Arrival with Children

If you have children in Tots for Christ (under 5 years) please use the entrance to the crèche at the back of the church. If you have older children as well, please drop off at the crèche first.

If you have children in Kids for Christ (5-11 years), please enter church by the front entrance, where you will be checked in and your child/children can go straight upstairs to be greeted by their group leaders. You will be shown to your seat by a steward.

G Unit (11-18 years) will go upstairs to the mezzanine area.

## In the Building

Clear signage will point you to the one-way system, remind you of social distancing and hand sanitising. Some areas of church will be closed off with tape. Avoid touching surfaces, furniture, handles etc as far as is possible.

Please co-operate with the stewards as they direct you.

## Face Masks

Face masks are required by law inside public buildings, so you will need to wear one, unless you have a medical condition which exempts you. If this is the case, please inform us before arrival [admin@merlandrisechurch.org.uk](mailto:admin@merlandrisechurch.org.uk)

Anyone involved in leading the service or working with children is not required by law to wear a mask, but will need to wear one when moving around the building.

We ask that children over 12 bring a face mask which they will need to wear in public areas but not in their group.

Under 12s will not need to wear a mask.

## Seating

All seating will be arranged with a minimum of 1m distance between side-facing chairs and 2m distance between rows. This is in accordance with the 1m+ mitigation guidance, which includes no face to face seating, a wide aisle to assist entering and exiting, and good ventilation.

Because of the need for good ventilation, it may be colder than usual, so please wrap up warm.

Seats will be arranged to accommodate people in their households, minus children who will already be in their own groups. Only the stewards should move seats.

Please do not change seats from the one shown to you by the steward.

This will give you an idea of what to expect:



## Personal Belongings

The coat racks will be out of use. You can place your coat on the back of your chair. In wet weather, please bring a plastic bag, such as a bin liner, to store any wet items.

## The Service

The service will be a mix of pre-recorded and live material and will be streamed online, so please note you may be filmed.

There will be live music with a reduced band. Current government guidance prohibits congregational singing but permits singers in leading worship. Tempting as it may be, please refrain from joining in.

## The Offering

We will not circulate an offering bag during the service, but there will be an offering box as you enter the building.

## Toilets

The disabled toilet downstairs will be open, as well as the upstairs toilet for the children's groups. Please try to avoid using these facilities. If you do need them, please hand sanitise before entering and wash your hands thoroughly after.

## Drinking Water

This will not be available except for medical need. Please bring your own water bottle if you wish.

## Leaving the Building

At the end of the service, parents will be asked to collect their children and leave first. KFC and G unit will be already waiting in the café area. Exit will be via the front and back doors.

Once parents have left, others will be dismissed row by row by the stewards.

Please do not mingle in the carpark or congregate at the front of the church. It is important for our witness and reputation in the community that we follow government rules and that we are not seen to be gathering in a large group.

## Fire

In the event of an alarm, the service leader will instruct you to leave via the nearest exit, and the one-way system will not operate. You should go straight to Merland Green, opposite the church. You should not collect your children. They will already be exiting the building and will be brought to you on Merland Green.

## Acknowledgement

Many thanks to [Christchurch, Banstead](#) for the provision of this template.