



**Yateley Baptist Church
Plan/ Risk Assessment for opening
with COVID-19 safety measures**

INTRODUCTION

Please think of the most vulnerable and the concerns of others when reading this document. Yateley Baptist Church intends to provide a safe and healthy place of worship and safe practices at all times. The purpose of this document is to describe a working plan and risk assessment in line with official Government guidance to ensure that the congregation has a safe worship environment during the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. *This document uses the Government guidelines as applicable to churches and follows the basic underlying principles set out for minimising virus transfer.* Only the re-opening of the church for Sunday services is considered. Other activities such as mid-week youth, ladies fellowship etc are not included for the time being. Opening the church for worship will take place when we can do so safely and in line with government guidance.

The fellowship will be consulted and their concerns and ideas taken into consideration before Sunday worship is re-started. Changes to this document may be made following consultation and in light of any changing guidance as well as seeing what experiences other like-minded churches have.

As before, only morning services will take place, which will be live shared on line to those who are unable or uncomfortable with attending on a Sunday. Alternatively, audio recordings of services will continue to be circulated for those without internet access.

We recognise that there will be a wide range of emotional responses to the thought of returning to worshipping together. There is likely to be everything from deep anxiety and fear, to confusion and uncertainty, to relief and even excitement. Everyone's experience of the lockdown has been unique. Everyone's reaction to its easing, however gradual, will be similarly unique. It is important that we acknowledge and take this into account.

With this in mind, we will communicate with as much clarity as possible using a combination of written and video messages to explain the details thoroughly. We want to paint a picture of what people can expect. This will help prepare and reassure them in equal measure. Church will look and feel different.

The risk assessment at the end of this document details the risk management measures that we will be implementing. The risk assessment will also be posted on the church website. There is lots here to take on board about how things will need to operate differently. All member and friends will be informed of the measures that have been put in place so that there is the opportunity for everyone to reflect and respond with questions or suggestions on further improvements.

CHURCH RESPONSIBILITY

To protect everyone, members and friends should only attend worship if they are well and no one in their household is self-isolating.

If anyone shows/ develops symptoms during a service, they must return home immediately to self-isolate along with anyone else who that person has been in contact with.

CHURCH ENTRANCE

Notices will be displayed at the front entrance addressed to all the people entering the building to follow social distancing measures and sanitise their hands/ wash their hands on entry.

ARRIVALS AND DEPARTURES

Members and friends must observe social distancing not only when in the church building, but when arriving and departing from the church.

CHURCH ARRANGEMENT PROPOSAL

The congregation must sit in accordance to the 2m social distancing guideline. Family members living together should sit next to each other, maintaining the social distance between themselves and other individuals or family groups. Everyone will have access to hand sanitiser at entry and exit to the church. Face masks must be worn by the congregation when in the building during services.

Signage and guidance will be displayed in all areas to remind people of social distancing and hygiene measures.

CHANGES FROM LAST ISSUE

The perspex screen on the pulpit has been removed. This can be done because the preacher is more than 2m from the nearest person sitting in the congregation.

Communion arrangements have been added.

Good Friday arrangements removed.

Appendix 1.

Covid 19 Risk Assessment			
Premises	Yateley Baptist Church, Cricket Hill, Yateley GU46 6BA		
Persons covered	Members and visitors		
Purpose of assessment	To evaluate and reduce the risk of Covid-19 infection for those attending corporate worship		
Assessment carried out by	Stephen Colclough	Date	22 April 2021
Approved by	Matthew Colclough, Chris Ward	Date	22 April 2021
Next review	22 May 2021		

What are the hazards?	Who might be harmed and how?	What action do you need to take to control the risks?	Who needs to carry out the action?	When is the action needed by?	Date Done
Infection via airborne virus	All attendees	Maximum of 24 individuals at a service based on 2m separation. More can attend if family members sit together. If 1m distancing is applied the number attending can increase further.	Deacons/Door stewards	On Sunday	Ongoing
		Potential attendees told in advance not to attend if they are vulnerable or have or may have symptoms.	Elders	Before Sunday	10 Sept 2020 and subsequently
		Other information and advice (see paragraph after table) communicated to potential attendees.	Elders	Before Sunday	10 Sept 2020 and subsequently

What are the hazards?	Who might be harmed and how?	What action do you need to take to control the risks?	Who needs to carry out the action?	When is the action needed by?	Date Done
		Anyone displaying symptoms during service to immediately leave and go home.	All	On Sunday	Ongoing
		Maintain distance of 2 metres between people/family groups. (may change to 1m) Seating to be spaced and planned. Congregation to be seated by plan.	All Deacons Door stewards	On Sunday Before Sunday On Sunday	Ongoing August 2020
		Pulpit moved back as far as practical on stage to ensure greater than 2m between the preacher and nearest member of the congregation.	Deacons	Before Sunday	10 Sept 2020
		Entrance and exit to be managed by stewards to maintain spacing and avoid choke points.	Door stewards	On Sunday	Ongoing
		Congregation to wear face masks. The preacher is exempt from this while standing at the pulpit leading the service.	Door stewards	On Sunday	Ongoing
		No use of library, kitchen or back hall.	Deacons	Before Sunday	August 2020
		Warning and advice notices (including items from paragraph after table) to be displayed.	Deacons	Before Sunday	10 Sept 2020
		Doors and windows to be open where practicable for ventilation.	Stewards	On Sunday	Ongoing
		Singing and raised voices to be avoided at all times.	All	On Sunday	Ongoing

What are the hazards?	Who might be harmed and how?	What action do you need to take to control the risks?	Who needs to carry out the action?	When is the action needed by?	Date Done
		A record to be kept of all attendees and their phone numbers to assist with track and trace if needed.	Door stewards & deacons	On Sunday and following 2 weeks	Ongoing
Infection via airborne virus	Especially those over 70 and those medically vulnerable	Government advice not to attend to be communicated in advance.	Elders	Before Sunday	10 Sept 2020 and ongoing
Infection via airborne virus from children, who may be asymptomatic carriers	All	Parents to be asked to supervise their children at all times. Children without parents or adult carers not allowed to attend. Communicated as necessary in advance and on the day	Elders Elders	Before Sunday Before Sunday	10 Sept 2020 and ongoing 10 Sept 2020 and ongoing
Infection from hand contact	All	Initial schedule of one meeting per week to reduce the risk of infection. Mandatory hand sanitising on entry and exit to be explained in advance. Provision of hand sanitiser at entry and exit. Hand sanitising on entry and exit enforced on Sundays. Hand sanitiser provided in foyer and back entrance area	Elders Elders Deacons Door stewards Deacons	Before Sunday Before Sunday Before Sunday On Sunday	Ongoing Ongoing Ongoing Ongoing

What are the hazards?	Who might be harmed and how?	What action do you need to take to control the risks?	Who needs to carry out the action?	When is the action needed by?	Date Done
		<p>No items to be distributed on entrance e.g. notice sheets.</p> <p>Inform all attendees: No handshaking; No serving of refreshments on premises;</p> <p>Cash/cheque giving to be quarantined for at least 3 days.</p> <p>Remove fabric towels, provide paper towels.</p> <p>Communion preparation (see end of document)</p>	<p>Door Stewards</p> <p>Elders</p> <p>Treasurer</p> <p>Deacons</p> <p>Deacon</p>	<p>On Sunday</p> <p>Before Sunday</p> <p>On Sunday</p> <p>Before Sunday</p> <p>Before each Communion service</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>August 2020</p> <p>Ongoing</p>
Infection from hard surfaces	All	<p>Dependent on service frequency. While only Sunday morning services are being held, there will be sufficient time between services so that cleaning of touch surfaces will not be necessary. If frequency of services changes, this requirement will be reviewed.</p>	Fabric deacon + team	Not currently necessary	N/A

Other advice to be communicated to potential attendees:

- Sit in the same seat week by week.
- Vestry only for the use of the preacher on Sundays.
- Preferably toilets only to be used if absolutely necessary.

Arrangements for Communion.

A deacon will prepare the elements for communion.

The deacon shall wear a face covering and gloves while doing this and will use tongs to handle the elements instead of holding things in their hands.

A serving of bread and a glass communion cup of wine will be placed in a suitable small bowl for each person receiving communion.

The bowls will be placed at the rear of the church and each person receiving communion will be told to take one bowl each as they enter the church and before they sit down.

The deacon will provide bread and wine separately for the preacher on a stand next to the pulpit.

At the end of the service, people shall return their bowl and glass cup to a box at the rear of the church as they leave.

The bowls and cups will be washed in hot soapy water before being used again the following month.

These arrangements will ensure that contact with and potential contamination of the elements and utensils used is minimised. The collection arrangements mean that bowls and cups can be left for at least 72 hours before being handled again for cleaning.