

Important information

As we return to the building it is not as it was before. Sadly the Corona Virus is not something of the past so we are having to adapt the way we do things to ensure, as far as is possible, we provide a safe place for you to come to worship our God.

There are a number of practicalities that need to be shared.

Firstly, masks. You will be required to wear the mask all the time you are in the building - except at communion, if reading or leading the intercessions - then you can take it off whilst you are speaking

Keeping a safe distance from others is important. We are required to keep the 2metre rule so please be conscious of others as you come in and out of church.

Please use the hand sanitiser as you enter which is on a table just inside the door. Hazel and Sheila will welcome you and ensure we have your details - needed for the NHS Test and Trace information. If you have not already completed and returned the Track and Trace Consent Form, please could you do so as this will help ensure you enter the building with minimum delay and avoid queuing.

The seating is set out to ensure social distancing. There are a few seats for couples with the rest single seating. Although we will have music of some sort the congregation is not currently allowed to sing. This may take a bit of getting used to but I hope we can adapt to worshipping God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit with our hearts if not with our voices for the time being. I'll explain more about communion at the time, but essentially you will be

invited to come to the front where there will be two points to receive the "bread" - we will be only be having "bread" for the foreseeable future. Please stand as there is no rail. The guidance we are required to take is that you come up wearing your face masks, you stretch out your hands so I can drop the "bread" into your hands.

I will not say any words and will be wearing a face mask.

Once you have the bread in your hand you can take you mask off to eat it and then put it back on again before returning to your seat.

If our hands touch accidentally we must both sanitise our hands.

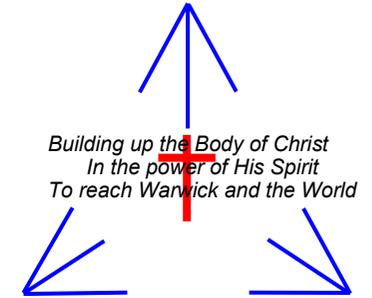
I'm sure with God's grace we will get used to this in time. However, please be assured if you would rather not receive under these restrictions you are welcome not to and I quite understand.

At the end of the service please leave the church observing the 2metre rule. Unfortunately we cannot serve drinks or go into the hall for our usual coffee/tea and we'd really appreciate it if you go outside to chat. Not everyone may feel comfortable with this so please be sensitive to one another.

On a very practical note it would be helpful if we could keep toilets for emergency use only due to the need for cleaning.

We are likely to be without heating in September as the boiler is having to be disconnected in readiness for a new boiler being installed at the end of September.

Welcome back.
Jonathan.



St Paul's Church, Warwick

**September 6, 2020
Trinity 13**

Rev Jonathan Hearn

Today's 10am Service - Holy Communion

If you are a newcomer to our Church, or a visitor to the area, please introduce yourself to one of the welcomers, or to the clergy.
There will be no Sunday club until the third Sunday in September.

This week - September 6	Next Week - September 13
10am Holy Communion	10am Holy Communion

Readings	
September 6	September 13
Exodus 12: 1-14 Matthew 18: 15-20	Exodus 14:19-end Matthew 18: 21-35

Praying for the Persecuted Church

Rose lost her husband. Then she lost her livelihood. But she hasn't lost her faith in God. Fulani militants and Covid-19 have taken so much from Rose - but your prayers and support are giving back.

Living in Plateau State in the middle band of Nigeria, Rose is in one of the most dangerous places in the world to be a Christian. Nigeria is number 12 on the World Watch List, but it's at the top of the list for Christians murdered because of their faith. And on April 7, 2020, tragically, Rose's husband Matthew was killed by Fulani militants.

Rose, who was pregnant at the time, said: "I woke up feeling very positive and eager for the clinic visit. I finished all my house chores and prepared a meal for my husband and daughters."

She said goodbye to her husband and left for the trip, which would take a few days. That evening, Matthew – a pastor – and the church secretary went out on patrol. Members of the church were taking it in turns to check for any signs of an impending Fulani attack on their village.

Rose said: "After the patrol, my husband was on his way back home to the children when he was shot dead."

Life for widows in Nigeria can be very hard. Supposedly, it is culturally expected that the deceased husband's family will take care of his widow and children. In practice, this often doesn't happen. Rose's in-laws did worse than neglect – they confiscated Rose's livestock, food and everything else of value. She was left empty-handed and grieving.

Right at this time, another crisis came. The Nigerian government announced lockdowns to curb the spread of Covid-19. Life became even more difficult. Like many people, Rose lost any opportunity she had to make money to buy food. Rose said: "There was no money to buy any food. We couldn't trade anything for money, because the markets were closed. Sometimes we go to sleep without any food."

But Rose's faith of God keeps her resilient and hopeful. She said: "Today we are amongst the living ones. It's a miracle!"

How many people would have Rose's optimism in these circumstances? She meditates on Psalm 119:11 - "I have hidden your word in my heart that I might not sin against you."

She said: "Whenever I read this Psalm, I feel so encouraged."

The church in northern and central Nigeria is sadly accustomed to caring for women who have been widowed by extremist attacks. But lockdown has greatly reduced the income of churches, and thus their ability to help vulnerable members of their community. Rose received some food for her and her children, but it was very insufficient.

As has been seen in other countries, Christians are often last in line when government food and aid is distributed – and are often deliberately neglected. However, Open Doors partners were able to bring a relief package to Rose shortly after she gave birth to her third daughter. She was delighted!

She said: "I had never imagined that I would receive such gifts, but today, my faith in Christ has been strengthened. This support will enable me to care for my family."

Source, Open Doors UK.

Thought for the Week - welcome back

The last time we were in church for a service was on March 15th, some 25 Sunday's ago.

It seems both a long time ago and only yesterday but a lot has happened since. I never thought it would be so long!

So WELCOME BACK - even if we are not back to the way things were.

I am conscious I have been coming into church to say the Morning Office for some time but I remember the first day that I did - more than anything I felt I just wanted to sit quietly for a while soaking in the atmosphere of the place, enjoying the peace and presence of God in the building.

I know His presence is not confined to the building, and we can be aware of His presence wherever we are as His promise is that He will never leave us or forsake us and that He is with us always, but there can be something special about place.

As I sat that first day, and many times since, I have reflected on what it is I had missed.

I'd missed just not being in the building, that sense of the presence of God, and the memories associated with the Place.

I missed the people - our local family of God - with our stories of joy and sorrow - and the love and support of that family.

I don't know how you are feeling this morning but I've sensed you've been looking forward to be back.

So as you sit before the service, be still and be aware of the wonderful presence of God in the building and as we begin the service there'll also be the opportunity to be still before we "Worship".

Perhaps too there are limitations to what we can do. Use these times to help reflect on the freedom we have in this country to meet together to Praise and Worship our God.

As there can be no congregational singing use this time to help you think of our brothers and sisters in other parts of the world who have to be "Silent Believers".

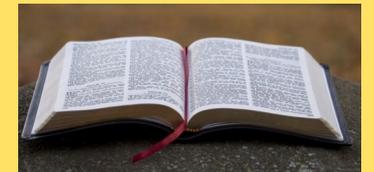
For them to sing would leave them potentially in danger of their life and livelihood.

So let God touch your heart and mind afresh with his Holy Spirit and inspire you in your thoughts as we enjoy being back in church this morning. Welcome to St Paul's today!

Our Bible verse for the year

Never doubt God's mighty power to work in you and accomplish all this. He will achieve infinitely more than your greatest request, our most unbelievable dream, and exceed your wildest imagination!

He will outdo them all, for his miraculous power constantly energises you.



Ephesians 3: v20.