

Kirby-le-Soken Evangelical Church

The Street, Kirby-le-Soken, FRINTON-ON-SEA, Essex, CO13 0EE

Guidelines on reopening after the coronavirus lockdown

These guidelines have been agreed by and are issued by the church council who are committed to meeting in a COVID secure manner in line with government guidelines.

1. The church decided to close in January 2021 whilst local infection rates were very high but began a phased reopening for worship at the end of February. Each week there are Sunday morning and evening worship services, a Prayer and Bible Study on a Thursday and from April 20th a Mum's and Toddler group.
2. Under the national lockdown, places of worship were one of the very few legal exemptions that allowed larger numbers of people to gather. It is therefore crucial that places of worship and those attending comply with both law and the COVID-19 Secure guidance.
3. Anyone showing symptoms of COVID-19 (a new continuous cough, a high temperature or a loss of, or change in, their normal sense of taste or smell) should not attend the place of worship due to the risk that they pose to others. Where individuals are self-isolating due to a possible or confirmed case of COVID-19 in the household, or because they have been requested to so by NHS Test & Trace, they must only participate remotely. The government advise the clinically vulnerable (including those 70 and over) to keep social contacts low and maintain social distancing from those they do not live with. Anyone who feels ill or begins to feel symptoms of COVID-19 while at the church should go home immediately.
4. We will make the Sunday morning service available on Skype for those unable to attend and encourage any who are shielding or concerned about mixing with others to use this facility. Audio recordings of services are available on the church website, and videos on a memory stick.
5. We will keep a record of who attends services for 21 days to assist NHS test and trace.
6. Face coverings are required by law to be worn in places of worship. There are valid exemptions for some individuals and groups to not wear a face covering in these settings. In particular, those who are leading permitted services in a place of worship, and those who assist them are exempt.
7. The capacity of the church has been reduced by removing chairs. The remaining chairs are spaced so that people can sit in socially distanced household groups. People are asked to enter through the main front door and to fill the front seats first. At the end of the service those at the back will be asked to leave through the main door first and an additional exit through the vestry will be available for those sitting at the front. Overflow seating, with video and audio feeds, is provided in the rear hall for the Sunday morning service.
8. Everyone should maintain strict social distancing at all times, meaning people should be 2 metres apart or more than 1 metre apart as well as taking extra steps to stay safe (such as wearing face coverings) to reduce the risk of transmission. You must not mingle with anyone outside your household or support bubble indoors, but are allowed to meet in groups of six outside.
9. Hand washing is important and we have provided sanitiser at the front and rear entrances to the building and in the kitchen. Please use the hand sanitiser when entering or leaving the building. Some face masks, gloves and bottles of water have also been provided in the entrance porch.
10. The person unlocking the building will ensure that doors are opened to avoid the need for others to touch door handles. They will also open windows to increase ventilation.
11. We will not join together in congregational singing indoors. Hymns and Bible readings are projected onto the front wall. People are encouraged to bring their own Bibles and may borrow a hymn book. The pew Bibles and hymn books are not used, except in the overflow where they are only used on a Sunday morning.

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12. Everyone is encouraged to give by bank transfer, but the offering box is available for those wishing to donate by cash or cheque. Only one person is to handle the box and cash when the collection is counted.
13. Those attending are asked to place their coats under, or on the back of their chairs, instead of on the coat racks.
14. The toilets will be available for use, but only one person should use them at a time. Paper towels have been provided in the toilets and the kitchen.
15. There is generally a gap of 48 hours between meetings. The church cleaner has been asked to clean once a week between the Sunday and Thursday meetings. Where services are being held less than 48 hours apart (such as on Sunday) the church will be thoroughly cleaned to provide a safe environment for the next service. This will involve volunteers cleaning the toilets, chairs and door handles with household cleaning products. The church trustees will ensure the building is left clean and tidy after each meeting.
16. In order to hold a communion service bread and wine will be prepared in the kitchen by one person, wearing a mask and gloves. They will cover the elements and place them on a table near the front of the church but to the side rather than in front of the minister. The bread will be served by one individual, wearing a mask and gloves, who will go around the congregation and drop a piece of bread into the hand of each one wishing to take part. The individual communion cups will be served in the usual manner by the same individual. Face masks may be removed to take communion.
17. An informal booking service is in operation for the Mum's and toddler group where the number of adults present will be kept below fifteen. All adults present must wear face coverings, should use hand sanitiser and maintain social distancing.
18. We do not serve any refreshments on the premises at present.

Document History

Issue 1	4-Jul-20	Reopening for one Sunday service
Issue 2	15-Jul-20	Adding provision for a midweek meeting
Issue 3	28-Jul-20	Extra guidance for a wedding, communion and evening service
Issue 4	19-Aug-20	Updated guidance on face masks which are now mandatory.
Issue 5	23-Sep-20	Updates for rule of 6 and coffee morning
Issue 6	17-Oct-20	Updates for "COVID alert level – high" restrictions
Issue 7	5-Dec-20	Updates for singing group
Issue 8	24-Dec-20	Updates for Tier 4
Issue 9	26-Feb-21	Updates for National Lockdown
Issue 10	26-Apr-21	Easing of restrictions and restarting Mum's and toddler group

Keith Munford

26-Apr-2020

Kirby-le-Soken Evangelical Church is a charitable incorporated organisation (registered charity number 1170625)