



St James's Church Piccadilly

**Rooted in God's earth, we envision a just society and a creative,
open-hearted church.**

Sunday service arrangements for July, August, September 2021

Introduction

The government has lifted covid 19 restrictions from Monday 19th July and the Church of England has issued guidance to help us make our own arrangements regarding public worship. At St James's, as throughout society, there is a range of views regarding risk, and the restrictions that we live with or not.

The legal responsibility for the ordering of public worship lies with the incumbent (in our case the Rector). A meeting was held this week with wardens, members of the standing committee and staff to make proposals regarding St James's Sunday services over the next two or three months. Inevitably all of these arrangements are subject to review as we go along and all feedback is extremely welcome to churchwardens@sjp.org.uk or rector@sjp.org.uk

Our principles are

1. To make St James's as inviting, accessible and safe as possible for anyone to worship together either face to face or online.
2. To have a special regard for all those who are more vulnerable to covid 19 and its effects, physically or mentally and to make sure that anyone who is feeling anxious or cautious about the lifting of restrictions is not discriminated against.
3. Nevertheless to take measured steps forward in the practice of our public worship, in the return to something like a new normal.

Track and Trace no longer required

From this Sunday (25th July) it will no longer be a requirement that you book in advance to attend the service.

Location

Through the summer, we will hold our services outside in the courtyard making use of our outside pulpit and sound system. We are extremely fortunate to have this space and intend to use it as often as possible between St James's Day (25th July) and Harvest (10th October) as all the feedback we have received is that people feel safer outdoors. **Please come prepared with umbrellas (for sun or rain!) and suitable clothing and presume that the service is outdoors** until 10th October.

The exception to this are Sundays 1st August, 5th September and 3rd October (when the courtyard will be being set up for the Soul at Saint James events).

When we are holding the service outdoors, we will include congregational singing and not require face coverings. The distribution of communion will remain as it is for now. When we are indoors, the following arrangements will be made:

Hand Sanitiser

This will be freely available throughout the church and all congregation and visitors are expected to use it on entry to the building, before receiving communion and on exit from the building.

Face coverings

We can't require these but strongly encourage people to use them, and will insist on them when people are moving around, not only to protect ourselves but to protect one another.

Social distancing

According to Church of England advice, we will 'zone' the church to start with and take the relaxing of restrictions step by step. To start with, the Piccadilly side of the church (the central pews, the side pews and gallery) will be free seating with no social distancing required. For those who want to continue to maintain distance, the Jermyn Street side (central pews, side pews, gallery) will continue to have alternate pews cordoned off and restrictions will remain as they are now. We will see what

people would like to do and adjust as we go along accordingly. However we have undertaken to have part of the church as a social distance zone for as long as people request this.

The Service

Outdoors, we will sing together, and encourage people to use every part of the site including the garden if they wish to maintain greater distance.

Indoors, we will have one congregational hymn at the end which everyone is invited to sing, reducing the amount of collective singing in recognition that we are inside the building. The rest of the music will be led by the Lay Singers and musicians.

Outdoors or indoors, Communion will continue to be shared with the congregation as it is now: no gathering around the altar, receiving the bread only, requiring hand sanitiser before receiving communion.

The Peace will continue to be shared socially distanced without physical contact.

The Serving Team will not return until the autumn and the priest will continue to prepare and administer communion alone.

Conclusion

Our purpose in taking these measures step by step is to ensure that we are moving forward, but doing so at a pace which will generate confidence that St James's is a welcoming and safe place to pray together. I hope that we as a congregation and community can pray together this summer, living out our commitment to inclusion, and our desire to be a 'creative, openhearted church.' For some these measures won't go far enough, for others they represent a lifting of restrictions that will cause anxiety. Please know that you are prayed for here in your church, whatever your circumstances or views, and that we are committed to making our way through these next few months together as we have travelled together so far.

Creator God, you made us all in your image: may we discern you in all that we see, and serve you in all that we do; through Jesus Christ we pray. Amen.

Lucy Winkett 21st July 2021