

## Arrangements for re-opening St Alphege from 16<sup>th</sup> August

In order to re-open safely, we must have due regard to the Government's guidance, and that of the Church of England and the Diocese of London.

An initial risk assessment has been completed already for opening the church for livestreamed masses, and further assessments will be made specifically for re-opening for public worship.

In what follows, I have followed the 'journey' of a worshipper arriving at St Alphege, entering the church, taking part in the mass, and leaving afterwards.

### Before setting out for church

All worshippers should write their name, address, and contact number or email address, on a small piece of paper, which they should put in the box provided by the entrance to the church – see the section 'Entering the church' below. If it is raining or rain is forecast, you are advised to bring an umbrella and/or waterproof coat as it is possible you may have to queue outside for several minutes. You might also want to go to the loo, as the toilet in the church will only be opened in an emergency!

### Please arrive early!!

It's going to take a lot longer to get into church than usual, as you'll understand as you read this document! Please help us by trying to arrive by 0915 at the very latest.

### Arriving by car

Those arriving by car should park in the car park in Rossdale Drive as usual. As they get out of their cars, they must be mindful and aware of where others are, and maintain the minimum social distance of 1 metre + between themselves and members of their own household on the one hand, and members of other households on the other. They should then join any queue which may have formed outside the doors to the church, maintaining the 1 metre + distance from members of other households.

### Arriving by foot or public transport

If you arrive via the car park, be mindful and aware of others arriving by car or on foot and ensure that the social distance of 1 metre + between households is maintained. If you arrive from Hertford Road, be aware that there may be a

queue that you cannot see as you reach the corner of the church hall and ensure you do not bump into the last person in the queue!

### Entering the building

I am sure you'll now be only too familiar with having to queue outside supermarkets and post offices, and the same will apply to entering the church. Please queue in a single file, maintaining social distance of 1 metre + between members of your household and members of other households. There will be a marshal by the door helping make sure that the queue is managed, and social distancing is maintained. Please cooperate with that person!

The church doors will be open, and you will not need to touch them in order to enter.

As you pass through the doors, you will be greeted by a sidesperson who will ask you to place the piece of paper with your contact details into a box provided for the purpose. Please do **not** give this piece of paper directly to the sidesperson. Your contact details are intended to assist the NHS 'test and trace' system should we later discover that a member with confirmed Covid-19 was present in church on a previous occasion when you were also present.

Immediately after putting your contact details in the box, use the hand sanitiser that will be provided to clean your hands. Do **not** shake hands with anyone!

There will be no hymn books since these may be touched by many different people and cannot be cleaned effectively.

The welcome area will not be available for the time being.

### Finding a place to sit

You will need to sit on a seat that has a green service sheet and Sunday pew sheet on it already or, if you have come with a member of your own household, a seat adjacent to a seat with those sheets on it. Please go directly to one of these seats, without stopping to greet others on the way. I know this is entirely the opposite of what you will want to do if you haven't seen other friends for 4 months, but you must keep your greetings to waving and smiling from a distance!

If a large household with several members are sitting in adjacent seats, they may extend to within a short distance of another seat with sheets on it. Do not

sit on such a seat. You must make sure that there are **at least two vacant seats** between you and the nearest member of a different household.

### During the service

Singing is not permitted at the moment because singing (or shouting, but I hope you won't be shouting in church anyway!) increases the chance of virus being spread in the air. All the responses, or things such as the Gloria and the Creed, should be said quietly.

There will be no passing of the offertory plate to receive your contributions – but please don't think this means we don't need your money! Quite the opposite as, with no hall income for 4 months and no regular giving on Sundays, we are in a very difficult financial position and we rely very heavily on those relatively few members who have set up a bank standing order. There will be a plate at the back of the church for your envelopes or cash giving, and bank card payments will be accepted as well. The safest way to give will be using your bank card online at <https://st-alphege-parish-church.sumup.link/>

At the peace, please do not move from your seat, and restrict your greetings with others to a smile and a wave.

### Candles and praying at the statues

We will be removing the candle stands by the statues for the time being as their presence is likely to encourage people to be closer than 1 metre +. However, you are welcome to pray or make your personal devotions by our Lady or other statues, but please be aware of others who may be doing the same, and ensure you observe the 1 metre + rule. You must **not** touch the statues, or get so close to them that you breathe directly on them.

### Receiving communion

Communion will be given in one kind only, and there will be no sharing of the chalice. You will need to approach the altar step via the central aisle or nave and return to your seat via one or other of the side aisles. Please ensure that when you are queuing to receive, and also when you are returning to your seat, that you maintain social distancing of 1 metre + between members of your household and members of other households.

When I distribute the sacrament, I will try and keep away from your immediate space – this will not be because I'm being unfriendly! I will drop the consecrated wafer into your hands without touching you. I will not be able to give the sacrament directly into your mouth. If I miss your hands, or you drop

the host, just leave it where it falls. I will give you another and consume the one that has been dropped – but only after 72 hours if the host actually touched your hands. You need not worry about what happens to the dropped host. Just hold out your hands for another.

#### Prayer ministry during communion

Sadly, this will not be possible at the moment. The Lady Chapel will be closed to the public. If you have a need for prayer, please contact Mary in the usual way via the number on the pew sheet.

#### After the service

After the service either take the pew sheet home with you or leave it on the seat you were sitting in. Please do **not** bring it to the back of the church. Leave the green service sheet on the chair as you leave and, once again, **do not** bring it to the back of the church.

There will be no serving of teas, coffees, biscuits or, to my personal dismay, cake after mass!

Although I realise this will be painful, please leave the church quickly after mass, and maintain social distance of 1 metre + between your household and others as you leave.

Please use the hand sanitiser provided to clean your hands before you leave.

If you wish to talk to other people, please do this **outside** – the chances of contracting the virus in the open air are much less than inside a building. However, please do not stop to talk to others immediately outside the church doors because this will make it difficult for other worshippers to leave safely. If you do talk to others outside your own household, please continue to maintain the social distance of 1 metre +.