

Ebenezer Evangelical Church: reopening 2020

Attendance to Worship:

1. Symptoms

You should not attend if you have the symptoms associated with coronavirus, or if you have come into contact with someone who has it. Symptoms are a dry cough, a high temperature and a lack of taste or smell.

2. Test/trace and booking a seat

We will need to keep a record of attendance for 21 days to support the NHS Test & Trace programme. We'll only share your details with NHS Test & Trace if asked, and the record will be destroyed after 21 days.

For regular attenders and members whose contact details we already have, we will simply note down your attendance. Those whose details we don't have will need to complete a form.

The best way to do this is by getting everyone to book their seat. You can do this in two ways by contacting the Secretary of the Church by phone/email or failing that the Pastor.

The second way is by an online form that you fill out and we hold all your details on file the first time you book and then the next time there is a speedy booking process but every time you will be asked to sign up to the Churches guidelines for coming to worship.

Book your seat at:

www.ebenezer-pontnewydd.co.uk/booking.html

3. Over 70s

Public Health Wales has not issued any guidance for those over the age of 70, specifically in relation to worship services. But it's worth noting Public Health England's note on this:

- Certain groups of people may be at increased risk of severe disease from COVID-19, including people who are aged 70 or older, regardless of medical conditions.
- Individuals who fall within this group are advised to stay at home as much as possible and, if they do go out, to take particular care to minimise contact with others outside of their household.

4. Hand gel at entrance & exit

You'll be given hand gel at the entrance; you are asked to clean your hands before you enter and limit the places that you touch as they will need to be cleaned down later when the Church will be cleaned.

On the way out you will be asked to clean your hands again with the hand gel provided, this is to keep you safe in the unlikely event that you have picked up any extra germs on your hands during your stay in the Church building.

5. Face masks

Face masks are not mandatory in Wales but if you feel that you should wear a face mask you can do. We only really need face masks in the event that we are in a deeply enclosed space and less than two metres distance.

With this in mind you may wish to wear a face mask on entry or exiting of the building and when people are being shown to their seats. During the service you will be socially distanced from everyone else and you may feel at ease to take a mask off.

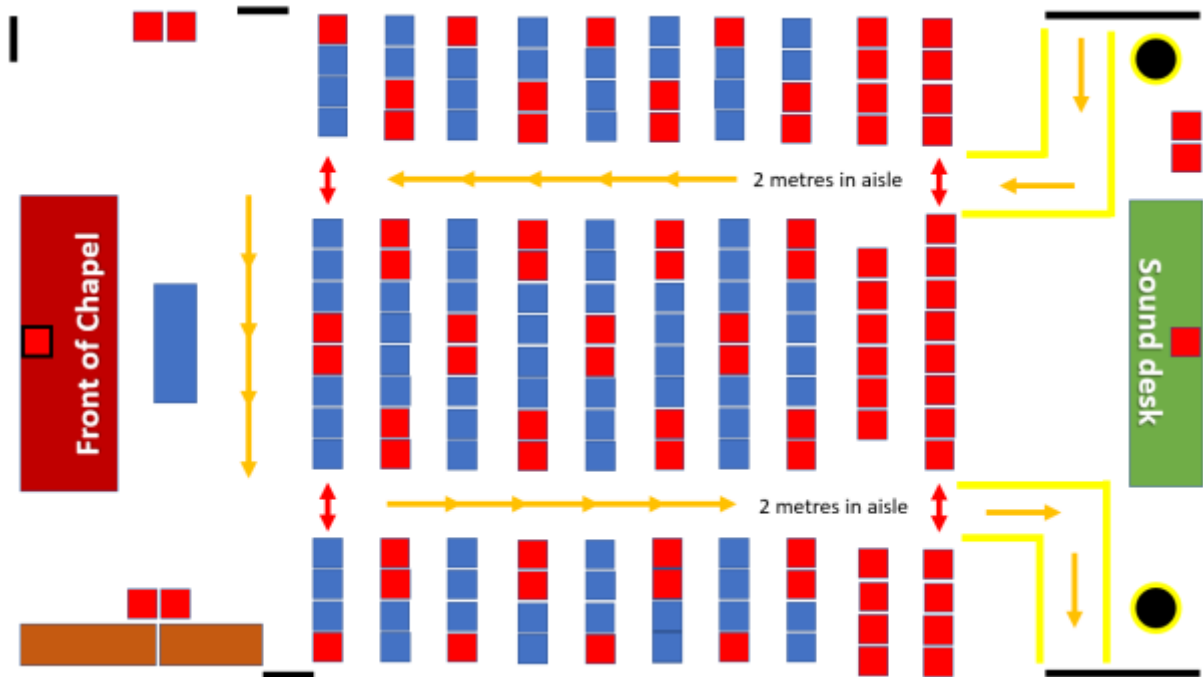
The building:

1. One-way system

There will be a seating system, so if you arrive at the same time as others, or there are people around the door please maintain 2 metre distance (temporary cones on the floor will show 2 metres). Please wait until the Officer on the door invites you in.

We'll be operating a one-way system in the chapel. As you enter through the main door you will be shown where to sit, you will not get a choice of seat and you will not exit the building the same way as you came in, this will be the fire exit at the rear of the Church after the end of the service. When in the building the those closest to the exit will need to file out first.

Please refrain from loud conversation within the building, although you're free to chat outside afterwards. But please make sure you're leaving enough space to let others pass you safely, at a suitable 2 metre distance.



2. Seating

Seating will be according to the government guidance of 2 metres but family groups will be able to sit together during the service but you are asked not to leave your family bubble and mix with other households limiting the risk of cross contamination and spread of any disease.

3. Toilets (**revised)

During your stay at the Church one toilet will be available to be used. While you are asked to go to the toilet before you leave the house, we know some will need to use the facilities.

We have opened the disabled toilet for use at this time. We need to maintain 2 metres distance from each other. It means that if the cloakroom door is closed don't go down the corridor the toilet is in use.

Also, you will be asked to clean down the surfaces of the toilet before you begin and after you use the toilet, this greatly reduces the risk of infection for yourself and for others. Meaning we can use the facilities and be safe at the same time.

4. Cleaning

The building will have been cleaned prior to you entering, all surfaces will have been cleaned with a full clean taking place again after 72 hours after the service at the Church so that we are kept safe.

The service:

1. Recording

During the service the recording camera will only be on the pulpit and the audio recording will only be from the pulpit microphones. This means that those who can't make it to the Church will have ministry at home.

2. Singing

Unfortunately, we won't be singing in the meeting. This is by government guidance as to the particles and droplets we release into the air as we sing. We don't sing in order to protect ourselves and others not passing on anything.

However, we have plans to have some sort of hymns on the screen and music before and after the service. Even though it might not be a normal service, we pray that the Lord's presence and His Word will speak to us as we participate in worship together in the same place.

3. Sunday School

There will be no provision for Sunday school at the moment due to the current circumstances, so all children will need to stay in the service and parents are asked to do their best with their children and the congregation is asked to show grace to others as families are to be part of any Church fellowship.

This may change over time as the Welsh government have issued guidance that under 11's don't have to socially distance and can be around adults as they are seen as low risk.

4. Communion

At the moment we are working on the safest way to come around the Lord's table. This is to keep you safe and others safe as the bread and the wine are prepared, served and handled. As you can imagine this can present contamination and the passing on of germs through touch so we must be safe and careful.

5. Bibles and hymnbooks

Church Bibles and hymn books will not be given out and all words will be on the screen for you to see. It would be good to bring your own Bible and you can look up the passage for yourself and keep familiar with the flow of the Bible.

As you can imagine when touching books, surfaces and anything else we can contaminate that surface and to limit this we limit all the articles and objects we come in contact with.

6. Cash donations

Collections of money can be left in the collection box, but it would be preferred if you could give electronically. Physical money can carry infection on it and to limit this being passed on we would ask you to consider how you give to the work of the Lord and of the local Church.

We are thankful to God for all gifts that He gives but we also want to be so careful as we worship the Lord week after week and also during our times of prayer and fellowship that we have.

Returning home:

1. Hand gel at exit

As you exit the building you will be asked to once again clean your hands and to make sure you limit the risk of infecting others, if you have your own gel please use that and exit the building in an orderly manner.

2. Outside

Once outside if you do talk to others please do so with good ventilation and also keeping to the 2-metre rule but we suggest that you limit the conversations and head home keeping yourself safe and others.

3. At home

Once you return home you can and should wash your hands and make sure that you can control any germs you may have picked up or taken home with you.

4. Covid Symptoms

If when you get home you begin to have Covid symptoms, like a temperature, a persistent cough and the loss of taste or smell then you must contact a Church officer or the Pastor and also go and get tested.

5. Self-isolation

If you have Covid then you must self-isolate and you mustn't come to any of the Church service for at least 14 days. By that time you will be clear and you will not infect others but you must be very careful that you don't carry the virus to someone else in your household or another household.

And finally:

As a Church leadership we have done all due planning in order for you and others to return to worship. If you can't go along with the guidance from the government and also found in the documentation for safe return to worship then we must ask that you don't attend.

We endeavour to keep you safe and all other worshipers too and we want to minimise risk and make sure you that you can worship the Lord with us in a safe environment with others, which in other places is called a Covid safe environment.

We want to honour the Lord, keep you safe and make sure we do as we are being asked by the government. We hope that you understand why these procedures and ways have been implemented and do ask for your cooperation at this very trying time.

Pastor Darran Dowey (07th September 2020).