

St Luke's Downham

Part of the Catford (Southend) and Downham Team (charity # 1142353)

Team Vicar: Rev. Nick Walsh

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Re-Opening of the Church for Services – Sunday 9th August 2020

Dear friends,

I trust you are continuing to keep safe and well during these difficult times. It has been lovely to connect with people over the various forms of technology and communication these last few months. However there is nothing quite like meeting together in person, especially for those without access to technology.

Therefore following the relaxation of the restrictions on physical worship I am pleased to advise you that St Luke's will be re-opening for services on Sunday 9th August 2020 at 11am.

If you're not able or comfortable with returning just yet our online services will continue and these will be made available each Sunday at 10am on YouTube (Rev Nick Walsh), on the Church Facebook page and on our website (www.stlukesdownham.org.uk). If you are unable to access these services and would like resources to help you worship at home, please do not hesitate to contact me.

For those who feel able to, it will be good to gather together in person and as we start our services again there will be space to share what God has taught us and the ways he has been at work over these last few months.

Guidance on Coming to Church:

Whilst it will be good to gather together for worship and good to see people in person again there will be a number of changes to our usual way of doing things. Therefore here are the guidelines that will apply and which will need the co-operation of all who attend.

- If you or any of your household have any symptoms of COVID19 or you have been asked to isolate, please DO NOT attend church.
- When you arrive at the Church you will be asked to wash your hands and will then be guided to a specific seat. You may be asked to queue if too many people arrive at once.
- Whilst it may seem counter-cultural please do not have physical contact with others, no hugs, handshakes or any touch and there will be no shaking of hands at the peace. Please maintain physical distancing as far as possible at all times.
- You will be invited to place your tithe in the collection plate/box as you enter the Church – ideally please consider switching to giving via Standing Order or use the our new contactless collection plate to give by card.
- The Church has been re-organised to accommodate people whilst maintaining physical distancing and we have identified places for households/social bubbles to sit together.
- Our service will be different to usual and all our liturgy will be on the screens; in particular there will be no singing of either hymns, liturgy, or Happy Birthday.

- Face masks are strongly recommended but not required for attendance at church.
- Communion will be distributed in one kind only (the bread) and there will be no individual words of distribution used. I will come to each person in their seats to distribute the bread or offer a blessing.
- Children must stay with the adult(s) who bring them at all times. Kirstyn will be preparing activity packs for the children to do during the service.
- There will be no refreshments after the service and people are asked to leave as soon as the service is over.
- We will be recording contact details of those attending to assist tracing should it be required, if you do not wish your contact details to be recorded please let a steward know when you enter.
- Should you wish to light a candle at the Votive stands, please light from an existing lit candle.

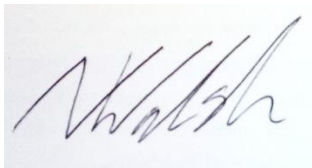
This may sound like a lot and may feel like it changes our worship quite considerably, but the Bible reminds us that though our God remains the same, there are seasons when our common life looks different due to the circumstances we find ourselves in.

Weekday activities:

For the time being all our week day activities are paused with the exception of the Front Room Club which is opening on Fridays from 10am to 12noon only.

I hope you will be able to join us soon as we are now able to meet and break bread together.

Grace and Peace

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'Walsh', is centered on a light-colored rectangular background.

Rev. Nick Walsh
Team Vicar, St Luke's and St Mark's
Catford and Downham Team Ministry
07774516204