

PRESBYTERIAN REFORMED CHURCH

The Bible Centre, Stockton-on-Tees

RISK ASSESSMENT OUTCOMES

“Places of worship play an important role in providing spiritual leadership for many individuals, and in bringing communities and generations together” (GOV.UK Guidance).

RISK ASSESSMENT PURPOSES

The purposes of the Risk Assessment are:

1. To promote the safety of individuals attending *The Presbyterian Reformed Church, The Bible Centre, Frederick Street, Stockton-on-Tees.*
2. To comply with government guidelines for places of worship by acting to minimise the spread of the Covid-19 virus by reducing or controlling potential risks as indicated below. The predominant modes of transmission are assumed by Government to be droplet (as with coughing and sneezing) and surface contact.
3. To reassure those attending that measures have been taken to promote confidence concerning arrangements for their safety.

RISK MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES

The following methods will be observed in order to manage the risk to worshippers of coming into contact with Coronavirus sufferers. They are based upon an attendance of forty but this could be higher depending upon *family* and *support bubble* sizes. (For the purposes of this document a support bubble is equivalent to one household.)

Venue manager(s)

Nominated venue managers are responsible for the management of the centre for worship, including ventilation and heating and their instructions must be followed at all times. Problems can be considered later, and if you have any concerns please make them known. These can be discussed after the service times. Venue managers are responsible for closing the building if the Guidelines cannot be safely followed.

Compulsory non-attendance. No one should attend the Bible Centre if they are suffering from a raised temperature, a new persistent cough, a loss of taste or smell, or other Covid-19 symptoms or if they have been or are in close contact or live with anyone with the Covid-19 Coronavirus. (Live-streamed services are available at [facebook.com/prcstockton](https://www.facebook.com/prcstockton) for those who are unwell or in a household that is self-isolating).

Voluntary absence. Government guidelines state that people in specified categories “should” stay away from places of worship at present. Those who are not required to attend should use the live-stream services.

Car Parking. When parking your car in the Bible Centre car park please ensure that there is at least one metre between your car and the next vehicle. This will result in fewer cars being able to park in our car park but there is normally plenty of adjacent on-road parking all day on Sundays and on evenings during the week. Do not park within the four metre space from the Bible Centre double doors

and do not stand in this area alone or within your family bubble until this waiting space is vacated by any other person or family bubble waiting to enter. At all times you and your family bubble must not be closer than two metres to anyone else. If you arrive by car, please wait in your car until the entry area in front of the doors is vacant.

Avoiding Congestion. Please always maintain socially distanced positions in the car park until a door steward is available. Congestion must be avoided in the vestibule, toilets and main hall. At all times endeavour to avoid the need to pass other people. We will continue to enter by the front door as usual. The door steward will direct each family to their seating area if necessary. At the end of a service always exit the main hall through the main exit starting from the back row to the front row, without any queuing and maintain social distancing in the Bible Centre and in the car park as you are leaving. If a queue does start to form ensure that you maintain a two metre distance from the person in front of you. It is necessary to avoid walking towards others on entering or exit and at other times.

Using toilets. To avoid crowding, do not use the disabled toilet in the foyer during entrance times unless under the supervision of a door steward. Door stewards will direct you to the ladies and gent's toilets. Parents should supervise young children especially regarding hand washing and everyone should wash their hands for twenty seconds after any event, such as visiting the toilets, coughing, sneezing etc. to avoid contaminating others. At no time should more than one person be in any toilet unless both belong to the same household bubble. Toilets will be cleaned after each session. Please familiarize yourself with the toilet routes and protocols.

Observing the two metre rule. The 2-metre social distancing rule will be observed during the services wherever possible, and, all seating will face the pulpit. Each household should use the seating *Bubble* allocated to them. (N.B. The 1-metre rule with face mask is only for use where 2 metres is not viable.)

Necessary modification of service order. In line with Government advice concerning airborne transmission of the virus there will be no live Psalm singing in the Bible Centre until further notice. Service length will be reduced according to the circumstances.

Children. Children under twelve needing to leave the service should be accompanied by their adult carer or by an adult from their household to the foyer, observing social distancing at all times. If the foyer is already in use in a way which prevents social distancing, it will be necessary to return to the main hall or to go out to one's vehicle. There will be no separate children's activities at the Bible Centre for the foreseeable future.

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Cross-contamination from Surfaces

Precautions regarding cross-contamination are very important. Please note each of the following.

1) Hand sanitiser will be provided by the door stewards to be used by every person on entering and leaving the building.

2) Church Bibles or Psalm books used MUST be returned to the USED box only for quarantine until further notice. You should print your own service sheet from the internet and take it away with you. If you take a service sheet at the Bible Centre for use in the service, you must also take it away with you after the service and *not* discard it in the Bible Centre. Worshippers should endeavour to bring their own Bibles (and psalm books when necessary) and take them home with them *after each service*.

- 3) All personal belongings must be taken home *after each service*.
- 4) Bible Centre pens, books or any other objects will not be available so do not forget your own.
- 5) The kitchen will not be in use under the current restrictions and must only be entered by nominated persons.
- 6) In accordance with government guidelines sweets, food or drink are not allowed in the services.
- 7) Gloves and wipes will be provided so that the toilets can be cleaned after each use. Adults from the same household should escort children under 12 to ensure this is carried out.
- 8) Toilets, door handles and other contamination points will be cleaned after each service.

Offerings

The government advice is against cash donations. The recommended alternative is payments direct to the appropriate account. If you need details Email the Pastor.

Test and trace

A Venue Manager will record the names and contact details of those attending each service. The record will be retained for twenty one days to facilitate the NHS Test and Trace service regarding anyone needing to isolate as a result of contact with a person with possible or confirmed COVID-19. After twenty one days the record will be destroyed.

Caring for others.

It is important to remember that diligent attention to the practices outlined above are not just a matter of self protection. We are to love our neighbour as ourselves including children, the aged, and particularly the vulnerable. Precise attention to the above-mentioned practices should help prevent someone, to all appearances healthy but unknowingly infected with Covid-19, from being a risk to others. If you feel ill during a service, go home and isolate until you have a diagnosis.

Enforcement.

Local Authorities have enforcement powers to ensure the control of various risks as specified in law.

Review

Risk assessment requirements will be reviewed in the light of future government guidance and local circumstances to incorporate necessary improvements and will continue for the foreseeable future.

A faith response

God has been very kind to our congregation to date in protecting employment and self-employment situations and we need to be very diligent in protecting one another. We should be praying for ourselves and one another and it would be hypocritical to be lax about what is within our power to do. The Pastor trusts that you will suffer his word of exhortation on this point. There is no room for complacency as we do not yet know what the Autumn or Winter will bring.

**IN AN EMERGENCY THESE INSTRUCTIONS WILL BE SUPERSEDED BY THE NEED
TO LEAVE BY THE NEAREST AVAILABLE FIRE EXIT**

Session, Presbyterian Reformed Church, Stockton-on-Tees, August 2020