

Visiting the Orthodox Church of the Ascension during the Coronavirus pandemic

In order to keep everyone as safe as possible, and to minimise the risk of transmission of COVID-19, everyone who comes to the church MUST follow the following rules and procedures. If you bring young children to church with you, it is your responsibility to make sure that they follow the rules.

- The number of people allowed in church is strictly limited so that people inside can keep 2 metres apart.
- If the church is full, the Doorkeeper will ask you to wait until someone leaves: 'One in, one out'.
- If you have to wait, you (and any members of your household) must keep at least 2 metres away from anyone else who is waiting. There are signs along the path at 2 metre intervals to remind you.
- If there is no notice outside the porch asking you to wait, you may enter the porch. Only one person or household is allowed in the porch at any one time.
- Please clean your hands using the hand sanitiser provided in the porch for at least 20 seconds immediately before entering. There is a notice in the porch showing you how to clean your hands properly.
- Please read the NHS Track and Trace information poster and complete the registration form using an unused pen from the 'Unused Pen' container.
- Place the used pen in the 'Used Pen' container and take the form into the church with you, wearing a face covering. If you have not brought your own face covering, please take one from the porch.
- The church door should already be open so there should be no need for you to touch it yourself. Try not to touch church furniture and fittings unnecessarily during your visit.
- Once inside the church, please place the completed NHS form in the box placed on the candle-desk and sanitise your hands using the gel provided.

- If you wish to light candles, please clean your hands with hand sanitiser immediately before touching any candles in the box on the candle table. Please do not replace any candles in the box after you have handled them.
- When inside the church please stay 2 metres apart from other people at all times. There is a Doorkeeper/Steward to direct and guide you. Please follow any directions that they may give you.
- Please avoid touching your face. If you cough or sneeze, cover your mouth and nose with a tissue, or with the crook of your sleeved arm, not your hands. Please place the used tissue in the bin beside the door, and clean your hands with hand sanitiser immediately afterwards.
- Please wear a face covering at all times inside the church.
- When reverencing the Holy Icons, please do not touch or kiss them: you may reverence them by making a metania (making the sign of the Cross and bowing) in front of the icon.
- After lighting candles and reverencing the Holy Icons, please go to an empty seat and remain there. The Steward will direct you if needed.
- Once at the seat, you may sit, stand, or kneel, as you wish. Only one person or household may be at or around each seat.
- If you need to move around the church during your visit (e.g. to light further candles), please keep at least 2 metres away from other people at all times.
- Please do not come forward to receive the Holy Gifts, unless invited to do so by the Priest or a Steward.
- Please note that donations will not be collected as usual after any Service. Donations may be made instead by placing them in the candle stand as you leave the church.
- If you have used a disposable mask, when you leave the church please place it in the bin provided, or take it home with you for disposal.
- Please clean your hands (using the hand sanitiser provided) for at least 20 seconds immediately before leaving the church.