

WHAT TO EXPECT WHEN YOU COME TO CHURCH



Coming into church for the first time can be scary. It can seem like everyone already knows everyone else and understands what is going on. However, everyone was new here once and we all want to make you feel welcome and comfortable. We hope the following gives you some helpful hints and answers as to what to expect.

What happens when I arrive?

One of our welcomers will greet you at the door. Come in, make yourself at home and choose any seat in the church (there are no 'reserved' seats). If you need any books or other information a church member, welcomer or steward will give these to you and please also ask them any questions you may have - it's what they are there for! If you arrive late, don't worry, just come on in.

What happens during the service?

The person leading the service will explain what is going on and what happens next. Please join in as much or as little as you want to, and if you're unsure what to do just ask the person sitting next to you. All our services will include prayers, readings from the Bible and a talk, some will include hymns and songs, and communion takes place at others (which we explain below).

What happens after the service?

After most of our services we offer refreshments, and you are welcome to stay for these if you want to. You can, if you wish, also make yourself known to the person leading the service and they will both introduce themselves and introduce you to other people.

Some other frequently asked questions:

Is there a dress code?

No, please come in whatever you are comfortable wearing. The days of 'Sunday best' are long gone. Some of our churches are, however, big, old buildings which are quite difficult to heat. We do our best, but please come prepared in the winter months.

Do you have toilets?

Yes.

How do I find you?

Each of our churches have a separate page on our website with details of how to find it including a link to Google Maps. Alternatively, if you're not sure, please give our church office a ring and we'll happily give you directions.

When are your services?

Each of our four churches have a service every Sunday (but we also have a joint service four times a year when there are five Sundays in the month) and, in addition, there is a short, midweek Communion service at the Mission Church each Wednesday at 10:00am.

Sunday services are as follows, With each lasting about an hour or less:

Holy Trinity Walton 9:15am

St Andrews Compton Dundon 10:00am

Mission Church Street, 10:30am

Parish Church Street either 8:30 am or 11 am

Are children welcome?

Absolutely. Some of our services have separate groups for children but they are welcome at all of our services in each of our churches. Please don't worry about them making a noise or running around, it is what children do, and we really don't mind.

Check our website or call us for details of services where we offer separate children's activities.

Do you ask for money?

We take a collection during each of our services for the work of the church as this is entirely funded by church members. However, there is absolutely no obligation for you, as a visitor, to give. If you choose to do so, our churches either have a collection plate (with Gift Aid envelopes if you can gift aid) or a contactless giving machine. Many of our church members choose to give regularly via standing order or direct debit so may not put anything in the collection plate on a Sunday.

What is Communion and can I take it?

Communion is an important celebration for Christians as we remember the Last Supper that Jesus shared with his disciples before his crucifixion. During Communion we share, as a symbol of this, a wafer or some bread and a sip of wine (gluten and alcohol-free options are available). The words that are said beforehand explain why we do this. We have what we call an 'open table,' meaning that anybody who believes in Jesus is welcome to come and share communion with us. If you would prefer not to do so, please either come up to the front when everyone else does and let the minister know that you would prefer a blessing, or simply stay in your seat when those around you go up.

How do I find out more about what is going on?

We have a weekly news sheet 'Lifeline' which you should be able to pick up in church together with a monthly magazine 'Life' (price 50p) which should also be available. Alternatively use Facebook (search for SWCD Churches) or our website www.swcd-churches.org.uk. If you decide you'd like to make your home with us then we will ask you to complete a welcome card, and a member of the clergy team will be in contact with you. Please be assured that we strictly adhere to GDPR guidelines for the information you give us.

I'm worried about safeguarding.

We take this extremely seriously and have a dedicated team of parish safeguarding officers who ensure that everybody who comes into contact with children or vulnerable adults is appropriately trained and checked through the government vetting and barring system. You can find more details of who to speak to around our buildings or on our website.

Anything else?

Please contact either the church office or our Rector; we would love to hear from you

Contact details Tel: 01458 442671 Email: churchoffice8@gmail.com