

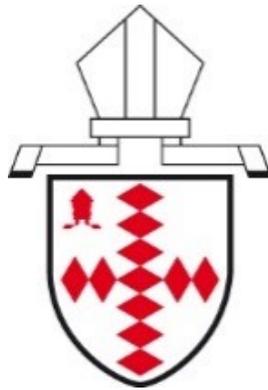


# On re-entering the church

*A short service upon returning to church after the lock down,  
before reopening for personal prayer.*

*Feel free to use as many or as few of  
the elements of this service as are helpful.*

*Commended by the Bishop of Southwark  
during the COVID-19 Pandemic, Trinity 2020*



**One thing have I asked of the Lord and that alone I seek:  
that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life**  
*Psalm 27.4*

## Re-entering

*Words to be said outside the Church building*

Peace be to this house  
and all who come here.

*In chalk write on the doorpost **CMB**, which is *Christus Mansionem Benedicat*,  
May Christ bless this House.*

Bless this door and this place.  
Keep it open to joy and love.

*Scatter sea salt, a symbol of purification and hallowing used in Jewish and  
Christian traditions, across the threshold of the Church*

Bless this threshold and this floor.  
Keep all want and harm without.  
Bless the roof, the walls and all who come within.  
Bless friend and stranger, creature and kin.  
May all whose feet cross here be blessed,  
and peace be upon their coming and going.

*A different voice responds with the following*

The Lord shall keep watch over your going out and your coming in,  
from this time forth for evermore. *Psalm 121:8*

## Light

*Enter the building, light a candle and silently walk through the Church,  
bringing to mind all those who would worship or visit, and stop near the altar  
or the font. If watching this short service from home (live streamed), light a  
candle and join in the following prayer.*

Let us pray.  
O Spirit, present with us now:  
You are the peace of all things calm.  
You are the place to hide from harm.  
You are the light that shines in dark.  
You are the heart's eternal spark.  
You are the door that's open wide.  
You are the guest who waits inside.  
You are the stranger at the door.  
You are the calling of the poor.  
You are God and with us still.  
You are love, keep us from ill.

You are the light, the source, the way.  
Bless this house by night and day. Amen.

*If a Paschal Candle has not been lit earlier this year, it may be lit now.*

*If the Paschal Candle has been lit already elsewhere, this may be the time to bring it into the Church.*

*Some may wish to leave this until the first service with congregation can take place.*

The Light of Christ.  
Thanks be to God.

*The Paschal Candle is returned to its usual place.*

## A reading

### *Suggested readings*

Genesis 28:11-17  
1 Kings 8:22-30  
Psalm 122  
Revelation 21:9-14  
Matthew 21:12-16  
John 10:22-29

## Prayers

### *A prayer of sadness*

God,  
our hearts are filled with joy  
to be able to return to this place.  
Yet, our Church is incomplete,  
not all of our brothers and sisters here.  
Hold all those still at home in your loving arms;  
protect them from all harm;  
bring comfort to the mourning or frightened,  
and healing to the sick.  
In Jesus' name,  
Amen.

*In a moment of silence we hold before God those members of our community for whom this time is still so difficult.*

### *A prayer of hope*

Gracious God,  
persevering through the years, persevering to the end,  
as we face the future as a community of your people in this place,  
may we know afresh your faithful love,  
and see afresh your loving faithfulness.  
May it be your words of life for which we listen,  
and by which alone we live.  
God before and God behind,  
for all that has been - thanks.  
For all that will be - Yes!  
Amen.

### *A prayer of welcome for a new member in the team, e.g. lay minister or curate, who has joined during the past 3 months whilst the church building has been closed*

Heavenly Father,  
whose ascended Son gave gifts of leadership and service to the Church,  
bless N whom we welcome today  
to minister with us in this place;  
through him who came not to be served but to serve,  
Jesus Christ our Lord.  
Amen.

### *The Lord's Prayer*

Wherever we are, whatever language we speak,  
we may be united in the prayer our Saviour has taught us  
**Our Father ...**

### **A blessing**

Unless the Lord builds the house,  
those who build it labour in vain.

*Psalm 127:1*

May the blessing of God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit,  
rest on all who look to this house of prayer  
for comfort and companionship,  
this day and always. Amen.