

## Teddington Baptist Church: News Update

Monday 10 May 2021

The government announced today that Step 3 of its roadmap will be going ahead as planned on 17 May 2021. This will allow us to take bookings for mid-week adult groups.

Colin

Monday 5 April 2021

The government announced today that Step 2 of its roadmap will be going ahead as planned on 12 April 2021. So we will be re-opening our premises as a community centre mid-week for permitted activities with effect from Monday 12 April. The permitted activities at this stage are mainly children's groups and groups for carers and children and they will have to operate under covid-19 secure arrangements including social distancing. If all continues to go to plan, mid-week adult activities will be able to start again from 17 May 2021 at Step 3.

Colin

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Friday 26 February 2021

Following changed advice from the Baptist Union of Great Britain (BUGB), we have decided to resume in-person Sunday morning services with effect from Sunday 7 March 2021. We could have been holding in-person services even during national lockdown but we followed advice from BUGB not to do so. Now BUGB advice has softened to say "We encourage churches to consider their own plans for re-opening and take the decisions that are appropriate for their own local circumstances." We will remain subject to all the Covid-19 restrictions including sanitising, social distancing, discouraging those attending services from socialising before and after services, and a ban on congregational singing and social interaction.

Numbers who can attend our in-person services will be limited so it will be necessary for those attending to register in advance. Please email the church office ([office@teddingtonbaptist.org.uk](mailto:office@teddingtonbaptist.org.uk)) for details of how to register. The service will be live streamed on our YouTube channel for those unable to attend – and will be available for viewing later if preferred.

Colin

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Monday 22 February 2021

We are currently allowed to hold in-person services but have suspended them in favour of live streamed and pre-recorded services since 10 January 2021. Our Leadership Team still has to decide whether and when we resume in-person services in the light of the government roadmap for lifting lockdown issued on 22 February 2021.

See:

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/963491/COVID-19\\_Response\\_-\\_Spring\\_2021.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/963491/COVID-19_Response_-_Spring_2021.pdf)

The government's roadmap (page 34) says that community centres will be able to open again in Step 2 i.e. from 12 April 2021 at the earliest. It goes on to say (page 34) that in Step 2 *"All children will be able to attend any indoor children's activity, including sport, regardless of circumstance. Parent and child groups of up to 15 people (not counting children aged under five years old) can restart indoors."*

Such children's activities will still be subject to Covid-19 secure restrictions (cleaning, face masks, social distancing etc). We will have to conform to current government guidance for such measures. **12 April is therefore our best current estimate for when we will be allowed to re-open our premises for mid-week children's activities.**

The roadmap also says (page 37) that in Step 3 mid-week activities for adults will be allowed to resume. This will be on 17 May at the earliest.

Colin

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Tuesday 5 January 2021

The new lockdown announced yesterday does not change the arrangements for places of worship. Under the government restrictions, we could still hold in-person worship services. However, our Leadership Team has taken the very difficult and painful decision to suspend our in-person public services for the time being. From 10 January 2021 we will instead live stream our morning service and provide an online (pre-recorded) evening service.

Colin

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Tuesday 22 December 2020

In government guidance, "supervised activities for children" are linked to childcare which enables people to go back to work.

We have concluded that we have to close our premises under these Tier 4 restrictions for everything except our worship services and exempt activities like blood donations.

Colin

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Saturday 19 December 2020

The government announced this afternoon that London would be moved into a new Tier 4 with effect from 00.01 on Sunday 20 December. The government guidance for Tier 4 issued this evening (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/tier-4-stay-at-home>) says: *"You can attend places of worship for a service. However, you must not mingle with anyone outside of your household or support bubble. You should follow the national guidance on the safe use of places of worship."*

It also says that community centres and halls must close except for a limited number of exempt activities, including:

- *education and training - for schools to use sports, leisure and community facilities where that is part of their normal provision*
- *childcare purposes and supervised activities for children*
- *hosting blood donation sessions and food banks*
- *to provide medical treatment*
- *for elite sports persons to train and compete (in indoor and outdoor sports facilities), and professional dancers and choreographers to work (in fitness and dance studios)*
- *for training and rehearsal without an audience (in theatres and concert halls)*
- *for the purposes of professional film and TV filming*

We are still trying to understand what the government restrictions for Tier 4 mean for the mid-week activities which we host.

Colin

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Monday 14 December 2020

The government announced today that London is moving to Tier 3 restrictions with effect from 00.01 on Wednesday 16 December until further notice. A review is due by 30 December 2020.

For our activities, this affects the kind of activities we can host on our premises e.g. adult exercise classes are permitted under Tier 2 but banned under Tier 3.

Colin

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Wednesday 2 December 2020

We have reopened today for all the activities allowed under current government guidance etc for Tier 2. The government has updated its [guidance for places of worship](#). There is also updated [guidance for community halls](#).

Colin

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Wednesday 26 November 2020

The government has announced that Teddington, along with the rest of London, will be in Tier 2 (High Risk).. Details of what is allowed and what is forbidden for Tier 2 can be found at: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/local-restriction-tiers-what-you-need-to-know>

Colin

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Tuesday 24 November 2020

The government has issued new guidelines setting out the arrangements for the Tier system from Wednesday 2 December 2020. These guidelines can be found at: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/local-restriction-tiers-what-you-need-to-know>

We will find out on Thursday 26 November 2020 which Tier we will be in from 2 December 2020. However, our reading of these guidelines is that in-person public worship and suitably structured carer and toddler groups are allowed under all Tiers. In both cases they need to be run under Covid-19 secure conditions.

Colin

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Monday 9 November 2020

Starting tomorrow for the duration of this period of lockdown, we are open for individual prayer on Tuesdays 10.30am - 11.30am and Saturdays 11am – 12noon

Colin

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Saturday 7 November 2020

Yesterday the government issued its [Guidance for Places of Worship](#).

Colin

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Thursday 5 November 2020

We have closed the church premises from today. If all goes well we will reopen on Thursday 3 December. During November we will be live streaming our morning services on our [YouTube channel](#) – they can also be viewed there after the event. The evening service on Sunday 8 November will be pre-recorded (available on our YouTube channel). Subsequent evening services may also be live streamed. For up-to-date details see our [website](#).

Colin

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Saturday 31 October 2020

Today the government announced that England was moving into lockdown from Thursday 5 November until Wednesday 2 December 2020. The government has already issued initial lockdown guidance which you can find at:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/new-national-restrictions-from-5-november?priority-taxon=774cee22-d896-44c1-a611-e3109cce8eae>

We may see more detailed guidance over the next few days but it appears that from Thursday 5 November we will have to close the church premises and stop all our mid-week activities and lettings. We will also have to suspend our in-person Sunday services.

The guidance referenced above says (among other things):

*“This means you must not leave or be outside of your home except for specific purposes. These include:*

- for childcare or education, where this is not provided online*
- for work purposes, where your place of work remains open and where you cannot work from home (including if your job involves working in other people’s homes)*
- to exercise outdoors or visit an outdoor public place - with the people you live with, with your support bubble or, when on your own, with 1 person from another household.*
- for any medical concerns, reasons, appointments and emergencies, or to avoid or escape risk of injury or harm - such as domestic abuse*
- shopping for basic necessities, for example food and medicine, which should be as infrequent as possible*
- to visit members of your support bubble or provide care for vulnerable people, or as a volunteer*

*This list is not exhaustive and there are other limited circumstances where you may be permitted to leave or be outside of your home. These will be set out in law and further detailed guidance will be provided.”*

*“Places of Worship will be closed, unless they are being used for:*

- Funerals*
- To broadcast acts of worship*
- Individual prayer*
- Formal childcare or where part of a school*
- Essential voluntary and public services, such as blood donation or food banks*
- Other exempted activities such as some support groups”*

Colin

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Thursday 15 October 2020

Today the government announced that London will become a Covid-19 Tier 2 (High Alert) area with effect from Saturday 17 October. Details of Tier 2 arrangements are set out in government guidance at:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/local-covid-alert-level-high?priority-taxon=774cee22-d896-44c1-a611-e3109cce8eae>

The Rule of Six applies as set out in the document and limits the mixing of households. Public Worship remains an exception with its own guidance. But in addition there are a number of exemptions to the Rule of Six similar to those below and which cover most of the weekly activities we host on our premises and some of the one-off activities as well. Consequently, we will continue to organise church activities and take bookings for outside activities which are consistent with this and other government guidance.

Colin

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Wednesday 23 September 2020

Yesterday the government has announced a set of slightly different exemptions to the “Rule of Six” which takes effect on Monday 28 September. There are a number of exemptions including places of worship for worship services and private prayer. This and other official exemptions where groups can be larger than 6 people are listed in government guidance at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-meeting-with-others-safely-social-distancing/coronavirus-covid-19-meeting-with-others-safely-social-distancing>

Apart from worship services, that document sets out a number of exceptions where groups can be larger than 6 people. These include:

- for work, or the provision of voluntary or charitable services
- registered childcare, education or training
- supervised activities provided for children, including wraparound care, youth groups and activities, and children’s playgroups
- providing support to a vulnerable person
- providing emergency assistance, and to avoid injury or illness or to escape risk of harm
- for arrangements where children do not live in the same household as both their parents
- fulfilling a legal obligation, such as attending court or jury service
- elite sporting competition and training
- wedding and civil partnership ceremonies and receptions – up to 15 people
- funerals – up to 30 people. This does not include wakes, other than for religious ceremonial purposes
- exercise classes, organised outdoor sport or licensed outdoor physical activity, and supervised sporting activity (indoors or outdoors) for under-18s
- indoor organised team sports for disabled people
- support groups of up to 15 participants – formally organised groups to provide mutual aid, therapy or any other form of support. This includes support to victims of crime, recovering addicts, new parents, people with long-term illnesses, those facing issues relating to their sexuality or gender, and those who have suffered bereavement.
- protests – if organised in compliance with COVID-19 Secure guidance. All individuals must be socially distanced

Where a group includes someone covered by such an exception (for example, someone who is working), they are not counted as part of the gatherings limit. This means, for example, a tradesperson can go into a household of six without breaching the limit, if they are there for work.

As before, these exemptions appear to cover all of the weekly activities we host on our premises and some of the one-off activities as well. Consequently, we will continue to organise church activities and take bookings for outside activities which are consistent with this and other government guidance.

Colin

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Tuesday 22 September 2020

Today the government is announcing a new set of restrictions in response to the increasing number of Covid-19 cases. We understand that this does not affect worship services and private prayer in places of worship. But it may affect some of the exemptions listed below. We will provide an update here when the detail of the restrictions is issued by the government.

Colin

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Thursday 10 September 2020

The government has announced a new “Rule of Six” which takes effect on Monday 14 September. However, there are a number of exemptions included places of worship for worship services and private prayer. Other official exemptions where groups can be larger than 6 people are listed in government guidance at

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-meeting-with-others-safely-social-distancing/coronavirus-covid-19-meeting-with-others-safely-social-distancing>

The exemptions are stated there as including:

- where everyone lives together or is in the same support bubble, or to continue existing arrangements where children do not live in the same household as both their parents
- for work, and voluntary or charitable services
- for education, training, or registered childcare (including wraparound care)
- fulfilling legal obligations such as attending court or jury service
- providing emergency assistance, or providing support to a vulnerable person for you or someone else to avoid illness, injury or harm
- participate in children’s playgroups
- wedding and civil partnership ceremonies and receptions, or for other religious life-cycle ceremonies - where up to 30 people will be able to attend
- funerals - where up to 30 people will be able to attend
- organised indoor and outdoor sports, physical activity and exercise classes (see the list of recreational team sports, outdoor sport and exercise allowed under the gyms and leisure centre guidance)
- youth groups or activities
- elite sporting competition or training
- protests and political activities organised in compliance with COVID-19 secure guidance and subject to strict risk assessments

These exemptions appear to cover all of the weekly activities we host on our premises and some of the one-off activities as well. Consequently, we will continue to organise church activities and take bookings for outside activities which are consistent with this and other government guidance.

Colin

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Friday 28 August 2020

From Sunday 6 September we will be resuming hold online evening services (6.30pm) while continuing with our in-person morning services (10.30am) which will be live streamed on our YouTube channel (and can also be viewed later). Details are on the front page of our website ([www.teddingtonbaptist.org.uk](http://www.teddingtonbaptist.org.uk)).

Many of the regular weekday activities held on our premises will be resuming in September, many in the week beginning Monday 7 September. Each activity will have its own social distancing and face covering protocols. Adults delivering children for these activities should leave the premises promptly and only return when the activity ends as (under government guidelines) they are not allowed to wait in the Atrium. Please bring your own face coverings and drinking water. Our toilets will be available for use but (under government guidelines) their use should be minimised.

Colin

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Monday 3 August 2020

Government guidance (dated 31 July 2020) now makes it clear that face coverings will be mandatory with effect from Saturday 8 August 2020 on the church premises at all times except for (a) church staff; and (b) young children and those with respiratory conditions as in all cases where face coverings are otherwise expected. These face covering rules for our premises are now the same as for shops and other public indoor spaces.

We would encourage you to bring and wear your own face covering when visiting the church premises but we have some supplies available.

Colin

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Friday 31 July 2020

The government announced today that face coverings will be mandatory for all those attending church services with effect from Saturday 8 August 2020. Young children and those with respiratory conditions are excluded from this as in all cases where face coverings are otherwise expected. We would encourage you to bring and wear your own face covering when attending our services but we will have some supplies available.

Colin

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Wednesday 29 July 2020

During August we will have no evening service but we will be continuing our in-person morning services.

We have heard via the Baptist Union that the government is now advising that face coverings are used by all those attending church services regardless of the distancing. Young children and those with respiratory conditions are excluded from this as in all cases where face coverings are otherwise expected. We would encourage you to bring and wear your own face covering when attending our services but we will have some supplies available.

Colin

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Wednesday 8 July 2020

We have completed a Covid-19 risk assessment to support of the re-opening of our buildings and this can be viewed on our website.

Colin

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Tuesday 29 June 2020

We have now received the government guidance on the precautions we should take on re-opening for worship services on or after 4 July 2020. We have decided to hold a worship service in the church building on **Sunday 12 July 2020** at 10.30am. Numbers who can attend will be limited so it will be necessary for those attending to register in advance. Please email the church office ([office@teddingtonbaptist.org.uk](mailto:office@teddingtonbaptist.org.uk)) for details of how to register. The service will be live streamed on our YouTube channel for those unable to attend – and will be available for viewing later if preferred.

Colin

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Saturday 13 June 2020 am

The government has decided that churches can re-open but only for private individual prayer. We have decided not to re-open but to encourage everyone to continue to pray in their own homes.

It is possible that we will be allowed to re-open for more general activities from Saturday 4 July but that remains uncertain. The government has not yet given that as a firm date nor issued the necessary guidance which is likely to require additional health and safety provisions including limiting the capacity of our various rooms.

Colin

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Monday 22 March 2020 pm

The church office is now closed and staff are working from home wherever possible. You can still leave messages on our answerphone (020 8977 8000) or email us on [office@teddingtonbaptist.org.uk](mailto:office@teddingtonbaptist.org.uk).

Colin

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Friday 19 March 2020 pm

The office is still open weekday mornings but otherwise the premises are closed and all activities whether organised by the church or others have been suspended until further notice. Notes & Notes for this weekend has already been circulated by email.

An online service will be prepared for each Sunday with links from the website to an order of service and a video sermon. Links to the material will be posted on the homepage of the website ([www.teddingtonbaptist.org.uk](http://www.teddingtonbaptist.org.uk)) each Saturday ready for the following day.

Colin

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Wednesday 18 March 2020 am

Until further notice, all family and children's activities organised by the church are now suspended in response to Covid-19. This includes, Open Door, Busy Bees, Teatime Special, 4-Youth, Re-Wired and WLTD0.

Oliver

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Tuesday 17 March 2020 pm

The Baptist Union has advised all gatherings should not now take place. This means the Church Meeting and AGM planned for 18 March 2020 have been postponed until further notice.

John and Oliver

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Tuesday 17 March 2020 am

The Leadership Team met last night to decide how we should respond as a church to the presence of Covid-19.

The situation is fluid but, as the recommendation at the moment is for all non-essential contact to be avoided, we have agreed not to hold a service on Sunday. We do plan to record something and details of how you can view that will come out over the next few days.

We would suggest that all Lifegroups cease meeting until the government has advised that it is safe to do so.

We want to encourage people to remain in contact with each other and would ask that you continue to phone/email/skype and encourage one another. We will try and use the website/Facebook etc a bit more to help us feel we belong over the time we are apart. It is vital that we keep communicating. We plan to assign everyone to a Lifegroup and

suggest that people pair up/triplet up etc so that we can particularly pray for and encourage one another. If you have never belonged to a Lifegroup we are doing it this way so that it is easier to organise. It may be an opportunity to start talking to someone really interesting that you have never talked to before! Watch this space.... The onus should not fall on the Lifegroup leader, everyone should use their initiative.

Some have already offered to help those in need. Thank you. We hope the above will identify any need, which may not be immediate, but be required over time. Keep praying - it would be great if no-one was infected!

The churches in Teddington are planning to offer the community help. If you are free to distribute cards at the end of the week that would be great. There are several other ways of getting involved including Richmond and Hampton Local Authority (See their website)

At the present moment the building is open and operating normally until we are told that schools have been ordered to shut. If you need to contact us you can do that through the office.

May the perfect love of God keep you in his peace

Love in Christ

John