

FAQs for reopening St James Youth and Kids Ministry

Booking and registration

Q: I have children in more than one age bracket – which service should we book?

You'll need to make a judgement based on how you think your children would manage in each of the different settings. It is best for an individual to attend only one of these services, both to be part of only one 'bubble' and also to free up places for others to be able to attend.

The youngest we can accept a child in the Promiseland group at 10.30am is 3 years old (these are CofE rules, not our own), but the session is aimed at those at Primary School and so it is structured (as opposed to free play) and they will be required to stay seated at a table for much of the session to maintain social distancing so please only bring 3 or 4 year olds if you are confident they can do this.

We recommend the younger children's service for children up to 7, but there are no restrictions on age. All children can attend as long as they are accompanied by an adult.

Likewise, the youth service is suitable for children 10+ but older primary school aged children who you are confident could sit through a service may attend with an adult.

If you have a 2 year old and 5 year old for example, or a 3 and 7 year old we recommend attending the Younger Children's Service, but if you had a 4 and 6 year old, you could attend either the 10.30 or 3pm.

If you have more children over 4 than under, for example a 2, 6, and 10 year old, you could attend the 10.30am service if you are confident that you could safely keep your under 3 with you without moving around the church. You could bring some quiet toys, books, colouring or snacks to entertain them in the seats for example.

Q: How do I book?

Please book online using ChurchSuite. You will be sent a link to do so. Bookings open at midday the previous Sunday.

Q: What if I need to cancel a booking if I'm unable to make it?

If you let us know in advance, it may open up space for someone else to attend.

Rules for places of worship

Q: What are the rules on masks?

Children under 11 are not required to wear a mask, and some adults also are exempt. Otherwise, everyone should wear a mask for the duration of your time inside the church. Promiseland and service leaders are permitted to remove their mask when teaching or leading to enable clear communication. We will aim to keep the rooms well ventilated.

Q: What if a child displays symptoms during the service?

If you or your children have displayed any Covid symptoms or feel unwell, you should not attend. If a child displays symptoms during the service, we will come and get the parent from the service and ask you to take the child home and get tested for Covid. We keep a register of everyone who attends for test and trace purposes.

Q: Do I need to bring anything?

You are welcome to bring a labelled snack or drink for your child if you feel it necessary whilst the church is not permitted to serve refreshments, though there will not be a specified 'snack time' in the session.

Children may bring their own colouring pencils and Bible. Children will not be able to share colouring pencils, as they did before, but we can provide an individual set per child.

Your child can wear a mask if they would prefer.

Q: Will toilets and changing facilities be open?

Yes, but we're asking you to try your best to get children to go the toilet at home before you attend to ease pressure of our limited toilet facilities and minimise the movement of people around the building.

Q: How much cleaning will be happening?

We will be cleaning the church between the different services, and frequently wiping down hi-touch surfaces.

Promiseland (10.30am)

Q: What group will my child be placed in?

Government and CofE rules for out of school settings limit our numbers to 15 children per group/room. Rather than placing children in age groups, as we did before, we will try grouping children by surname so that families can be kept together (this makes drop off and collection easier, and also means they can sit together, and means that families are not split across multiple bubbles). This means in each small group there will be a mix of ages. We will still be running Promiseland Plus, and again, there may be a wider age range in this group than previously.

Q: How is pick up and drop off working?

To avoid create congested areas, we will have multiple pick up and drop off points. We will confirm with you specifically on the day (or nearer the time) which entrance you should use, but it may be something like this:

Surnames A-H – Jimmy Room (where PL Junior used to meet) – use the back door from the Vicarage Car Park accessed along St James Lane. Queue outside and drop at the side gate.

Surnames I-R – Church Centre (kitchen end) – use the bookshop entrance – queue outside in the scaffold tunnel.

Surnames S-Z – Church Centre (garden end) – use the fire exit doors by the sheds – queue along the path in the front garden.

Promiseland Plus – Youth Office - use the back door via the Vicarage car park. Queue separately from those in the surname A-H group.

We will open check-in 15 minutes before the start of the service (10.15am) to give a wider window in which people can drop off and avoid congestion.

You should queue, with 2m distancing, and wait to be greeted by a leader at the door who will register your child. We will not be operating self-check in at the moment.

Under current regulations, parents are not permitted inside the room and you will need to drop at the door. If you have concerns that your child may struggle to leave you, please get in touch with us beforehand.

Your child should hand sanitise as they enter, and you can make your way to the service entering through the front glass doors. We will assume that you will remain on site. If you are not, you should tell us.

Once the service has ended, you should collect your child promptly from the same entrance you dropped them at.

Q: What will happen in the Promiseland session – will my child still enjoy it?

We hope it will be really fun! The session will be just over an hour as the church services are shorter than before (between 45-60 minutes). We will have non-contact games, a drama and music video, Bible teaching, discussion time and a craft. To help children maintain social distancing, we will set the room out 'classroom style', seating them at tables but there will still be time to get up and active and we will make use of outdoor spaces when we can.

Q: What provision will there be for children who would rather watch at home?

The same drama and Bible teaching videos that are watched during the service will also be available on our St James Kids YouTube channel. If there is sufficient interest, we will offer a Zoom discussion group as well.

Younger Kids Service (3pm and Monday)

Q: How will you ensure that children under 5 socially distance during the service?

Parents will be responsible for their children. As well as social distancing, there is an area cordoned off in church because of construction work, so it is important you keep your children close to you. Each family will have a small circle of chairs with their own 'activity kit' for the service.

Q: How long will it last?

The service will be 30-40minutes.

Q: What will happen as part of the service?

There will be messy play (e.g. playdough), craft, Bible teaching and a chance to dance or use shakers to join in with some of our favourite songs.

Youth and Young Adults service (6pm)

Q: Do adults need to accompany their children?

No, young people can attend without their adult. We need you to make sure the emergency contact details are up to date on our database though in case we did need to contact you.

Q: Are adults allowed to stay?

Yes, there will be a separate seating area for adults that attend. The young people will be invited to sit in their school year groups, rather than with their parents, to aid the Bible discussion.