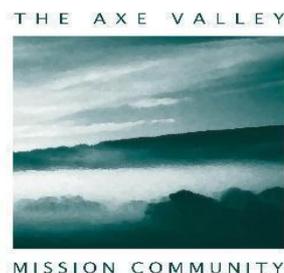


A Letter from the Rector

The Opening of Our Churches For Private Prayer



Dear Friends and Colleagues,

Most of us have been looking forward to the time when our church buildings can re-open. We are in no doubt but that there are those who would like to visit, as they have done in the past, for prayer and spiritual reflection – many who would appreciate the opportunity during the present concerns and worries.

The Government has now announced that church buildings can re-open for private individual prayer from Monday 15 June. Doing so is something which must be planned carefully to maintain the safety and well-being of all concerned, and so should be undertaken with care when and if all reasonable care is in place.

The Church of England has published guidance about how to prepare church buildings for re-opening and the social distancing measures which will be needed. It is available on the Church of England website and is frequently updated to take account of changing advice and scientific guidance.

The opening of any church will be undertaken with prayerful consideration and by agreement between PCC and incumbent and after a careful risk assessment. Within the Axe Valley Mission Community we are conscious of the need to balance our desire to make our buildings available for all, with the need to provide facilities which offer all reasonable protection to those who visit and those who care for them. For this reason we will be considering the steps we should take very carefully. We do not envisage opening any of our churches during the month of June as we undertake these considerations and preparations.

Re-opening for private prayer will be undertaken in line with the Diocese of Exeter guidance in :

'PREPARING TO RE-OPEN OUR CHURCH BUILDINGS'

<https://exeter.anglican.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/Preparing-to-Re-open-our-Church-Buildings-FINAL-v4.pdf>

When we are confident we can open all/any of our church buildings we will ensure that this is communicated widely and people are aware of the steps taken to promote the safe and enjoyable usage of the churches.

With thoughts and prayers

Clive

Jesus is alive, and he is building his church (Matt. 16:18).