

9th June 2020

Well friends, some news about opening Churches which may be of interest to you. Here is part of a statement from Bishop Peter which addresses the announcement that Church buildings may open for 'Supervised Private Prayer' from Monday 15th June.

Statement from the Rt Revd Peter Hill, Acting Bishop of Chelmsford on Individual Prayer in Churches

We welcome the Government's announcement that church buildings can open for supervised individual prayer from 15 June. We are expecting the Government to publish more detailed guidance soon that will enable us to take this first step on the journey of reopening our churches.

The period of lockdown has seen a flourishing of community service and online worship across our diocese and we have been able to serve and minister to many we have not reached before. In many cases we have achieved a new proximity to our communities which we must not leave behind. But our church buildings, our sacred spaces are incredibly significant in our lives and faith as well as being at the centre of community life, especially at times of deep need as at present. We look forward to a time when people can return to pray and eventually to worship together again.

We are being encouraged to undertake a 'rigorous risk assessment' of our buildings prior to any opening and we will receive more guidance as it is received from the Government.

Normally AwAS would not be open during the day but as the statement says, there should be supervision during the times of opening. This means a suitably qualified person should be in the church whilst it is open for prayer, to make sure numbers do not exceed the safe social distancing limits and that entry to and exit from the church is safe. Under the circumstances, therefore I am thinking that, if we are able to do so safely, we may be able to open the church for an hour once a day during the week but only if we are able to comply with the safety restrictions. I'll keep you informed.

Tom

And finally... A man brings some very fine material to a tailor and asks him to make a pair of pants. When he comes back a week later, the pants are not ready. Two weeks later, they still are not ready. Finally, after six weeks, the pants are ready. The man tries them on. They fit perfectly. Nonetheless, when it comes time to pay, he can't resist a jibe at the tailor.

"You know," he says, "it took God only six days to make the world. And it took you six weeks to make just one pair of pants."

"Ah," the tailor says. "But look at this pair of pants and look at the world!"

Sent by Canon Tom Page
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