



12 June 2020

Dear friends

RESPONDING TO RECENTLY UPDATED GOVERNMENT ADVICE

As many of you will be aware the Government has recently changed its advice to allow churches and other religious buildings to open for individual prayer from Saturday 13 June.

The Methodist Church's advice remains that churches stay closed.

When the Government announced its intention to change the advice it stated that: "Places of worship still have discretion over when they consider it safe to open and may decide to remain closed or reopen at a slower pace if they wish." We would like to stress that no-one should feel under any pressure to open buildings for individual prayer.

Nevertheless, we appreciate that there may be some churches who feel their mission depends on their church being open for individual prayer. In such cases it is essential the local church managing trustees consult with their circuit and take full account of the advice and guidelines set out here.

<https://www.methodist.org.uk/media/17685/opening-churches-for-private-prayer-covid-19-connexional-advice-0620.pdf>

We affirm the vital need for prayer at this time and recognise that we have been praying no less because we have not had church buildings in which to pray. Above all, we want people to pray and worship safely. All the circuits remain committed to supporting our spiritual needs through a range of online and distributed resources.

Please be assured of my continuing care and prayers in these challenging days.

Every blessing

Leslie Newton
District Chair