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Dear brothers and sisters,

Following the announcement that the government have made around the resumption of public worship in our church buildings from 4 July we are still awaiting further guidance and clarification from government on how we are to do this and what limits and safeguards will need to be in place. We are expecting to get this next week.

Because the government advice will be offered to all faith communities, we will need to look at it carefully, once received, to see how it should be applied to us. Please be assured that we will do this and seek to offer you as clear advice as we can to help you in your planning.

For this reason, for the moment we would suggest you don't rush your plans for the resumption of public worship. We know there are some in our communities who are hoping that things can go straight back to how they were. This will not be the case – we will need to go gently, taking time especially over the summer months as we continue to learn from this experience and shape all aspects of our church for the future. The decision on when and how to return to public worship in our church buildings will depend on local circumstances and available resources, and the permission being given is as before permissive and not prescriptive. Our expectation over the summer is that it will be simple and limited in scope.

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Once the government guidance is published and we have had the opportunity to study it we will be in touch with further specific guidance for this diocese. In the meantime please do be in touch as you need.

This comes with the assurance of our prayers.

**Bishop Rachel & Bishop Robert**