



THE CHURCH
OF ENGLAND



(St Peter's, Market Bosworth; All Saints, Cadeby;
St James, Sutton Cheney & St Mary the Virgin, Congerstone)
with All Saints, Nailstone; St Andrew, Carlton
& St Peter's, Shackerstone.



Diocese of
Leicester

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My brothers and sisters in Christ across Bosworth Benefice,

I said in my Insight article that 'by the time you read this, the situation will have changed again', and it has! One moment we seem deep in lockdown, the next we feel like we're hurtling out of it. However, there are many guidelines and restrictions to adhere to. Alongside this is the risk of a second spike and the potential for lockdown again as seen in Leicester city.

We have been informed that public services may resume in churches from 4th July. What are we to make of it all here in Bosworth Benefice?

Having read the Guidelines, these 'services' would be much shorter, with no singing, and within the constraints of 2m social distancing between households. Communion would be in one kind only – and I would have to practice dropping the wafer into your hand from the safest possible distance! In addition would be the necessary hygiene requirements and cleaning if the church were to be used again within 72 hours. People over age 70 and clinically vulnerable are still advised to minimise or avoid social public situations, especially in enclosed spaces. I'm also very aware that if Ann and myself were to start moving regularly around our churches, we may be an infection risk to others and there will be many who are not yet confident that we should be coming out of lockdown at all.

The Bishop's have given us dispensation not to restart services until we are ready, and whilst it may be disappointing my recommendation would be that we enter into an interim period in which we maintain our Sunday morning Zoom service at 10am and hold maybe a few other services in those churches that can be made ready to see/feel how it may work, with a view to restarting some sort of pattern beginning with a service to celebrate Ann's priesting in September.

This may also give us the opportunity to reflect on what we've experienced, think about how we may develop a 'blended' approach to worship across the Benefice with the use of digital media, and frankly, take a break if possible.

Weddings, funerals and indeed Baptisms may also take place with restricted numbers in those churches ready or able to accommodate these restrictions. Any bookings, or requests for services will therefore be on a case-by-case basis.

Personally I have to tell you this is all very difficult to manage. Clergy are already exhausted with everything they've had to deal with so far, and the complexity of guidelines, restrictions and re-opening of churches is not simply a case of unlocking the door. It will take energy to adapt, reflect, and deal with the many issues this pandemic and lockdown has caused. I don't believe we will simply get back to where we were before, but I hope that as we grow out of this period we may see it as an opportunity to revise, adapt, challenge and grow into a new and more connected expression of God's love in these communities.

I assure you therefore, of my commitment to see our churches open again, but I ask us all to remain patient as we allow God to guide us through this challenging period.

Yours in Christ,

Revd Mark Poskitt

(Rector)