

## ST CROSS CHURCH, KNUTSFORD

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### **Ref: A letter to all parishioners about the re-opening of St Cross Church for private prayers and devotions**

Dear Parishioner

You are probably aware that places of worship can now open for private prayer and devotions. At St Cross I have been in discussions with the Churchwardens, PCC and Ministry Team. After consultation Judith, Grahame and myself concluded that the best way forward at this present time was to make St Cross available for private prayer from Wednesday June 24<sup>th</sup>. This will be by appointment, in the first instance, by contacting myself. We have taken all necessary steps to ensure the building is safe and clean, but individual visits will be under the same applicable safety measures that we can expect when the church eventually opens for services. The availability of the church for private prayer by appointment will also be put on the website and notice boards. More than one person can attend if they are from the same household.

From the consultation I recognised that whilst for some people the opportunity of private prayer in church is not of interest because one can pray at home or outdoors; the opportunity for some people to spend some time with God in a place of silence and detachment is more important to them. The thousands of prayers that have been said, and worship that has been offered in St. Cross over the last 140 years all combine to mean for some people a deeper sense of the Spirit of God's presence in there. For some people, not being able to enter the church building has felt like a serious deprivation and re-entry will feel like a joyful homecoming, or at least the start of it, as we begin our return from exile.

Likewise, for those who grieve, few communities have been unaffected by loss, illness and death in this pandemic. Beyond the pandemic we continue to remember our own loved ones, living or departed at any time, and remembering a loved one in a place of worship is a way of coping with the pain and anxiety that we continue to experience.

When services eventually resume, I would hope that this opportunity of private prayer would continue in order to allow people who are unable to physically attend a service in church to come and pray in the church, should they desire.

Yours, in Christ

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Paul". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping horizontal line extending to the right.

Ps: I know some people have church keys via the Parish Rooms but the arrangement at present is for the clergy or nominated deputy to let any worshipper into the church via the North Door.