

# The Parishes of Tavistock, Gulworthy and Brent Tor

The Vicarage, 5a Plymouth Road, Tavistock, Devon PL19 8AU  
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Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ

On Monday the Prime minister announced that places of worship may re-open from 4th July, providing certain conditions are met and Government guidance is followed. The Government has also given permission for weddings to resume from the same date.

This is very welcome news. As a benefice we have been thinking carefully about how we do this. There are serious health and safety considerations to be worked through and updated guidance from the national church is still awaited. We will be able to meet in our buildings again, but this will be far from a return to normal life before lockdown.

Whatever pattern of worship is offered will need to be sustainable. I hope this will continue alongside the virtual worship and fellowship which has been so fruitful and welcomed widely during the lockdown.

In advance of the guidance, there are some things we do know: we will not be able to sing together, at least for a time. Holy Communion will need to be administered in one kind. We will need to be socially distanced from one another and there cannot be refreshments served or long conversations at the door. There will also need to be good hand hygiene. Movement throughout the church will need to be thought about carefully and there will be additional cleaning requirements. Because of the need for social distancing, there will be restrictions about the numbers who are able to come, depending on the size of the building.

In Tavistock, we plan to trial limited worship on the four Sundays in July, beginning 5<sup>th</sup> July at 9.45 am using the Clothworkers Aisle with social distancing and the use of sanitizer, with monitored entrance, and for a maximum of 30 people. We will have a Risk Assessment in place. Sadly to ensure everyone's safety as best we can, there will be no Vestry Group, no hymns, no books, or passing of the peace, no social mingling, or coffee served afterwards. You are welcome to bring your own service book/Bible if you wish. We will continue to post a service on-line as we have done throughout lockdown, although this will go out slightly later each Sunday as it will be recorded in Church in the morning. The church will remain open until 2pm for socially distanced private prayer on a Sunday, and closed during the week for the time being except for private prayer on a Wednesday between between 10 am – 2 pm when circumstances permit. Gulworthy and Brentor will also be open for worship and private prayer in accordance with Government and Diocesan guidelines. Sunday Worship in Gulworthy is at 11.15 am, Christ Church 9.45 am, and St.Michael's 6.00 pm.

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Nationally, the Church of England is pressing for greater clarity on outdoor worship but, at present, this is limited by the numbers allowed by law to assemble in public.

Our calling now is to rebuild and reset the prayer and worship of God's Church in faith, continuing to show love, care and concern for our neighbour.

Thank you again for all your continued prayers and support as we take these next steps together.

With God's blessing

*Christopher Hardwick*

Vicar

The Feast of St.Peter & St.Paul