

The Parish of Halas

Together in Christ

CRADLEY HALESOWEN HASBURY LAPAL ROMSLEY



Dear Friends

We don't know about you, but as your clergy we have been pondering, praying, planning with the churchwardens about what to do regarding the news that churches can now be open for personal and private prayer. We've attended Zoom meetings, WhatsApp discussions, read proposals, risk assessments and guidelines and it's not quite as easy as just opening the doors to our churches as we have done in the past.

Opening up.

To what?

Why?

Well opening up does not just mean unlocking our doors and leaving them open, not just yet. We are being given a gift from the government in taking the first steps towards our new church normal.

This points me towards the wisdom of Psalm 37. It is worth reading the whole Psalm, so it may be worth looking it up in your own Bible when you have a moment.

Trust in the LORD and do good; dwell in the land and enjoy safe pasture.

Take delight in the LORD, and he will give you the desires of your heart.

Commit your way to the LORD; trust in him and he will do this (NRSV) Or

Open up before God, keep nothing back (The Message)

We want to open our doors again so that we can enter for personal and private prayer. You may be yearning for services but this is not the time. We want to **encourage those for whom it is safe to do so**, to join in the joy of being able to pray again in church. We may yearn to enter church so we can see each other again, but we're not there yet.

This is a chance for us to Open Up before God, to Quiet down and be prayerful. So in some ways nothing's changed, we can do this each and every day in our homes and hearts. But...

This is a chance to connect with God in our places of prayer if that is what we **need**.

We do not need to rush this; we do need to follow guidelines. But we do want to help people who need to find personal time quietly to drink in the prayerfulness of our church buildings, even though we know it may be a while before they can again become places of meeting, chatting and catching up with one another. Here is space and quiet for those who need it.

We will publicise when we are open and where - each of our Church buildings plans to be open for a couple of hours a week by the end of this month and as the opening times are fixed we will post them on the home page at halasteam.org and on our Halas Team facebook page. We pray that you will be fulfilled by God's Spirit wherever you pray.

AMEN

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