

Dispensation Process after 31st March 2021

Canonical Dispensation

The dispensation from canonical requirements for worship in a benefice, already given to 31st March 2021, is extended to include 1st April 2021 (Maundy Thursday) and 2nd April 2021 (Good Friday).

From April 3rd 2021 onwards a dispensation should be sought in each case where a benefice (or plurality) does not feel able or ready safely to offer in-person worship on Sundays. In such cases, please share your [risk assessments](#) with your rural dean and archdeacon, before making an application for dispensation to your Area Bishop or Episcopal Vicar.

An application for dispensation can be made **using** the suggested template below, from the Diocesan Registry. This is **not** necessary for individual churches who decide not to reopen if others in their benefice (or plurality) are reopening.

Dear Bishop

I am writing to confirm that the Parochial Church Council [s] of the Parish [es] of [xxx] [and xxx] in the Benefice of [xxx] has [have] met [digitally as the case may be] and has [have] passed a resolution reflecting its [their] discussions and consideration of the current circumstances relating to the Coronavirus issues facing the country at the present time with particular reference to the ministry of the Church of England within the Parish [es] and the Church [es] of [xxx] [and xxx].

The resolution for each PCC was "to request the Bishop to exercise his/her powers under Canon B14 to dispense with the obligations to say, sing or celebrate services under Canon B11 and B14 within the Church [es] of [xxx] until [date]". [As minister, I concur with this request]

There is no intention that the Church [es] of [xxx] should cease to be used altogether for public worship and there is a full intention that services should be resumed as soon as is appropriate.

The factors which [I]/[the PCC] took into consideration included the following:

Those of you who decide that your church(es) should not offer in person worship should ensure that:

- There is appropriate prior consultation within the benefice, including with the PCC.
- Where possible and appropriate, provision for online worship is made within a benefice.
- Where it is not feasible for a benefice to organise its own online worship, people are advised of possibilities elsewhere including in person worship
- Clear information about changes to services is made publicly available in advance, on websites, church doors / noticeboards, and through other means as needed.

+Michael Leitch:

10 March 2021