

**The Rt Revd Libby Lane
Bishop of Derby**



The Parochial Church Council & Revd. P Barham
St Matthew's Church
Church Lane
Darley Abbey
DE22 1EF

14th January 2021

Dear PCC & Peter

Dispensation from holding services in the parish of St Matthew Darley Abbey

Thank you for your email of 12th January in which you set out your PCC's resolution to ask me to permit the dispensation from holding your normal services whilst the Covid-19 pandemic continues. I appreciate that the decision to make this request has not been taken lightly, and I am holding your parish in my prayers.

By virtue of the authority given to me by Canon B14A 1(b), I hereby give my consent to your dispensing with the holding of any services until 28th February 2021. If you wish to keep your church closed beyond that date, please send me a further resolution at least two weeks prior to 28th February 2021 to give me time to consider your request and respond. If you wish to reopen your church at any period prior to this date you will need to contact my office and your Archdeacon at least one month before the proposed reopening. This will ensure adequate time is allowed for you to complete a Risk Assessment and for this to be fully reviewed.

I fully acknowledge the sadness and disappointment you feel as a result of taking this action. However, please accept my assurances that your decision is both wise and godly. You are encouraging the faithfulness of those who are continuing to practise their faith at home, and you are reinforcing the ways people are supporting one another and their communities in a practical and prayerful manner.

I am grateful for our partnership in the Gospel, especially during these difficult times.

With assurance of my continuing prayers,

+ Libby Derby

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