

## **INFORMATION FROM THE CHAIR OF THE LANCASHIRE DISTRICT.**

As you can see from the Statement below our church buildings remain closed; There have been times when people have had to enter the building. Please ensure that you have permission and if you do have cause to enter the building, you must sign in using the book in the Willow Grove.

### **Methodist Churches in Lancashire Remain Closed**

Following the recent announcement to allow churches to open for private prayer from the 15th June, the Superintendents of the eleven Lancashire Circuits met to decide a unified response. We have decided that at this point we will not be opening the Methodist Churches across Lancashire for private prayer, even though we will have the permission of the government to do so.

#### **There are several reasons for this: -**

1. The Methodist Church in Britain has decided not to make any change to its position until after the Methodist Conference has met at the end of June, so there is no change in the guidance from the Connexion.
2. Methodist Churches are places where we gather in community to worship and pray and not a place where we commonly go as individuals. We recognise there has been an increase in recent years for our buildings to be used for 24/7 prayer, but this has often been in specific locations.
3. The risk assessment for every church has not been carried out.
4. There are cleaning, distancing, and movement through the building issues that will need to be in place for when we resume to meet together, and these have not been resolved at this stage.
5. We need to ensure that those opening and managing our buildings are not those in the 'highest risk' categories, and we can't be sure of that at this stage.
6. The Re-infection rate (R Number) in the North West is the highest in the country at the moment and we remain cautious about the spread of infection in our region.

**Paul Davis. 10th June 2020**