

As the latest Government guidance set out steps for reopening of church buildings for individual private prayer, and also for organ practice which is now permitted, the Church of England together with the Royal School of Church Music has encouraged the Government to be proactive in ensuring music-making can resume in church buildings, once it is safe to do so.



evidence on how music and particularly singing can be resumed safely.

Keith Blundy

Responding to the latest guidance, **The Bishop of London, Sarah Mullally, said:**

"We know that for church musicians this remains a difficult time, and many are anxious to know the date it will be possible to sing and play together again.

"The most recent guidance now allows for organ practice, providing the usual precautions on social distancing are observed, which will be of encouragement, yet before permitting choirs to resume the Government is awaiting the latest scientific and medical advice.

"We are encouraging the Government to be alert to the consequences of our choirs' continued silence - and to take a proactive approach to allowing singing to return to our churches and cathedrals as soon as it is possible to do so safely. This way we can safeguard our choral tradition which many believe to be the finest in the world.

"We look forward to a time where worship and music can once again be combined, in all their different expressions, as they have for centuries, turning our hearts to God."

**Royal School of Church Music Director, Hugh Morris added:**

"This news will be of great encouragement to organists. We know from the work we have been doing to support church musicians up and down the land that they are longing to express themselves in music making; and we endorse the encouragement to the Government to be alert to the importance of allowing a safe return of choirs and singing to all our churches.

"The ministry of music is such a vital part of the life of the church, and choral music is a rich part of the tapestry of worship."

During the Coronavirus pandemic, the Church of England partnered with the RSCM to provide **free hymns** for parishes for use in streamed worship, which have been downloaded more than 45,000 times.

## More information

- [COVID-19: guidance for the safe use of places of worship during the pandemic](#)
- [Guidance from the Church of England](#)

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