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The Cathedral Church of St Andrew

Statement to the Diocese

Wednesday 3 June 2020

I am writing to inform you that the Trustees of the Cathedral Church of St Andrew in Aberdeen have decided to close the cathedral buildings temporarily from the end of September this year. They have made this decision because the buildings are no longer suitable for worship through another winter. The closure will allow for a careful consideration of whether restoration and redevelopment of the buildings are possible. During the closure a judgement will be made as to whether it will be feasible to source sufficient funds to carry out required work, as neither the diocese nor individual charges have sufficient resources to support an extensive capital project.

From the closure of the buildings, St Andrew's will cease, temporarily, to serve as the cathedral church of the diocese. I have asked the Rector and Vestry of St Mary's, Carden Place, to serve as the pro-cathedral (that is, temporary cathedral) for the Diocese of Aberdeen and Orkney. The Provost and congregation of St Andrew's are invited to accompany me, as Bishop, to that new location for worship.

The decision to close the buildings, although not a surprise to many in the St Andrew's congregation, is a disappointment. The congregation has faced a number of challenges through the last months. After diligent prayer and reflection, they have increased congregational giving, so that the operating account will be in surplus this year. During the pandemic lockdown, they have been sustained through on-line worship and meetings, which have deepened their congregational life. Under the leadership of the Provost, they have been encouraged to keep their eyes and hearts focused on God, and have responded with faith and grace.

In deciding to close the cathedral buildings temporarily, the Trustees are acting in the best interests of the congregation of St Andrew's. This kind and loving decision has been echoed by the invitation from St Mary's, Carden Place, to welcome the St Andrew's congregation there. That location will provide us with an opportunity in these challenging times to pool our resources, so that together we can continue to serve our neighbours in the City of Aberdeen.

+Anne