

How can I help during the Vacancy?

You may be thinking that this information is not for you. This is, however, a time when the prayers and efforts of all the church are important.

Prayers

Please be faithful in praying for the church during the time of vacancy. Please remember the churchwardens, area dean and vacancy leadership team; those working on the parish profile and all who have additional responsibility during this time. Please also pray that God will call the right person to be your new incumbent and for wisdom in discerning this.

Efforts

There will be increasing responsibility on many during this time of vacancy. It is helpful if people continue with their duties as much as possible. If you find that you have some spare time on your hands, then it may be worth asking your churchwardens whether there is anything additional that you might be able to do to support them during this time.

Reflections

Very soon, there will be consultation about your perception of priorities going forward that will feed into the building of a person specification for the new incumbent. Please pray and reflect upon this and pass any ideas to the churchwardens.

Prayer for Vacancy

God our Father, you have welcomed each one of us in Jesus and called us to be His body in this place:

Send us your Holy Spirit at this time of uncertainty and change, to fill us with vision and energy and faithfulness in prayer, that we may be true to our calling to bring new life to our community. Give your heavenly wisdom to those who are to choose a new incumbent for this parish, that she or he may be a wise and gentle shepherd of your people, ready to serve us with joy, to build us up in faith and to lead us by example in loving obedience to your Son, Jesus. Amen.

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Archdeacon's Newsletter for St. Mary's Stoke D'Abernon

September 2021

Dear Friends,

The purpose of this newsletter is twofold.

Firstly, I wish to say a huge thank you to Godfrey who has been the Minister here for the last 8 years. During this time, he has made a significant contribution to the life and witness of this parish. As he prepares to leave St. Mary's for pastures new, we pray that he may continue to know God's provision as he follows His call into the next season of ministry.


Secondly, this newsletter will explain how the vacancy will be managed and how a new appointment will be made with a provisional timeline of the important meetings. I am grateful to Godfrey for his permission to begin the process of succession planning before he moves on.

Please be assured of my care, prayers, and support during this time.

Best wishes,

Martin

Martin Breadmore
Archdeacon of Dorking

Diocese of
Guildford 
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What happens when Godfrey leaves?

Who is In Charge during the Vacancy? Following Godfrey's departure, the formal running of the parish is the legal responsibility of the Area Dean (Revd Renos Pittarides) and Churchwardens (the Sequestrators).

How does the parish function without an Incumbent? Whilst the Area Dean will provide oversight and support, he is also a busy incumbent and will not be able to be present in the way that Godfrey is. Most of the work, therefore, will be coordinated by the vacancy management team who are accountable to the PCC. This will consist of the churchwardens, administrator, treasurer, and others who share in ministerial and administrative support. It will meet regularly to ensure things continue as normal. For good reason, the Area Dean will ensure that no strategic decisions are taken during the time when there is no incumbent in the parish.

What if I have any questions during this period?

Please speak to the churchwardens in the first instance. They will be able to direct you to the right person.

How is our new Incumbent chosen?

Who decides on our new Vicar?

There are six people who will be on the formal interview panel:
The Patron (King's College Cambridge) represented by the Chaplain
The Bishop of Guildford (Rt Rev Andrew Watson)
The Archdeacon of Dorking (The Venerable Martin Breadmore)
The Area Dean of Leatherhead (Revd. Renos Pittarides)
The two Parish Representatives (elected by the PCC)

Will there be consultation?

Yes. The most important work that needs to be done now is the putting together of a parish profile and person specification. This is, in effect, the document that lays out our priorities looking forward and the gifts that we seek in a new leader. The compilation of this document will be done by a small *Parish Profile Team* but following a process of wide consultation which will be facilitated by the diocese. There will also be an opportunity for the PCC and officers of the parish to meet shortlisted candidates and offer feedback.

What is the Timescale for all of this?

We attempt to be as efficient as possible. We do, however, need to go through a process that is laid down by the Patronage (Benefices) Measure (1986). We have already started to prepare for this process. The dates that have been set are below:

<i>Archdeacon's open meeting with the congregation (to explain the process)</i>	15 th September
<i>Vision morning with Diocesan Missioner</i>	3 rd October
<i>Final Draft of Parish Profiles completed by (stage at which most of the work is complete)</i>	December 2021
<i>Section 11 Meeting (profile formally agreed and parish reps chosen)</i>	January 2022
<i>Advertise Post: Rector of Stoke D'Abernon (on Diocesan website and in Church Times)</i>	11 th , 18 th 25 th February 2022
<i>Closing date for applications (final date on which applications submitted)</i>	11 th March 2022
<i>Shortlisting (interview panel meets to shortlist candidates)</i>	22 nd March 2022
<i>Interviews (held in the Parish over two consecutive days)</i>	12 th April 2022

The Bottom Line...

So when can we expect to welcome our new Incumbent?

As soon as possible... but the process can't be rushed! If we are successful in appointing a new incumbent in April, we might expect an induction during July/August. The average time between an appointment and an institution is approximately 3 months. It must also be remembered that a panel can decide that God's person for the post is not amongst the shortlisted candidates. This can be disappointing. It is, however, important that the right person is appointed, even if it means re-advertising and waiting a little longer.