

EMBARGOED UNTIL SUNDAY 5 JUNE 2022

To: the Congregation of St Peter's, Farnborough
The Congregation of St Mark's, Farnborough

27 May 2022

Dear Friends

The St Peter's & St Mark's Partnership

It is with a heavy heart that I announce that the Revd Gareth Dicks will not be continuing as the planting minister at St Peter's, Farnborough or be licensed, as was the intention, as vicar of St Mark's Farnborough.

This project has not worked out as planned. Over the past three weeks, I have spent some time with Gareth, the standing committee of the PCC at St Peter's, and the PCC of St Mark's. I have listened deeply to everyone and there is general agreement that the financial, missional and vocational circumstances of this project are not right for it to have the best chance of success.

It is natural that this will be a disappointment to everyone. We do, however, recognise that, in an increasing climate of venturing in mission, not every project will work in the way we might have hoped. In these situations, it is important that we stop and reflect upon the reasons for this – and apply our learning as we journey forwards. There will be time to reflect a little more deeply with all parties in the months ahead.

Meanwhile, I would like to say a heartfelt thanks to the three stakeholders in this project: to Gareth, for offering himself to lead this project; to the community of St Peter's for their deep faith, generosity and sacrificial spirit in funding this project; and to the community of St Mark's, who have worked very hard in the context of vacancy and who have welcomed me, the diocesan team and Gareth with open hearts.

We are currently in conversation with Gareth about his future ministry. Please do hold him in prayers as he discerns his next chapter. He will not be returning to ministry at St Peter's or St Mark's but we hope to organise an occasion where we can say thank you to him and pray for him.

Once again, my sincere thanks to you all.

Yours in Christ

*As ever,
Paul.*

Paul Davies
Archdeacon of Surrey