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11th June 2020

Dear Friends

St Peter's Church Carlton Colville Update

We hope that you and your family have managed to stay safe and well during these testing times. We are sure you have many questions about the future of St Peter's, so perhaps now is the time for an update.

Church Opening

Despite the announcement from the Government on 6th June, both Bob and Mark feel that to open the church for private prayer, given our limited resources/availability and the stringent requirements expected of us in order to do this safely, is not possible at this time. We are sorry about this but feel, with the appropriate risk assessment on access etc, it is our only immediate course of action. We await Government and Diocesan guidance on a return to public worship and will keep you informed.

Vacancy

Bob, as churchwarden, received the following notice from the Diocese on 8th June, which we feel you should read in full, and has had contact with the Archdeacon of Norfolk and the new Rural Dean (Rev Mandy Bishop). We will then try and explain what we understand from it:

"The benefice is currently vacant following the departure of the previous incumbent. There is the need to make sure that we are using our resources as effectively as possible for mission and ministry and suspension of presentation will allow a full review to take place. This will include consideration of ministry in this and nearby benefices as well as a Diocesan deployment strategy. Once this is completed then suspension will be lifted, on an appropriate scheme brought forward. In the meantime, it may be possible to move forward with an interim appointment which will help to address these questions, and ministry in the benefice. +Graham Norvic, Bishop of Norwich"

As Mark and Bob currently understand the situation, the 'suspension of presentation' means our advertising of the vacancy of Rector was made but has been removed, and we will be expecting a Priest-in-charge to be appointed by the Diocese, for a minimum period of 3 years, as soon as circumstances allow. This Minister may or may not be 100% focused within the current Parish/Benefice. The PCCs would be consulted prior to this appointment. The Diocese will be considering various models to deliver Ministry across the Deanery of Lothingland and the wider Diocese for the longer term. This will clearly take time and involve consultation, but it *may* be that the current Benefice of St Peter's and St Andrew's is stopped and St Peter's *may* then be merged with another Parish to form a new larger Benefice with a shared Ministry Team and a shared Ordained Minister. You may be aware that this is already being planned for Gunton, Corton and Hopton parishes, who are also in vacancy.

Diocese and Church Finances

Both Diocese and churches have suffered financially through the current crisis and we are no exception. The Diocese is engaged in planning of ministry within the finances available for this and coming years. With the church closed to public worship we have of course been met, as has every other church, Deanery and Diocese, with a reduction in income. We anticipate that this may be as much as 40% of our expected

income for 2020. This means we will be drawing further on our reserves in order to remain functional as a church building both now and in the near future. Please, if you can, over the time this church has been closed, continue to set aside what you would normally give regularly, or if possible set up a Standing Order with the Treasurer so we can better manage the finances in this time.

And finally....

We understand that the above news will be upsetting to many members of our congregation, just as it has been to ourselves, but we belong to a universal Church of Christ, called by Christ to be One with God, ready to be his Disciples on earth.

If you weren't aware, then we have been running weekly 'Online' services via the church's YouTube channel "St Peter's Church Carlton Colville" in an effort to bridge that gap of not being able to meet and as a result be his disciples in the world, not just in our Parish. Please, if you are able to, then do join us at 10:30am each Sunday, or in fact at any time – all the services since Palm Sunday are available there.

In addition, you may be able to make use of Rev Peter Baxandall's Thought for the day. Links to both these can be found on the Church's website <https://stpeterscc.org.uk>. If you would like to receive Peter's notes on paper, because you do not have an email address and cannot access the website, then do contact Mark and Sandra and we will deliver them to you or post it to you.

There is also the church Facebook page (@stpchurchcarlton), and linked to it our lively Fellowship of St Peter's Church group.

We appreciate that all these ways of doing church are not the same as a physical presence, praying and worshipping together, but we do offer these resources to those that can use them as a means of staying in a fellowship. Also, of course, please do keep in contact yourselves with each other through phone calls, or even letters, as did St Paul, St Peter and many others.

Grace, Mercy and Peace to each one of you.

Mark

(Lay Chair to the PCC, and Reader)

Bob

(St Peter's Churchwarden)

John

(Treasurer)

WWW: <https://stpeterscc.org.uk>



@stpchurchcarlton



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