

GODALMING MINSTER UPDATE - 16TH JANUARY 2023

'Post of First Responsibility' (PFR) at St Mark's/Ockford Ridge

The Reverend Sheila Samuels commenced her new role as Associate Minister on 1st December 2022 and was subsequently licensed at St Mark's Church on 11th January 2023 by Archdeacon Paul Davies.

This month Sheila and Patrick will move to the Old Vicarage, Franklyn Road.

The Diocese have confirmed funding is in place.

Consolidation of Parishes and Charities - The process of pastoral reorganisation is accomplished with the Church Commissioners and the Diocese. An initial meeting was held on 10th January with Wendy Harris, the Diocesan Pastoral Secretary, to discuss the process and review a first draft of the new Pastoral Scheme document. A final version will be put to PCCs on 13th March for approval, whereupon the Diocese and Church Commissioners will work to produce the necessary legal documentation based on the approved Scheme. It is envisaged that this will be completed and put to PCCs in July for final approval. Thereafter, assuming no significant public or stakeholder objections (not expected), the Church Commissioners finalise the Scheme in August by obtaining Bishop Andrew's signature. SPSP and BHC will then proceed to work with the Charity Commission and banks etc to effectively merge the existing three charities into one (likely to be named the Benefice of Godalming Minster) by 1st January 2024. A Minster celebration service officiated by Bishop Andrew is tentatively scheduled for Sunday 14th January 2024.

The Pastoral Secretary re-confirmed that there is no charge to the parishes for legal costs incurred in forming the Minster. PCCs may subsequently elect to seek independent legal counsel should this be deemed appropriate.

Minster Senior Leadership Team Offsite - A joint SPSP/STM and BHC Senior Leadership Team (SLT) offsite took place on 30th November to commence alignment on Minster strategies, and further develop focus areas arising from the Diocesan Needs Process workshop held on 19th November. Richard Lloyd and Jens Mankel from the Diocesan Mission Enabling Team facilitated. Three principal areas were identified as Discipleship, Younger Generations and Community.

Minster Transition Steering Group - Three meetings have taken place (1st November, 6th December, and 10th January). Primary focus is to identify the areas of immediate focus, establish subgroups to address and develop and overall timetable with specific plans.

The Steering Group will primarily address 'secular' activities to ensure that the Minster comes into existence on 1st January 2024. This will include legal, finance, patronage, HR, buildings, and administrative matters. A Minster PCC will be created c. October 2023 EPCM and legally come into force 1st January 2024. This Minster PCC will replace the Transition Steering Group. Existing separate PCCs will carry on as normal until end 2023.

The Senior Leadership Team (SLT) will address 'sacred' activities to ensure mission and worship across the Minster are put in place. This will include vision and strategy, organisational structure, timing and location of all services, associated children's and youth work, pastoral care, evangelism, media & communications. .

Contemporary Service at SPSP - An initial Contemporary Service was held at SPSP on 6th November at 9.30am and feedback was very positive (attendance was 240 (198 adults and 42 children). Valuable learnings have been captured and will be incorporated into the next Contemporary Service at SPSP which is scheduled for 26th March. This service will occur alongside the regular SPSP Sung Eucharist Service.

David Wilkin, Reverend Simon Taylor and Canon John Harkin.