

## 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 Associate Rector, the Churchwardens, the Area Dean, the 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 Rector and for wisdom in discerning this.

### Working together

There will be increased responsibility on many during this time. It is helpful if people continue with their duties as much as possible. If you find you have some spare time on your hands, then it may be worth asking Simon, David or Will 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 Person Specification for the new Rector. Please pray and reflect upon this and pass any ideas to the Churchwardens.

### A prayer for use during the vacancy

*God our Father, you have welcomed each one of us in Jesus and called us to be His body in this place:  
Send your Holy Spirit at this time of uncertainty and change,  
to fill us with vision, 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 rector 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 Christ. Amen.*

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GODALMING  
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Diocese of  
**Guildford**   
TRANSFORMING CHURCH  
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## From the Archdeacon November 2024

Dear Friends

The purpose of this newsletter is threefold.

Firstly, I want to say a huge thank you to Simon (Taylor!), who has been Rector at Busbridge & Hambledon and then Godalming Minster for over 14 years. During this time, he has made a significant contribution to the life and witness of the parish, and has led the process of bringing Godalming Minster into being. We pray that he and the family may know God's provision and blessing as they follow God's call into the next season of ministry at CPAS.

Secondly, I want to thank Simon Willetts for his ministry, and in particular for taking on the additional responsibility that the vacancy will bring, particularly given that John, Sheila and Patrick have all recently moved on too.

Thirdly, I want to take this opportunity to explain how the vacancy will be managed and how the process of appointing a new Rector will work. You will see that inside there is a timeline of the important stages in this journey.

I look forward to working with the Wardens, the Parish Representatives and the Patron (see over) to make the best possible appointment. Please be assured of my care, prayers and support during the coming months.

Every blessing

*Catharine*

Catharine Mabuza  
Archdeacon of Surrey



## What happens when Simon Taylor leaves?

**Who is in charge during the Vacancy?** Following Simon's departure, the formal running of the parish is the legal responsibility of the Area Dean (Revd Chris Bessant) and Churchwardens (Will and David). Together, they are the sequestrators.

**How does the parish function without an Incumbent?** Whilst the Area Dean will provide oversight and support, he also has responsibilities elsewhere and will not be able to be present on a day to day level. Simon Willetts will take on much of the pastoral responsibility and spiritual leadership, and will work closely with the Wardens.

There will be a Vacancy Leadership Team who are accountable to the PCC. This will consist of the Churchwardens, Associate Rector (Simon Willetts), Operations & Communications Manager, Treasurer, and other members of the Senior Leadership Team. 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.

### Who decides who our new Rector will be?

The appointment process will be managed by the Patron for the parish, CPAS. They will be represented by Revd Rob Miles, who will chair the interview panel. The formal interview panel will consist of:

- The Patron's Representative (Revd Rob Miles)
- The Bishop of Dorking (Rt Revd Paul Davies)
- The Archdeacon of Surrey (The Venerable Catharine Mabuza)
- The Area Dean of Godalming (Revd Chris Bessant)
- 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 preparation of a Parish Profile and Person Specification. This is the document that lays out our priorities for Godalming Minster going forwards and the gifts that we seek in a new leader. There will be a wide consultation process, and then the Profile will be put together by a small Parish Profile Team. At interview stage, there will also be an opportunity for the PCC and some staff members 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, and the following dates have been agreed.

|                                                                                                                                |                                                                                        |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <i>Archdeacon's meeting with the congregation<br/>(to explain the process)</i>                                                 | 4 <sup>th</sup> November 2024                                                          |
| <i>Patron and Archdeacon to meet with the PCC</i>                                                                              | 11 <sup>th</sup> November 2024                                                         |
| <i>Vacancy Vision Workshop</i>                                                                                                 | 18 <sup>th</sup> November 2024                                                         |
| <i>Final Draft of Parish Profile completed by<br/>(stage at which most of the work is complete)</i>                            | Mid-December 2024                                                                      |
| <i>Section 11 Meeting<br/>(profile formally agreed and parish reps chosen)</i>                                                 | 20 <sup>th</sup> January 2025                                                          |
| <i>Advertise Post of Rector of Godalming Minster<br/>(on the Diocesan website, CPAS website, Pathways and in Church Times)</i> | 28 <sup>th</sup> Feb, 7 <sup>th</sup> , 14 <sup>th</sup> ,<br>21 <sup>st</sup> Mar '25 |
| <i>Closing date for applications</i>                                                                                           | 23 <sup>rd</sup> March 2025                                                            |
| <i>Shortlisting by CPAS</i>                                                                                                    | 27 <sup>th</sup> March 2025                                                            |
| <i>Interviews<br/>(held in the Parish over two consecutive days)</i>                                                           | 7 <sup>th</sup> + 8 <sup>th</sup> May 2025                                             |

## The Bottom Line...

### So when can we expect to welcome our new Rector?

As soon as possible... but the process can't be rushed! If we're successful in appointing in May, we might expect an induction (welcome service) during September. The average time between interviews and someone starting is about 4 months. It's also possible that the panel decides that God's person is not among the shortlisted candidates. This can be disappointing, but it is really important that the right person is appointed, even if it means re-advertising and waiting a little longer.