

From the Area Dean

Dear Parishioner

It is hard to believe that St John's has been vacant for three months already. In that period, it has been my privilege to get to know the Select Vestry whose members are working extremely hard to keep things going during the vacancy. I am also immensely grateful to Revd Hector for all that he does so faithfully by way of pastoral ministry and the conduct of worship. As a new Area Dean, I am still learning the ropes a little and those with whom I have had contact from this lovely parish have made that process much easier!

I wanted to write to keep you up-to-date with some pastoral information:

1. Priest-in-charge

You will know from Bishop David's letter last week that thanks to the efficient and effective work of the Select Vestry and the Parochial Nominators an advertisement for the post of our next minister in Killyleagh has already been published, much sooner than is typical. This is excellent news and I know you will continue to pray for all those who will be involved in this appointment process, including the man or woman God is already preparing for the role.

2. Common Cup

I have been asked some questions about how permanent the new arrangements around the Common Cup at Holy Communion are to be. The directive from the House of Bishops following events of the global pandemic is quite clear – all churches were to have returned to the Common Cup by Pentecost of this year. These guidelines, which come from the Bishops after they sought expert medical advice, are quite clear and specific. As per last week's announcements, if you find a practical difficulty in using the Common Cup then you should feel comfortable speaking to Revd Hector or to a Churchwarden.

3. Pastoral Visitation

During a vacancy there is an inevitable falloff in the amount of pastoral work that can happen in a Parish. Revd Hector is generously and expertly providing pastoral ministry in emergency situations, but we are aware that those who are housebound while not necessarily in situations of emergency might be glad of a visit. I have spoken to Bishop David about how additional pastoral provision might be offered and we hope to be able to report progress on this soon.

4. Work on the Rectory

During a vacancy in a parish, the Rectory is inspected and recommendations are made as to improvements and repairs that are easier to make when the house lies empty. This vacancy inspection report has been received and a subcommittee of the Select Vestry is already working to implement the recommendations. These include minor things like painting and carpet/flooring but also more significant work such as the replacement of glazing that has failed and the updating of the heating system (the present boiler is nearly 40 years old!). At its last meeting, the Select Vestry approved around £15000 of spend for some of these works and there will be more to come. I wish to record my thanks to the SV and its subcommittee for their diligence.

As you can see, neither the diocese nor the Select Vestry have taken their foot 'off the gas' during this vacancy. May I encourage you to follow their example of ***diligence in your prayer*** for the life of the Parish, in your ***commitment to worshipping regularly*** at Church and to ***giving as you are able*** to support the work of ministry which is ongoing.

Be blessed,



Revd Adrian Dorrian
Area Dean of Lecale