



## **To all members of the Electoral Roll of the Parish of the Harwich Peninsula**

*Churches of St Michael's Ramsey w Little Oakley, All Saints Dovercourt w Parkeston  
and St Nicholas Harwich.*

Dear friends

This letter comes to all members of our Parish Electoral Roll to offer all of us encouragement and hope as we look ahead to the easing of lockdown restrictions and as we plan for the future in our community life together as church. At the end of this letter, you will find details about changes in our Sunday worship from Easter Sunday, when we will finally be able to return to our churches.

By now, probably most of us will have had at least our first dose of the Covid vaccine and we give thanks for how successful this has been in the ongoing challenges the world has faced through the pandemic. We cannot underestimate those challenges, the difficulties, the depth of grief that we have all been subject to this last year and we rightly remain cautious as we look ahead to the coming days, weeks and months. All organisations, businesses and charities have had to face up to these unprecedented difficulties and challenges and the church is no exception. In the future, as we begin to emerge from lockdown restrictions, important questions will have to be asked about how we organise ourselves and continue to be the worshipping, serving and loving communities we are called to be. It is certainly not the case that we will simply pick up where we left off.

### **New start, new calling.**

With all this in mind, we will all need fresh eyes, fresh ideas, a renewed and refreshed commitment to Jesus Christ, in order to grow and become the nurturing, loving worshipping communities that is part of our calling as disciples of Christ. And this is where we can all play our part. We all have a new opportunity now, to be at the centre of the re-shaping and renewing of our churches. Over the years, all of our churches have tended to rely on the same set of people to give direction and leadership in parish decision-making. And we truly give thanks for that continuum of wisdom and faithful service. But as that pool of people reduces in number, we need to encourage others to step forward and take on some of these roles. There will be some important decisions that we will have to make this year and a new energy and new vision needs to be unleashed. We look to the guidance and power of the Holy Spirit to direct that releasing of 'newness' but the Holy Spirit needs us, his people, to play our part.

### **How might I be called in this new start?**

1) Firstly, all of our District Church Councils have vacancies this year that need to be filled and this is something all of us could think seriously about doing. DCCs meet only 3 times a year and members make decisions relating to the needs of the local church as well as supporting clergy and supporting decisions made by the PCC. Members of the DCC are expected to be regular attenders at church and show a depth of faith in and commitment to, our Lord Jesus Christ. In order to serve on the DCC, you have to have been an existing member of the Electoral Roll for a minimum of 6 months. This year, we will have the following vacancies: All Saints has 4 vacancies, St Michael's and St Nicholas both have 5.

DCC members are elected for three years only but may stand for election again after a year's break. A DCC member will be a regular worshipper and committed disciple of Jesus, keen to promote the Gospel and the work of the church in the parish and beyond. He/she will want to contribute to the DCC's discussions, pray for its work, share in its responsibilities and play an active part in the parish's life and witness. This will include contributing to the parish prayer life, attending functions and events in one's own church as well as the others.

DCC members are to co-operate with the Incumbent, the Ministry Team and other churches in the Team, in promoting the whole mission of the church, being called as Paul says to; 'partnership in the gospel.' They are to respect the governance of the parish through the PCC and its decision-making, to be wholehearted in personal prayer and Bible study, committed to good communication and positive encouragement of one another. DCC members must submit to all the Church of England requirements on safeguarding and safeguarding training.

Also, each church needs to elect at least one churchwarden, preferably two. Churchwardens are elected every year and are able to serve for 6 years only. So why not think about standing for election as a member of a DCC or even as Churchwarden? This could be your chance to play a key part in the re-shaping of our churches' lives. If you would like to find out more about the role of a Churchwarden, speak to our existing churchwardens who will be pleased to help.

If you are interested in standing for your church DCC or you would like to nominate someone (assuming they meet the criteria and they agree) you need to get in touch with Liz, our Administrator who will provide you with the appropriate nomination forms, by phone: 07762253132 or by email: [harwich.peninsular@gmail.com](mailto:harwich.peninsular@gmail.com)

Nominations for DCC and Churchwardens are received and agreed at the Annual District Church Meetings so please make a note of the dates below. We are assuming that by this time we will be able to meet in person, but this will be confirmed nearer the time.

St Michael's Sunday 25<sup>th</sup> April; All Saints' Sunday 2<sup>nd</sup> May; St Nicholas Sunday 9<sup>th</sup> May all at 4pm within a service of Evening Prayer.

The Annual Parochial Church Meeting will be on Sunday 16th May at 4pm within a service of Evening Prayer.

2) Secondly, maybe you feel you are being called to some other area of the church's ministry. Maybe you have pastoral and/or listening gifts that you could offer. Or work with children and young people or schools' work. Maybe you have a desire to be more involved in the leading of worship – musical gifts, leading intercessions, reading from the Bible, assisting with Holy Communion, Licensed Lay Ministry or Ordained Ministry? Or to represent the church in the community in some way? For all or any of these opportunities please speak to John Shaw or John Wallace who will gladly advise and support you.

### **News about Sunday worship**

From Easter Sunday, 4<sup>th</sup> April, we will once again, be returning to 'in-person' congregational worship in our churches: a wonderful day to begin our own emerging from lockdown, to celebrate the resurrection of Jesus Christ and our own 'new beginnings' in him.

Under the guidance of the Bishop (who has called for a 'slow and cautious' return) and following advice, the PCC has agreed to **two morning services on Easter Sunday, one at 9am one at 10.30am both at All Saints Church, with the 10.30 service being live-streamed as usual.** Then, from the 11<sup>th</sup> April until the end of May, the 9am service will *alternate* between St Michael's and St Nicholas' churches, with a weekly 10.30am service continuing at All Saints, that will be live-streamed. Details of how this will look are being published in our weekly newsletter and if you do not receive this, contact the Parish Administrator on 07762253132 or email [harwich.peninsular@gmail.com](mailto:harwich.peninsular@gmail.com)

**Services for March and Holy Week are online only.** You can join in via any of our church Facebook pages. We also have a parish YouTube Channel: go to YouTube and type in 'Harwich Peninsula Parish.'

21 <sup>st</sup> March 10.30am	Morning Praise
28 <sup>th</sup> March (Palm Sunday) 10.30am	Holy Communion
1 <sup>st</sup> April (Maundy Thursday) 7.30pm	Holy Communion
Saturday 3 <sup>rd</sup> April 8.30pm	Service of Light

*Easter Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> April 9am and 10.30am at All Saints Church.*  
Email or tel. Liz our Administrator to book and for further details.

### **A Personal Message from the Rector, Margaret**

Firstly, I would like to say a huge heartfelt thank you for the many many cards, gifts, flowers, messages, phone calls and prayers I have received from you over the time of my sick leave. As many of you already know, I was diagnosed with breast cancer back in August last year and from October to the end of December I had chemotherapy. This treatment was brought to an abrupt halt in January as the drugs had made me too ill to continue and surgery was brought forward instead. On 12<sup>th</sup> February I had surgery (mastectomy and removal of infected lymph nodes) and I am pleased to say that this successfully removed the cancer. As the cancer was an aggressive type, I will now be back on chemotherapy throughout the rest of March and April followed by radiotherapy, all of which is preventative and to eliminate any cancer cells that might still be lingering. All of this means that I will remain on sick leave at least until the end of April/beginning of May. Through all of this, I have been overwhelmed with the high level of care, concern, treatment and expertise of our NHS staff. We have so much to be thankful for in those who devote themselves to saving lives.

I am so grateful to our Area Dean, Rev Liz Barnes, who has taken on the managing of parish funerals and weddings and other areas of parish life, while she has her own parishes to manage. But also to Rev Claire Scargill, Rev Kirsty Emerson, Rev Laura Garnham and others from beyond the deanery who are helping. Archdeacon Ruth and Rev Philip Ritchie, Mission and Ministry Adviser, have both been very supportive in offering help for Sundays as well as in their guidance to the Ministry Team and PCC.

Let's continue to commit to praying with all hope and expectation of all that is to come, setting our eyes on Jesus, rejoicing in those promises of God that we cherish deep in our hearts. These are promises to build up and to plant, promises that speak of eternal love; promises that affirm again and again God's good plan and intention for all his people. We are called to be a people who bless: bless one another, bless our communities and hold fast to that blessing for ourselves.