

ST BOTOLPH

C A M B R I D G E

From the Rector

Dear Friends

Newsletter 29



(Image of St Botolph's Church on a summer evening)

From the Churchwardens

We are all very sad that Fr Stephen is retiring and he will be greatly missed. We thought it would be helpful to set out what we can about what happens next and how St Botolph's will operate during the vacancy.

To begin with, and most importantly, we would like to thank Fr. Stephen for all that he has done to re-establish St Botolph's as a community and to consolidate our position within the Diocese. This was especially evident in our 700th Anniversary celebrations and Bp Stephen's warm words then and, even more so at Fr Stephen's induction as Rector. It is a tribute to both Fr Stephen and to our St Botolph's community that we now have a Rector for the first time in over 30 years.

We have a strong basis from which to approach the challenge of finding a new Rector, something that may take a year or more. During the vacancy we hope to continue as best we can our current pattern and style of worship with the excellent support of Tim and the choir. We are firmly established as the main representative of the BCP tradition in Cambridge and we wish this to continue. We are working with Fr Stephen and Tim Harling, the Dean of Queens', to find someone to provide regular cover for us and we hope that we will also be able to rely upon those who have preached at St Botolph's in recent years.

As to finding our next Rector, a Parish Profile will need to be compiled which sets out information about St Botolph's, our community and worship and, most importantly, a view on the sort of person we are looking for. The PCC is working on this and we look forward to sharing a draft with you and incorporating your views, probably in September.

Following Fr Stephen's retirement in early October, Bp Stephen and the Archdeacon will meet the PCC and Patron to set out their proposals for finding a successor and the terms of the appointment. We are a far more attractive proposition than previously as the position ought now to be for a Rector, but the process of finding and selecting the right person may well take some time. We hope and pray for a good outcome.

In the meantime church life goes on. We are hoping that the porters at Corpus will once again open and close the church for us during the week, but we would like to establish a small rotating team to provide a visible presence in St Botolph's for as much of the week as we can manage. Visitor numbers are starting to increase again and this provides an opportunity to listen and talk to them about what brings them to St Botolph's, as Bp Stephen suggested we should.

If you think you could spare time then please email either of us. If anyone wishes the church to be open at any particular time then do let us know and arrangements can be made.

With all of the wonderful activity and music over our 700th Anniversary, we missed the opportunity to write, as our predecessors have traditionally done at this time, to ask for financial support. Many of you have given generously for The Lamb and we are very grateful too to those who have set up standing orders that helped fill the gap in collections and donations during the lockdowns. Although some of our former fundraising activities can now recommence (and we look forward to the book sale on 21 August) we have ground to make up and the annual one-off contributions at St Botolph's-tide used to make a substantial difference. Anything you are able to do will be much appreciated and the website has a facility for this on the Supporting St Botolph's page under the Governance tab.

Lastly, we will be organizing an event after Fr. Stephen's last service on 3 October which traditionally is Harvest Festival. Details will follow.

If you have any comments or suggestions please email either of us who will be happy to help.

With best wishes

Dan and Sarah

Save the Parish

A Twitter storm erupted shortly before the meeting of the General Synod in July regarding the proposal, entitled *Myriad*, that was submitted for Synod's support to the planting of 10,000 lay led house churches. This was in addition to the 10,000 church plants already endorsed at a previous meeting.

The proposal received a great deal of attention largely because of very intemperate remarks beforehand by a senior Church Planting official who described clergy, their theological education and church buildings as *limiting factors* to the spread of the Gospel; and the ordinary members of laity, unless engaged in planting initiatives, as *passengers* in the mission process.

Despite the obvious lack of credibility in the target numbers, Synod nevertheless adopted the proposals for lay led planting and house groups, the Archbishop of Canterbury arguing that this was precisely how the Early Church was started. The Church centrally will support such initiatives financially and with other resources.

There was fairly widespread concern in many parishes, including our own, that this would mean the redirection of funds that might otherwise be used to grow and develop parish based ministry.

Fundamentally, it would appear that the Church of England, as we know it, would have no prime place in the new environment, which sees a *mixed ecology* emerging between traditional church and house groups. In fact, it could be argued that as the house groups would be lay led and non-sacramental, there is no actual need for the Church (and its various limiting factors) at all.

An umbrella body, entitled *Save the Parish* is in the course of being set up and I commend the material on its website www.savetheparish.org for your further reading and reflection.

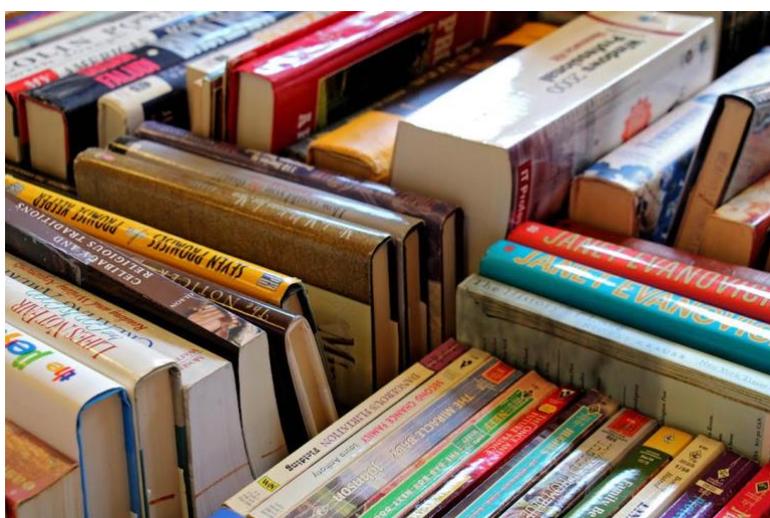
Confirmation



I shall be holding Confirmation classes during September and October, with a view to presenting candidates to the Bishop for Confirmation in the cathedral on Saturday 27th November, in the early evening.

If anyone is interested or would like to know more, please have a word with me or drop me an email.

Open Day and Book Sale



Our traditional Open Days with refreshments, stalls and a Book Sale resume on **Saturday 21st August at 10:30am – 4pm.**

During the lockdowns, we have received a number of books, including a small collection from the previous SPCK bookshop in Cambridge, so much of the stock has been refreshed and will be available for browsing and purchase.

Please have a word with the wardens if you can help with any aspect of the day's arrangements – including, but not just, the heavy lifting!

St Botolph's Rectory



St Botolph's Rectory, an imposing house of fine proportions in Summerfield, was built in 1934 on land bought by way of public subscription from Clare College. It has though not been lived in by the Priest in Charge or Rector for some 35 years.

Instead, it has become the home of the Archdeacon of Cambridge (was Ely) since the earlier times when Archdeacons Long and Walser in the 1970s and 1980s held a combined role of Archdeacon and Rector of St Botolph's.

However, the subsequent Archdeacon Watson held only the Archdeacon role, but still lived in the Rectory. This did not seem to much matter as my predecessor was quite content to continue to live in a property of his own nearby.

On the eve of my Institution and Induction as Rector, I was served, without prior warning or consultation, with a 28 days Notice by the Diocese seeking to transfer the Rectory formally to the Diocesan Board of Finance.

After consulting the PCC, the Norwich firm of Birketts Solicitors, was engaged to challenge the serving of this Notice, which they duly did successfully, on the basis that the Notice was invalid because it was not correctly drawn up legally. Rather than serve the incumbent with the correct Notice, we argued that we should be talking to one another, rather than serving statutory notices.

The Diocese has accepted this approach and at the time of writing, it is hoped to arrange a meeting between the Rector, Churchwardens, Treasurer and Patron with the Diocese in the near future.

The Diocese has made it clear that they wish for the Rectory to remain solely the abode of the Archdeacon. We have been advised legally that we cannot prevent the transfer of the Rectory (because its usage vests it with the Diocese, no matter the source of the initial funding) except by appeal to the Church Commissioners. We shall seek the commitment of the Diocese to provide alternative suitable accommodation for my successor within reasonable walking distance of the parish. If so, then an appeal to the Church Commissioners would have little chance of success. If not, then there will be a basis for an appeal, although the outcome would still be uncertain.

This matter has taken on an added significance with my approaching retirement. It would help enormously with the search for my successor if the role could at least be advertised on a House for Duty basis, rather than on a completely non stipendiary and no benefits basis, which will certainly limit the number of potential candidates.

Forthcoming services during August and until early October

Sunday 1st August – Ninth Sunday after Trinity

I I am Holy Communion – *with congregational hymns*
 Revd Margaret Widdess preaching

Wednesday 4th August

Compline by Zoom at 9pm

Sunday 8th August – Tenth Sunday after Trinity

I I am Mattins *with* Holy Communion – *with congregational hymns*
 The Very Revd Peter Judd, previously Dean of Chelmsford, celebrating and preaching

Sunday 15th August – Eleventh Sunday after Trinity

I I am Sung Eucharist – *with congregational hymns*
 Revd Dr Jonathan Holmes preaching

St Botolph's Choir returns

6pm Solemn Evensong for the Feast of the Blessed Virgin Mary

Full choral accompaniment, to include the Parsons, Ave Maria.

Fr Stephen preaching

Wednesday 18th August

Compline by Zoom at 9pm

Sunday 22nd August – Twelfth Sunday after Trinity

I Iam Mattins with Holy Communion

Clinton Collister preaching

Sunday 29th August – Thirteenth Sunday after Trinity

I Iam Sung Eucharist

Ben O'Neill preaching

Wednesday 1st September

Compline by Zoom at 9pm

Sunday 5th September – Fourteenth Sunday after Trinity

I Iam Sung Eucharist

Fr Stephen preaching

Sunday 12th September – Fifteenth Sunday after Trinity

I Iam Mattins with Holy Communion

Revd Dr Mark Smith, Dean of Chapel, Clare College, preaching

Wednesday 15th September kept as Holy Cross Day

Compline by Zoom at 9pm

Sunday 19th September – Sixteenth Sunday after Trinity

I Iam Sung Eucharist

Revd John Summers, Chaplain, Trinity College, preaching

6pm Choral Evensong

Preacher – *to be announced*

Sunday 26th September – kept as Michaelmas

I Iam Mattins with Holy Communion

Fr Stephen preaching

Wednesday 29th September

Compline by Zoom at 9pm

Sunday 3rd October – Harvest Thanksgiving
11am Sung Eucharist *followed by Harvest Lunch*
Fr Stephen preaching

Fr Stephen

Rector

Parish Church of St Botolph, Cambridge

30th July 2021