

The Hempnall Group of Parishes

Future arrangements

As we are all aware, we have been in clergy vacancy for some time now and future arrangements have needed to be considered in the context of a wider review involving all our neighbouring benefices in the Depwade Deanery. Our Parochial Church Councils were consulted late last year by the Archdeacon of Norfolk and our Joint Council, on behalf of the Group as a whole, submitted our views about possible options to the Diocese.

This week we have received a message from the Archdeacon about the outcome of consideration by the Bishop's Council of revised arrangements across the Deanery. We are very pleased to be able to announce that the option we put forward as our preference has been accepted and that as a result:

- the existing Brooke and Hempnall benefices are to be combined into a **new**, integrated benefice (name to be decided)
- this will be under the leadership of the Rev'd Lynn Chapman as Incumbent
- as part of the package for the new benefice there will also be a new part-time clergy post (called a 'House for Duty' appointment).

We had recommended this particular way forward because Brooke Benefice (located to the north-east of us and comprising Brooke; Kirstead; Mundham with Seething; and Thwaite) is similar to ours in many ways and we can envisage that this new venture will be a positive partnership.

We have also had considerable contact with Lynn during the past few months in her capacity as Rural Dean. Many of us will have met her at some of our services. To accompany this announcement, Lynn has kindly written an introductory letter, which is on p.2 overleaf.

The legal processes involved in changing boundaries etc will take a while but meanwhile the Archdeacon encourages us all to proceed to work together 'on the ground'. Accordingly, there will be various events and meetings in the near future to enable us to get to know each other and to start sorting out a range of practical issues. There will no doubt be challenges but with prayer and a positive approach we shall look forward to building a new benefice together.

So, as we digest this news **let us pray for the future**; for the opportunities we shall have to build on our history and strengths and to share and learn from the experience of others; and for the success of this new benefice in enabling us all to proclaim God's word and do God's work in this place.

If you have any immediate queries, please do contact us or your Churchwarden / Designated Person.

Liam Pilgrim and Jill Turner, Co-Chairs, Joint Council of the Hempnall Group, 1 February 2023

1st February 2023

Dear Friends,

I am delighted that we have reached a point where we can look to the future and pleased that the outcome of the Deanery Consultation has brought the Brooke and Hempnall Benefices together to form a new Benefice. I look forward very much to working with you in the coming months as we share in prayer, in discerning a vision and in getting to know one another better. Hopefully in the coming weeks we will be able to create opportunities to socialise and to listen to one another and share ideas about the mission, ministry and organisation of our new Benefice.

It has been a great pleasure to have the opportunity to lead your Sunday worship over the last few months and I have enjoyed getting to know some of you there. There will be others who have never met me and I look forward to meeting you as we move forwards together. To introduce myself a little....

I am a Norfolk girl and grew up in Wymondham. I went to school at both Wymondham High and Wymondham College. Wymondham Abbey was my home church and I went to Sunday School there and later became a Sunday School teacher. I became a chorister once girls were allowed to be part of the choir.

University took me north to Ripon, where I studied for a BEd in Theology and Religious Studies, qualifying as a secondary RE teacher. My first post was in Dover where I remained for several years. Having gained a Masters Degree in Curriculum Development (change management to everyone else!), I made the move to primary school teaching. I returned to Norfolk twenty years ago, taking up a teaching post in Bowthorpe where I specialised in working with children with behavioural challenges in mainstream education.

Returning to Wymondham meant a return to my beloved Abbey, where I quickly became Head Sacristan and then Churchwarden. It was during this time that my call to ordination, which had been around for a long time, became very clear and I was selected to train. I studied on the Eastern Region Ministry Course for three years, whilst teaching full time, and was ordained in 2011. I served my curacy in Sheringham before moving to become Priest-in-Charge of the Brooke Benefice in 2014.

My father lives in Wymondham and my brother is also in Norfolk. My sister and her family also live in Wymondham. I am a devoted aunt to Daniel (17) and Rebecca (15) and have had the joy of sharing in their upbringing. They spend a lot of time with me, especially in school holidays. Music is my most absorbing hobby. I play the piano and the organ, and I'm learning to play the cello. I love singing, dancing and acting and until very recently belonged to an amateur operatic company, taking part in annual shows. At home I knit, crochet, embroider and dress-make. I also love to bake and homemade cakes and biscuits have become part of my ministry.

Being a priest is a great privilege and one that brings new experiences every day. I particularly enjoy liturgy and like to spend time creating meaningful acts of worship. The Pastoral Offices are very important to me; they are very special opportunities to share the love of God with those who may have little contact with Church otherwise.

I am sure that the coming months will present us with some challenges as we all have to alter our expectations and imagine different ways of being Church but I look forward to serving you and sharing with you in all that God has planned for us.

This comes with my prayers for this new beginning and every blessing,

Lynn