

BELTISLOE DEANERY – FUTURE WORSHIP PATTERNS

May 2023

To: All Church Wardens
PCC Deanery Synod Representatives

Copies: Beltisloe Deanery Clergy
Beltisloe Deanery Readers & ALMs

From: Stephen Buckman, Beltisloe Deanery Rural Dean

1. Background – the need for change

At a national and local level, the Church of England is having to carry out its responsibilities with fewer stipendiary clergy. The Lincoln initiative to balance missionary objectives with available resources is called “Time to Change Together”. Other Dioceses have similar programmes.

Currently Beltisloe Deanery has 6 positions for paid priests. All our PCCs have been asked to forecast how much they are willing to contribute towards the stipends and living expenses of our priests. At the present time, the Beltisloe promises only cover the costs of 3 priests. This means changes to our Sunday worship patterns are inevitable.

2. Future Communication – right email addresses?

Over the next few weeks, we shall be sending out emails to our ministry teams and PCCs regarding the likely changes to worship patterns. So, a simple question:

“Have we got the right names and email addresses on our database?”

Please tell us of any changes using this email address: beltisloe@icloud.com
Help us share our messages with the appropriate people.

3. The immediate future – clergy will travel!

By August this year, as a result of retirements and job moves, the Beltisloe Deanery will have just three stipendiary priests (Anna Sorensen, Neil Bullen and myself). Fortunately, we are blessed to have the support of retired clergy and our team of lay ministers.

Anna, Neil and I have agreed to work closely together to help cover our regular worship plus weddings, baptisms and funerals. Inevitably, this will mean sharing time outside our current benefices. We also have a Deanery-wide ALM skills and capabilities database.

4. Next Steps – greater Deanery collaboration

Three important activities are currently in hand:

- Our lay ministry team is about to embark on a programme of discussion and training. This will involve regular meetings and appropriate courses. Their next meeting is on June 7th.
- A briefing meeting for churchwardens is planned for August 9th.
- A small team is developing a deanery wide Sunday service pattern. It will be built around the agreed Church types. The proposed rhythms will cover sacramental and other forms of worship.

The Clergy Chapter is overseeing this programme of activities.