



To
Churchwardens in Bedfordshire Archdeaconry
Those receiving Churchwarden mailings
Copied to clergy and PCC Secretaries for info

The Venerable Dave Middlebrook
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Dear Churchwardens

Election of Churchwardens for 2022-23, and Visitation Services *(are back!)*

Firstly, may I thank you for all that you have done in the last year as you and your church family have continued to cope with the many challenges that Covid, the ensuing restrictions, the many pastoral issues, and church finances, have placed on you all. I am so very thankful for your commitment to your communities and for the support you have given to your clergy.

I hope you have seen an email sent out (15th December 2021) by David White, our new Diocesan Secretary. The email reminded everyone of the various procedures relating to the preparation of the Electoral Roll, the Annual Parochial Church Meeting and the returns which need to be made after the meeting. This letter relates to part of that annual process, the election of Churchwardens.

In 2022, provided we are adhering to the latest government covid guidelines, Annual Parishioners Meeting (APM), and Annual Parish Church Meetings (APCM), can now happen with people physically present with one another and it is my hope that you will be able to do so in your parish. However, the Bishop of St Albans is making special regulatory provision for on-line meetings to take place where meeting in person is not possible. Further information can be found [here](#).

When you hold your parish annual meetings you will of course be electing your Churchwardens for 2022-2023. At that meeting, the Certificate of Election (of Churchwardens) should be completed and signed by the PCC Chair, or lay chair if in vacancy.

A blank Certificate for 2022 is attached to this email; the completed and signed form should be returned to my colleague Tricia Reed **within 7 days** of the meeting, via email to archdbedpa@stalbans.anglican.org. If this is not possible, please send the original documents to Tricia Reed, Archdeacon of Bedford's Office, 17 Lansdowne Road, Luton LU3 1EE. There is no need to send hard copies of documents if you have managed to send them electronically.

During the last two years, through the pandemic, we have necessarily changed the process for admitting Churchwardens into office, but this year we are returning to the practice of the

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Archdeacon admitting Churchwardens at a choice of three Visitation Services. Do please make every attempt to attend one of these services in order to ensure that you are able to carry out your role as Churchwarden.

You will be sent a separate email inviting you to register for one of these three options:

- St Augustine Luton on 29th June at 7.30pm
- St Andrew's Ampthill on Saturday 2nd July at 10am
- St Peter's Sharnbrook on Tuesday 5th July at 3pm

When you attend one of these services, you will be asked to sign a certificate of declaration and take an oath with all the other Churchwardens attending. If you have not experienced being admitted at a Visitation Service, I commend it to you as it is a powerful expression of service and faith. We will also offer light refreshments and an opportunity for you to meet informally someone from Emma Critchley's team who help with applications to the DAC, as well as someone from our Flourishing Churches Team, and Historic Churches representatives.

Throughout this year we are aiming to provide training to Churchwardens. The next online churchwardens training will be "Help I'm a (new) Churchwarden" and the dates for your diary are: 6th July (7.30pm), 12th July (7.30pm), and 19th July (2.30pm). This is aimed primarily at new churchwardens but will be a helpful reminder for long-standing and other churchwardens too so please put one of the dates in your diary and further details will be coming out in due course.

Thank you again for all that you do and please don't hesitate to contact Tricia or myself if you have any questions regarding this process, and, if you are stepping down as Churchwarden, please pass this email onto whoever will be taking your place.

God bless,

Venerable Dave Middlebrook
Archdeacon of Bedford