

Interregnum – a layman’s guide

Quite reasonably, there will be questions about this period in which the Team Rector role is vacant, and the process of appointing of a new Team Rector. The following addresses some of those FAQ’s:

Q Why appoint an Interim Team Vicar for Christ Church and St George’s for 18 months?

A The Team Vicar appointment is approved by the Team Rector so we are allowing time for that post to be filled first.

Q Could the appointment process for a new Team Rector have begun before the old Team Rector left?

A Considerable work was already undertaken in beginning to put together the Parish profile and our statement of needs, but we are legally prevented from seeking a replacement until the previous incumbent has left. Church of England reasoning:

- It prevents an over-reliance on the role of Rector in the congregations concerned
- It encourages the growth of lay ministry. The role of Rector is not equivalent to a CEO - it is equivalent to an elder in a royal priesthood / kingdom of priests (1 Peter 2:9, 5:1-4; Exodus 19:5-6).
- It prevents undue or damaging determination of the new Rectorship by the outgoing incumbent.
- It allows time for tackling the considerable challenge of leaving one position before beginning another, both for the outgoing rector and for the congregation(s)

Q What is the timetable for the appointment process?

A The whole process is designed to allow for prayer, reflection, and consultation, so is not to be rushed, although not to be delayed unnecessarily. We would hope that a new Team Rector might be in place by September, though there is a national shortage of suitable candidates for this kind of role. We hope and pray that Jesus will lead the right person to the role, but we must be prepared to wait, without there being a fixed timescale. This is a subject for earnest prayer, along the lines of the prayer Jesus commands us to pray in Matthew 9:38. This is by far the most effective means for congregation members to contribute to a smooth transition, and was Jesus’ means of appointing his apostles (Luke 6:12).

Key dates for information and prayer:

4 November	Section 11 meeting	Key items: The Parish Profile (the document of statement of needs and role description for the Team Rector) - will be discussed at this specially convened Parochial Church Council (PCC) meeting. Also, the PCC will seek to select the 2 lay parish representatives who, together with the Bishop, have a veto over any candidate proposed by the Patronage Board (see below). The Parish Wardens intend to propose that the District Wardens of St Mary’s be selected as the 2 lay parish reps as the Team Rector is the incumbent of St Mary’s.
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2 December	Section 12 meeting	The PCC meets with the Bishop and Patrons (parties with a
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historic 'say' in who is chosen) to exchange views on the Parish Profile, Advertising, Interviewing arrangements.

Advertising	7 January
Closing	6 February
Shortlisting	12 February
Interviews	4 March

Q Who will be selecting a new Team Rector?

A Interviews will be undertaken by the Patronage Board together with the 2 Parish Reps selected at the Section 11 meeting.

The Patronage Board is comprised of:

- Bishop Alan - represents the Diocese and chairs the Board (1 vote + casting vote)
- 2 Historic Patrons – CPAS and one other (1 vote each)
- John Shepherd - representing the Team Vicars (Jointly 1 vote)
- 3 lay members of the PCC selected from time to time (Jointly 1 vote)

On completion of the interviews the Board will vote and if appropriate 'propose' a candidate.

The 2 lay parish reps and the Bishop must be unanimous in accepting the proposed candidate as they each have a veto.

Q Who's in charge of the Parish while there is no Team Rector?

A. Jesus is in command of our parish and always has been! The legal responsibility for the Parish of Great Chesham lies with the Parish Churchwardens, Stuart Stockdale and Chris Embleton-Smith, supported by the Deputy Wardens (AKA District Wardens) in each District. The spiritual authority lies with John Shepherd for the Parish, along with the clergy and church leaders in the districts. When John is convalescing after his operation on 6th November, the Parish spiritual authority will shift to Josh Bailey for the duration of his recovery. Both the Archdeacon and the Area Dean will be providing final oversight and support throughout the period of vacancy.

For more information or any queries whatsoever please contact:

Stuart Stockdale – Email: stuartstockdale@live.com Tel. 01494 765892

Chris Embleton-Smith – Email: c.embleton@pastor-training.org Tel. 01494 783137

Grateful acknowledgement is made to Josh Bailey for much of the above in answer to a parishioners valued questions.

Dated 19.10.2019 and to be periodically updated as progress is made or further questions arise.