

West Dartmoor Vacancy News: 1

For anyone who has not yet heard our Rector Revd Preb Nick Shutt leaves us on 18 June to become Archdeacon of Plymouth. Revd Captain Gary Shirley had already announced that he was to retire from the end of August. This is great for both of them and we wish them well. News on how we can send the off in style will follow. This note begins the story of what happens next!

On 7 May 74 members of the West Dartmoor Community met with Bishop Nick Mckinnel at St Paul's to hear him explain the process for finding a replacement. It was a joyous and positive experience with a lot of talk of how far the Mission Community had come in forming strong links and joint activity and how much all wanted this journey to continue. A note of this meeting can be found on this website.

During the Vacancy formal responsibility for keeping the show on the road rests with the Churchwardens and Rural Dean: Revd Nick Law:

- The Mission Community Council will be meeting on 14 May to agree a little more detail on how this will work. We need to pin down how to carry out all the administrative tasks Nick and Gary have been doing until a new Rector joins us;
- This will be followed by PCC meetings across the Mission Community so reflection on how best to operate can be developed in a way which responds to wishes and concerns in all areas;
- The Clergy and Lay Readers we will still have will be meeting soon to consider how they can manage leading us in worship and in discipleship. We do not know yet whether we will be able to sustain our present pattern of services. Bishop Nick advised us not to be overambitious and to trim what we do to the resources available so that Clergy and Readers are not over committed. More news will follow in due course on what can be done.
- We will also be focussing on keeping other areas of work going such as "Open the Book" in schools, Discipleship groups, Pastoral work including visiting the sick and services in Briar Tor. Again more information will follow as these are settled. Many thanks to all those who are already volunteering to help keep all this running.

At the same time a project will be developed to appoint a New Rector. Much of this will be prescribed and run by the Diocese but PCCs have a statutory right to be involved and the arrangements for this will be developed urgently. This also involves responsibility for drafting the advertisement for a new Rector, called the Parish Profile.

We are advised not to advertise in the summer holiday season so will aim for September. Bishop Nick advised us that the earliest we could expect to have a new Rector would be Christmas, but it might well take longer. Buckland who have just appointed will have had a vacancy of nearly 12 months when their new person arrives.

In the meantime if you have any comments, queries, suggestions or worries please send them to Kathy Howard - howardsatbraemar@btinternet.com, or Richard Bayly – rdbayly@btinternet.com.

We will be providing regular updates like this on the website, and sending them to all Churchwardens so they can be read or shared in Church on Sundays.

Do please pray, for the process of recruitment that God may find for us a wonderful new Rector, for those who volunteer to help keep the show on the road, and for all of us as a Community that we may learn and develop during this period and deepen our strength as a Mission Community.