



Diocese of Liverpool

The Archdeacon of Wigan & West Lancs  
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**To the Parish of Burscough, St. John's Church**

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Greetings in the name of Jesus Christ, our Risen Lord.

I am writing on behalf of our bishops who wish you to know of their continued prayers for you all at this difficult time, during which I shall continue to be your appropriate point of contact. As such, on Sunday afternoon I and your Area Dean met with your churchwardens and curate to see how we might be most supportive. The conversation and time together praying was helpful and encouraging to us all. Coming out of that meeting are several points of information that we hope will be helpful to you to know.

In light of the death of The Revd Simon Glynn, your vicar, it is particularly important that you are aware of decisions as they are being made that affect the life of your parish. Understandably, many of you have raised questions about a variety of concerns. Our hope is to address the most pressing of those in this letter.

First, Simon's widow, Clare Glynn will remain in the vicarage for the near term. She is being afforded a few months' time to make her decision about where she would like to live and arrange her affairs accordingly. The Liverpool Diocese and Church of England are supporting her through this time and will aid her in her move when the time comes.

Next, your curate, The Revd Elliott Ireton, will remain at St. John's. We are committed to supporting this desire that is shared by Elliott, his wife, Jo, their children and the parish. The Revd Canon Duncan Petty, Area Dean for the Ormskirk Deanery (and a former curate at Burscough) will serve as Elliott's training incumbent. Our bishops and diocesan curacy team will monitor his training—as is done with all curates—to ensure that he is obtaining the experience that he needs from his curacy. And, as with all curates, as long as his training objectives are being met, he will continue in this cure.



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In regards to Elliott as curate—it is important to understand that he is not expected in any way to “fill Simon’s shoes.” Keeping this in mind will help everyone to have reasonable expectations for what Elliott is and isn’t able to take up at this point in his ministry as a transitional deacon, new to the parish. In addition to a curate, St. John’s is blessed with a wonderful team of retired clergy and lay worship leaders plus support personnel. All Sunday services and pastoral offices (including communion and baptisms, weddings and funerals) will be arranged and supplied appropriately. If additional help is needed, the Churchwardens and Area Dean together are sequestrators of all funds to aid in these instances. They are already working together to ensure provision is in place.

For the time being, all leadership decisions for the parish will be made by a small, cohesive team that includes your two churchwardens, Ian Hawksby and Caroline McCaul in consultation with your curate, Elliott Ireton. They will coordinate and communicate with the church staff, lay leaders, and PCC and ensure that correct information is made available to the congregation and parishioners in a timely manner. Please, if you have questions or concerns raise them with your Churchwardens to get proper answers and assistance.

The St. John’s PCC will next meet in September. The Area Dean will be present at that meeting to help sort and guide PCC members through the next steps to be taken. While there is no rush to make a decision, we anticipate at that meeting a discussion will take place regarding a time line for determining the process and timing of appointing a Vicar. In the meantime, we recognise that some of you are eager to keep moving forward enthusiastically in mission; others of you need time to get beyond the shock and sadness of having lost a popular Vicar. As St. Paul urges, our prayer and hope is that you may “Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love.” (*Ephesians 4:2*)

St. John’s is a resilient church full of the hope of the resurrection and of energy. We have complete faith that while offering comfort to one another now, in due time you will be back on your feet and moving forward in the power of the Holy Spirit. Simon’s vision was always to discern God’s vision and then once finding where God was leading, to join in. We want to encourage you to take up that task of discernment as the Body of Christ in Burscough, and as you have done for so long, to continue to follow where God leads you as the church in your local community, in the diocese, and in wider mission in the world.

May God bless you and keep you and may you know God’s peace,

**Jennifer McKenzie**  
**Archdeacon of Wigan and West Lancs**