

Statement from the Bishop of Peterborough

1. Dean to Retire in the Autumn

Our much-loved Dean, Charles Taylor, has given me notice that he will be retiring from the Deanery this autumn. His farewell service will be the Cathedral Eucharist on Sunday 2 October.

Charles is an excellent priest. He has given us all so much of himself. He is a man of the highest integrity and probity. His ability to hold so many things and so many people together is quite remarkable. His trademark humour is known throughout the Church of England. He has been a great friend to me, and a valued senior colleague.

Unfortunately Charles is unwell at present, but hopes to be back at work next week. We hold him in our prayers. I am appointing Canon Jonathan Baker as Acting Dean to cover this time of illness, Charles' holiday in August, and the forthcoming vacancy. I am grateful to him for agreeing to serve in this way. The process of appointing a new Dean will not begin until the autumn.

2. Cathedral Visitation

The Cathedral is going through a cash flow crisis. It is taking too long to pay some bills, and paying the staff at the end of the month has been a close thing twice recently.

I have decided to hold a formal Bishop's Visitation of the Cathedral. This gives me the power to bring in outside experts to report and advise: I am asking suitable people to investigate and report to me on the financial management and the overall governance of the Cathedral. A Visitation also gives me the power to give specific directions to the Cathedral Chapter and staff which they must follow: I will not hesitate to do that if I think it necessary.

I had already discussed the possibility of a Visitation with the Dean. He assured me of his goodwill and full agreement to this course of action, and that the Chapter would be happy to co-operate. The purpose of the Visitation is to solve current problems and prevent future ones, and the Cathedral leadership recognises that.

I am grateful to the Church Commissioners, who have responded speedily and generously to my requests for advice, support, and financial backup in this situation.

The Cathedral plays such an important role in the City and in the Diocese. I am fully confident that the current issues can be dealt with, and that we can put in place the right financial and management structures for a secure future.

+Donald

Bishop of Peterborough
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