

How can I help during the Vacancy?

You may be thinking that this information is not for you. This is, however, a time when the prayers and efforts of all the church are important.

Prayers

Please be faithful in praying for the church during the time of vacancy. Please remember Chris and the Churchwardens, the vacancy leadership team, those working on the parish profile, and all who have additional responsibility during this time. Please also pray that God will call the right person to be your new House for Duty priest and for wisdom in discerning this.

Working together

There will be increasing responsibility on many during this time of vacancy. It is helpful if people continue with their duties as much as possible. If you find you have some spare time on your hands, then it may be worth asking your Churchwardens whether there is anything additional that you might be able to do to support them during this time.

Reflections

Very soon, there will be consultation about your perception of priorities going forward that will feed into the building of a person specification for the new priest. Please pray and reflect upon this and pass any ideas to the Churchwardens.

A prayer for use during the vacancy

*God our Father, you have welcomed each one of us in Jesus and called us to be His body in this place:
Send your Holy Spirit at this time of uncertainty and change,
to fill us with vision, energy, and faithfulness in prayer,
that we may be true to our calling to bring new life to our community.
Give your heavenly wisdom to those who are to choose a new priest for this parish, that she or he may be a wise and gentle shepherd of your people, ready to serve us with joy, to build us up in faith and to lead us by example in loving obedience to your Son, Jesus Christ. Amen.*

The Archdeacons' Office
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Archdeacon's Newsletter October 2026

Dear Friends

The purpose of this newsletter is twofold.

Firstly, I wish to say a huge thank you to Fi, who has been Associate Minister at All Saints for over 6 years. During this time, she has made a huge contribution to the life and witness of the parish. We pray that Fi will know the Lord's richest blessing as she enters into this next season of discernment and a different shape of ministry.

Secondly, I want to take this opportunity to explain how the vacancy will be managed and how the process of appointing a new House for Duty Priest will work. You will see that inside there is a timeline of the important stages in this journey.

I look forward to working with Chris Bessant and the Wardens to make the best possible appointment. Please be assured of my care, prayers, and support during the coming months.

Every blessing

Catharine Mabuza
Archdeacon of Surrey



What happens when Fi leaves?

Who is in charge during the Vacancy? Following Fi's departure, the formal running of the parish and the legal responsibility will remain with Chris Bessant, Rector of Haslemere, and he will be assisted by the Churchwardens.

How does the parish function without a resident priest?

Most of the work will be coordinated by the vacancy leadership team who are accountable to the PCC. This will consist of the Churchwardens, administrator, treasurer, and others who share in ministerial and administrative support. It will meet regularly to ensure things continue as normal.

What if I have any questions during this period?

Please speak to the Churchwardens in the first instance. They will be able to direct you to the right person.

Who decides who our new Priest will be?

There are four people who will be on the formal interview panel:

- The Rector of Haslemere (Rev Chris Bessant)
- The Archdeacon of Surrey (The Venerable Catharine Mabuza)
- The two Parish Representatives (elected by the PCC)

Will there be consultation?

Yes. The most important work that needs to be done now is the putting together of a parish profile and person specification. This is the document that lays out our priorities for All Saints going forwards and the gifts that we seek in a new leader. The compilation of this document will be done by a small *Parish Profile Team* but following a process of wide consultation which will be facilitated by the diocese. There will also be an opportunity for the PCC and officers of the parish to meet shortlisted candidates and offer feedback.

What is the Timescale for all of this?

We attempt to be as efficient as possible and have already started to prepare for this process, and the following dates have been agreed.

<i>Archdeacon's meeting with the congregation</i> (to explain the process)	11 th October 2026
<i>Vacancy Vision Workshop</i>	24 th October 2026
<i>Final Draft of Parish Profile completed by</i> (stage at which most of the work is complete)	Early December
<i>Quasi "Section 11 Meeting"</i> (profile formally agreed and parish reps chosen)	Mid December
<i>Advertise Post: Associate Minister</i> (on the Diocesan website and in <i>Church Times</i>)	15 th , 22 nd , 29 th Jan & 5 th Feb '27
<i>Closing date for applications</i>	9 th Feb 2027
<i>Shortlisting via Teams</i> (Interview panel meets to shortlist candidates)	16 th Feb 2027 4.00pm
<i>Interviews</i> (held in the Parish over two consecutive days)	10 th & 11 th March 2027

The Bottom Line...

So when can we expect to welcome our new House for Duty Priest?

As soon as possible... but the process can't be rushed! If we are successful in appointing a new House for Duty Priest in March, we might expect an induction during July. The average time between interviews and a licensing (welcome service) is approximately 4 months. Do remember, too, that a panel can decide that God's person for the post is not amongst the shortlisted candidates. This can be disappointing. It is, however, important that the right person is appointed, even if it means re-advertising and waiting a little longer.