



Dear Friends,

I wanted to contact you all directly with an important update. Bishop Tim has today informed me that he will be stepping back from his role as Bishop of Winchester for the next six weeks, so that he can focus on discussions about future leadership and governance reform in the Diocese. I fully support his decision. Bishop Tim and Lambeth Palace have requested that, over this period, I temporarily take responsibility for the Diocese and I shall be working with the team at Wolvesey to ensure full continuity.

I realise that, even before today's news, this has been an enormously challenging 15 months for us all as a diocese and as a church - as it has been for the entire country. On behalf of Bishop Tim and the team, I wanted to thank you once again for all you have been doing for your parishes and your communities, in such trying circumstances. As the country begins to emerge tentatively from the long shadow of COVID-19, our anticipation continues to be tempered by necessary caution. We will, of course, continue to be led by Government and National Church of England guidance, so that we can all stay as safe as possible.

Finally, during these next weeks, every Monday morning at 9am from 24th May, I will be offering Diocesan Prayer on Zoom, with the exception of the Bank Holiday. You are very welcome to join me if you would like to do so, and further details will be circulated in due course.

With my prayers for you all,

Bishop Debbie

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