

To Churchwardens, Incumbents and Priests-in-Charge

**EVENSONG with the BISHOP'S VISITATION**

**Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> June 2026: 2:30pm for 3.30pm in Durham Cathedral**

**Delighted to inform you that Durham Cathedral is joined that day by Ripon Cathedral Choir for the service**

Dear Colleagues,

I am writing to invite all who have been elected as Churchwardens for 2026-2027 to the Bishop's Visitation in the Cathedral on Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> June at 3.30pm. At this event those elected as wardens make the public declaration that is necessary for them to take up the office of Churchwarden and are admitted to it.

The regulations that govern us as the Church of England require Churchwardens to make a spoken declaration at the service as well as a written one beforehand. Therefore, please return the enclosed written Declaration and the Certificate of Election to your Archdeacon's Office by 31<sup>st</sup> May.

When you send your written Declaration to your Archdeacon's PA please confirm that you are coming to the Visitation or send apologies. If you are not able to be with us on 14<sup>th</sup> June, please note that, legally, all elected Wardens have to be formally admitted to their office by 31<sup>st</sup> July. The Archdeacons of Durham and Sunderland will each offer an alternative date after 14<sup>th</sup> June to enable this, and will subsequently make arrangements for any who are unable to attend on any of the offered dates.

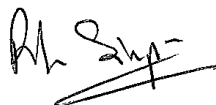
Clergy and lay ministers are warmly invited to attend the Visitation to support and pray for their Churchwardens (but will not be asked to robe). Do please come.

Will Churchwardens please register at the relevant Archdeaconry desk at the back of the Cathedral from 2.30pm, ready for a 3.30pm start.

Please will everyone note that there is no parking at the Cathedral but that it may be possible to assist people who have access needs and that people with a blue badge should contact [jill.chipchase@durhamcathedral.co.uk](mailto:jill.chipchase@durhamcathedral.co.uk) and the Cathedral will do its best to assist you.

I hope very much that you will be able to come to the Bishop's Visitation. I will have been installed as the new Bishop of Durham a week before and I am delighted to have this early opportunity to thank you for your service and pray with you for our churches to thrive in their worship, fellowship, ministry and mission. As I have said at many Archdeacon's Visitations in recent years, the role of Churchwarden is vital for the life and work of our churches. Parish churches cannot function without you; good team-work between wardens and clergy is always essential in healthy churches; and – as we know in times when the recruitment of clergy is really challenging – wardens often hold and care for churches through vacancies. I am therefore deeply grateful to you for taking this role. I hope to see you on 14<sup>th</sup> June.

With my very best wishes,



Rick Simpson  
Bishop of Durham Elect