



ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY

To the Diocese of Lincoln

LP Ref: +EI/EW76815

12 November 2021

Sisters and brothers in Christ,

Vacancy in the See of Lincoln

You will be aware that we have started the process for the appointment of your next bishop and thank you to those of you who have shared your hopes and prayers for the Gospel and for the witness of the Church of England across Lincolnshire through the various listening exercises.

Following a meeting with Bishop Christopher Lowson and a subsequent meeting with the Bishop's Staff team, I have asked Bishop Stephen Conway, Bishop of Ely, to be the Acting Bishop of Lincoln from the 1st January 2022. Stephen will be spending half of his time in Lincoln and the arrangement will be reviewed at the end of the year. This will mean a longer vacancy period than we had originally planned but we hope that a pause in the appointment process will provide some space and time to reflect on the longer term needs of the diocese. I am aware that you are in the middle of a challenging period of change as you explore what "Time to Change together – Resourcing Sustainable Church" might mean for your local church and the communities you serve. I think that exciting possibilities are beginning to emerge and it would be good to see how they come to life before the Crown Nominations Commission meets to consider an appointment.

Bishop Stephen is a wise and experienced senior bishop who will provide pastoral and spiritual leadership during this crucial time for discerning your future and the leadership that God will provide. I hope that Stephen will be able to come alongside you, to support and listen and to work with you to explore what the ministry of the next bishop might be and how this will enhance the calling of the diocese in the next chapter of its life.

As we approach this season of Advent and prepare for the transforming light of Christ let us be united in our confidence that through proper preparation and prayerful reflection God's will can be discerned and His ways fulfilled.

In Christ,

The Most Reverend and Right Honourable Justin Welby
Archbishop of Canterbury