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Dear Friends,

Priest-in-Charge: Coxfords and Toftrees

Thank you for your interest in this post. We seek God's wisdom and grace to discern the person being called to this role, just as we are sure that you too seek God's call for your future ministry. I hope that reading the profile, accompanying material and these notes will assist you in that process.

The benefice earnestly desires to grow in faith, in outreach and community service, and in the size of the worshipping community. This has been hard during a longer vacancy than any of us would have liked. However, the parishes have worked well together and remain committed to doing so.

Norfolk is both blessed and burdened with wonderful historic buildings whose maintenance is costly. However, the lay people of these parishes are, committed to leading in the care of the buildings. A major National Lottery grant has just been secured for Toftrees church so that necessary work can take place there. There have also been recent significant Heritage Fund grants for the care of St Martin's, South Raynham and the ruins of St Margaret's in West Raynham. Building care should not fall therefore on the new parish priest, whose support and involvement will, of course, be essential. The cost of buildings does, of course, impact the financial resource available for mission and ministry. Nevertheless, there are generous individuals within the benefice and many more, I suspect, who would contribute to the life of a church whose priest placed it at the centre of village life through outreach, seasonal, excellent and accessible worship and pastoral care.

The Parishes and this ministry

There are eight parishes in the Coxfords Group, plus Toftrees : East Raynham, West Raynham, South Raynham, East Rudham, Tattersett, Tatterford, Helhoughton and Houghton, with Toftrees in the process of formally joining the Group. The population of the benefice is small, with a combined total of under 3,500 across all the parishes.

You will see from the profile that the parishes have expressed their commitment to working with their new priest. You will be a person of wisdom and patience, working with the parishes in

prayerfully discerning and implementing vision and a new future. However, in rural ministry, the old ways remain good and much that is traditional in parish life will be part of the future to which the parishes look forward. The Diocese of Norwich's vision is to be Transformed by Christ: Prayerful, Pastoral, Prophetic. A vision of parish ministry forming a prayerful people in the congregations, exercising pastoral care in the communities and reaching out to those who are deprived and marginalised, would fit well with the ethos of the benefice profile.

The profile indicates that a new house is being purchased. This has now happened so that the new parish priest will enjoy high quality accommodation in a good location.

This Diocese and Deanery

The Diocese of Norwich has embraced the national church's three strategic aims and are currently focusing on developing a younger and more diverse church, with a parish system revitalised for mission so that churches can reach and serve everyone in their community. We believe that this is the kind of mission which will resonate with our rural benefices, including the Coxford Group, and enable priests and people across the Diocese to work to a common end.

The Coxford Group and Toftrees fall within the Archdeaconry of Lynn, and so under the care of the Bishop of Lynn and the Archdeacon of Lynn. The benefice is in the Burnham & Walsingham Deanery. The Rural Dean is the Revd Clive Wylie. Attendance at Deanery Synod and Chapter is an expectation, and all diocesan clergy are encouraged to give some part of their time and energies to the wider life of the Diocese.

Housing

The accommodation provided is described in the profile for the Benefice. Questions about the house should be directed to the Archdeacon of Lynn, The Venerable Catherine Dobson:
archdeacon.lynn@dioceseofnorwich.org

Enquiries, Applications and Interviews

Any priest wanting an informal discussion before deciding whether to apply is welcome to be in touch by telephone or e-mail with the Archdeacon. Completed application forms are to be submitted to:

Mrs Ann Whittet (PA to the Bishop and Archdeacon of Lynn), the Bishop's Office, Lynn House, Commercial Road, Dereham NR191AE by noon on Friday 20th June.

With grace and peace,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Jane Steen', with a stylized flourish at the end.

The Rt Revd Dr Jane Steen, Bishop of Lynn