



17th September 2024

Dear all

As you may have realised, it is now over a year since my installation, induction and licensing as Rector of the Elmete Trinity Benefice. It has been quite a year! When I started, I indicated an intention not to make any significant changes for the first year, as I wanted to see how everything worked in the individual churches and how things fitted together across the Benefice. Now that I have been through a full-year cycle, I have been able to reflect on what works and what could be changed to make ministry more effective.

I hope that you realise by now that I have a passion for growth, both in numbers in our congregations, and in the spiritual life of the members of all three churches. I hope that you also realise that I have a genuine and heartfelt connection with the people of All Saints. Unfortunately, as much as I would like to be, I cannot be in three places at once. I would like to be at All Saints more often as much as anything else, but some months I am only able to be there for perhaps one 10:30am service, which doesn't seem to me to offer the opportunities for mission and growth here that I would ideally like.

On that basis, I have the support of the PCC to revert the main Sunday service at All Saints back to starting at 11am starting in the New Year. I have thought long and hard about this and feel that there are many advantageous reasons for this move which are appropriate and indeed beneficial, and I'd like to share these with you:

- It will allow me to take more than one service on a Sunday in the Benefice, and I will be there at every Eucharistic Service at All Saints, unless I am on holiday.
- There will be no reliance on visiting Priests (unless I'm on holiday) in any of the three churches. Increasingly it is more difficult to get visiting priests due to their dwindling numbers and their commitment to the many places in vacancy in our diocese. This will result in a financial saving as well.

- I *could* come to every service at All Saints if required, which would enable me to be at the occasional non-Eucharistic services and be available to be present and part of the Thanksgiving services.
- It would allow extra Communion service at St Philip's (they only have one at present).
- I sincerely believe that it is the best workable solution for me as the only available priest, and for the Benefice which only has one available priest. Without this change, I fear that my ministry would become less effective.

For the avoidance of doubt, the Wednesday Communion will remain at the current time of 10:30am.

I hope that the above demonstrates that if we were to change the service time, it would be done for the best reasons and based entirely on prioritising mission and growth. I would, of course, be happy to have a chat with you if you have any concerns or comments.

Every blessing.

Revd Jonathan Brennan