

The Rt. Rev'd Dr Jane Steen
Bishop of Lynn
Lynn House, Commercial Road,
Dereham, NR19 1AE
01362 709200
bishop.lynn@dioceseofnorwich.org

PA: Mrs Ann Whittet
ann.whittet@dioceseofnorwich.org

March 2025

The Church in the Woottons – Priest-in-Charge

Dear Colleague,

Thank you for your interest in discerning a call to The Church in the Woottons benefice. These notes are intended to supplement the information given in the Profile, adding a slightly wider perspective and some further information.

The Parishes and this job

You will see from the parish profile that The Church in the Woottons wants to be active in welcome and in mission: in welcoming people to the love of the Lord and including them in the household of faith, and in reaching out to the new housing being built within the benefice. Both buildings have good facilities and both churchyards are (unusually for Norfolk) closed for burials although open for the interment of ashes. The benefice is one of the more affluent in north west Norfolk, and the most affluent in the Deanery.

The previous incumbent was in post for fourteen years and continues to live in the area. He pioneered many good initiatives, including the ecumenical co-operation which led to the establishment of the King's Lynn Nightshelter. The benefice is now ready for a new incumbent to encourage deeper faith and commitment to the Lord, a refreshing of the Christian life and mission of the benefice and new ways to serve the benefice which will attract younger and newer residents. Currently, there are services at either one of the two churches or the other on a Sunday and this, together with the possibility of an evening service, is something which might be revisited as the parishes seek to 'proclaim afresh' the gospel in the area.

The affluence of the benefice is noted in the profile, as indeed is the fact that parish share has become more challenging. The congregations are alert to their predominantly white and middle-class backgrounds and very open to the need for this to change. The Queen Elizabeth Hospital (in Gaywood benefice in the Deanery) attracts world-class medical professionals from the world over and is one reason why the wider area is more diverse than the church congregations reflect. This, too, going forward, is something to consider in the mission of The Woottons.

Diocese and Deanery

The Norwich Diocesan Vision is to be Transformed by Christ: Prayerful, Pastoral, Prophetic. The next incumbent of The Church in the Woottons will be one who rejoices in this vision and seeks to make it a reality in the life of the people of the parishes. In terms of the national Church of England vision and strategy, we are working for 'a parish system revitalised for mission so that churches can reach and serve everyone in their community'. This will be the way in which Norfolk parishes can play their part in

enabling a younger and more diverse church of missionary disciples in which the kind of mixed ecology already at work in The Woottons becomes the norm. We are seeking to raise lay and ordained vocations and a future incumbent who can encourage lay ministry would be very welcome. The Diocese has Licensed Lay Ministers but also Authorised Worship Assistants and latterly, Authorised Pastoral Assistants. These are discerned and trained at benefice level and can often be the first step towards other ministry.

As indicated above, the Diocese of Norwich's vision is to be Transformed by Christ: Prayerful, Pastoral, Prophetic. You can find out more information about this on the diocesan website. Please see: <https://www.dioceseofnorwich.org/about/vision/>. We are in the process of discerning the appropriate strategy which, by the grace of God, will help us to realise this vision across the Diocese in its varied geographies. Norwich is geographically large and predominantly rural diocese, but we also have significant market and large towns including King's Lynn, the city of Norwich and glorious coastal benefices. The Woottons are only a short drive from the coast, and about twenty minutes to Snettisham with its beautiful beach and amazing birdlife.

The benefices fall within the Archdeaconry of Lynn, and so under the day-to-day care of the Bishop of Lynn (The Rt Revd Dr Jane Steen) and the Archdeacon of Lynn (The Venerable Catherine Dobson). The benefice is in the Lynn deanery whose Rural Dean is The Revd Canon Karlene Kerr, incumbent of St John's, King's Lynn, Bishop's Adviser for Racial Justice and diocesan lead for the implementation of *From Lament to Action*.

There are 8 posts of incumbent status in the Deanery including one Team Vicar, along with 2 Assistant Curates (one in post now and one to be ordained at Petertide), 1 Assistant Priest, 5 Licensed Lay Ministers (Readers) 8 PTO clergy and 3 Authorised Worship Assistants.

The Woottons has been a training benefice in the recent past (the current incumbent of Snettisham trained here) and we would welcome an incumbent of the calibre to train future curates. 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. Questions about the house should be directed to the Archdeacon of Lynn.

Patronage

The Lord Chancellor

The Baron Howard of Rising

The closing date for applications is Wednesday 14th May (9.00am) with interviews being held on Wednesday 18th June.

Any priest wanting an informal discussion before deciding whether to apply is welcome to be in touch by telephone or e-mail with me or with The Archdeacon of Lynn. We can be contacted via our PA, Mrs Ann Whittet by email at ann.whittet@dioceseofnorwich.org.

Grace and peace,

Yours,



The Rt Revd Dr Jane Steen

