

ST MARY MAGDALENE & ST DENYS PASTORAL CARE POLICY

Introduction

Pastoral care is the responsibility of all Christians. Much pastoral care occurs in the Church in an informal and unofficial way as Christians seek to help in practical ways and to encourage one another in the faith.

Formal or official pastoral care is carried out by Church representatives on behalf of the Church community.

Those licensed to administer Home Communion are acting on behalf of the church whenever they are engaged in that work. Those who are Pastoral Care Visitors are acting in an official capacity when they are asked by the Vicar or Pastoral Care Coordinator to undertake pastoral visits. They would not be acting as official representatives of the church if they decided of their own volition to visit one of their friends within the church community.

Members who are ill, housebound or in hospital should be offered visits from the Pastoral Care Visiting Team. It is important that every member of the church understands their duty to report to the Vicar or Pastoral Care Coordinator those members who need a pastoral visit.

Practice for Pastoral Care Visitors

Bereavement, baptism and marriage visits are typically carried out by ministers, both licensed and under a permission to officiate (PTO), but such visits may be undertaken by members of the church community who are authorised, trained and invited to do so by the incumbent.

Safeguarding: Pastoral Care Visitors must always be aware of the safeguarding policy and procedures adopted by the PCC and maintain appropriate boundaries.

Visiting: Much pastoral care will be in the form of a visit but there are times when telephone calls, emails, texts, cards or other written communications are appropriate.

Prayer: Pastoral care needs to be rooted in a life of prayer. Pastoral Care Visitors should pray regularly for those to whom they are offering pastoral care and pray for help and guidance in delivering that care. Prayer should be offered at the visit, usually at the end; only offered and never imposed.

Listening: listening well is fundamental to all pastoral care.

Confidentiality: whatever a Pastoral Care Visitor is told must be treated with respect and usually kept confidential. However, if a safeguarding concern arises or a disclosure is made then safeguarding procedures must be followed.

Respect: Pastoral Care Visitors must respect the person being visited and the views of every person to whom they provide pastoral care.

Length of visit: it is good practice to suggest how long the visit might be and check that it is convenient for the other person.

Record of visit: after each visit made the pastoral care coordinator or vicar must be informed, giving only the date and name of the person visited. A note of the visit will be stored in parish records. Visits will only be undertaken alone where the safety of the visitor is deemed to be secure. Church contact forms may be taken to new people.

Selection and Induction: Pastoral Care Visitors will be selected and invited to join the Pastoral Care Visitor Team by the Vicar after consultation with members of the Pastoral Team. The Parish 'Safer Recruitment Process' will be followed including the taking up of references, DBS certification and safeguarding training as required.

Signed Date