

The Church of St Paul, Bedford

Provision of High Mass sets in green and purple

Statement of Needs

A. General Information

St Paul's is set within the busy county town of Bedford. The Electoral Roll numbers c150 and regular Sunday congregations number c95 -120 The church is the focus for special services, commemorations, exhibitions and concerts.

St Paul's Church is located on St Paul's Square in the town centre of the market and county town of Bedford. The very large building of cathedral proportions with its iconic spire dominates the town and is the largest Anglican parish church in Bedfordshire. The church is open every day between 10 and 4pm and the church exercises a ministry of welcome to more than 10,000 visitors and pilgrims outside of services, from far and wide each year, resourced by a voluntary team of welcomers.

St Paul's the Civic Church of the Borough of Bedford and the County of Bedfordshire; it is a focus for special commemorations and celebrations in the borough, county, and the wider region of the East of England, as well as being a central venue for concerts, recitals and exhibitions. Attendances at special services frequently number c 500.

The Eucharist is celebrated at the nave altar on every Sunday except the third when a full Choral Eucharist is celebrated at the High Altar. Compline and Choral Evensong take place in the quire or chancel on three out of every four Sundays. The Eucharist is presently celebrated on three days in the week, each celebration attracting a regular congregation of between 3 and 24. The congregation is essentially gathered, many members travelling some distance into Bedford to worship at St Paul's.

A new vicar (with professional experience and qualifications as a musician and liturgist) was appointed in 2014 who is encouraging both traditional and accessible Eucharistic worship, with a commitment to the highest standards of music and liturgy as well as to mission and outreach in the community.

Funding for this project has been promised by two individuals and the Friends of St Paul's have agreed to underwrite the project by funding the balance. The project has the unanimous support of the PCC.

B. The needs

It cannot be overstated that the distinctive liturgical and musical tradition of St Paul's is one of the church's 'Unique Selling Points'. It is a main reason why the regular congregation choose to worship with us and this tradition is seen as a major attraction for those in the county and region requesting special services. Adequately resourcing and facilitating this tradition is a top priority for

the Vicar and PCC. Indeed, we feel it is essential if the church is to survive and flourish in the future.

We wish to develop and enrich this liturgical tradition. However we do not presently have High Mass sets in the remaining seasonal colours and now need to remedy this.

C. The proposal

We propose:

1. One High Mass set of three vestments with appropriate stoles in Green/Gold St Margaret damask; with orphreys 3 1/2" (9 cm) wide including braids. Orphreys to be made in Red/gold St Margaret damask and edged with St Benet Gold braid. All vestments to be lined in gold.
 - a. Full gothic chasuble, in the above materials, to be made not less than 47" (120cm) wide; and not less than 44" (112cm) long measure from the top of the shoulder seam to its lowest point (foot) Matching priest's stole
 - b. Gothic dalmatic in the above materials, with 'H' pattern orphreys with double horizontal 'bars'. Matching deacon's stole
 - c. Gothic tunicle in the above materials, with 'H' pattern orphreys with single horizontal 'bar'.
 - d. A second tunicle for use by the crucifer

2. One High Mass set of three vestments with appropriate stoles in Violet/Purple St Margaret damask; with orphreys 3 1/2" (9cm) wide including braids. Orphreys to be made in Blue/gold St Margaret damask and edged with St Benet Purple/Gold braid or Blue/Gold braid. All vestments to be lined in blue.
 - a. Full gothic chasuble, in the above materials, to be made not less than 47" (120cm) wide; and not less than 44" (112cm) long measure from the top of the shoulder seam to its lowest point (foot). Matching priest's stole
 - b. Gothic dalmatic in the above materials, with 'H' pattern orphreys with double horizontal 'bars'. Matching deacon's stole
 - c. Gothic tunicle in the above materials, with 'H' pattern orphreys with single horizontal 'bar'.
 - d. A second tunicle for use by the crucifer

Please see attached images for swatches of the fabrics proposed, and also a specimen of the style of dalmatic (in white).

We have considered the worship needs of the church and feel there is no alternative but to acquire the remaining high mass sets if there is to be a consistency of approach to our liturgical pattern and practice.

Section D Support and Practicalities

Apart from infrequent cleaning maintenance and upkeep is expected to be absolutely minimal.

E: Impacts and Significance.

The Statement of Significance highlighted the place of St Paul's as a Major Parish Church within the Borough, County and Diocese with historical and national significance, recognised by membership of the *Major Churches Network*, This liturgical tradition also draws in many visitors to services from well beyond the parish boundaries and is one of our 'Unique Selling Points' and seen as a key part of our mission.

This proposal will enhance both the Eucharistic worship at St Paul's, and is viewed as affording a positive impact upon the visitor and regular worshipper, both architecturally and aesthetically: being especially consistent with St Paul's historic architecture and decoration. These vestments will also provide beauty and enhance the liturgical composition of the church, complementing the existing furniture and fittings. We anticipate little or no negative impact upon the church building or its fabric in this proposal.

We warmly and wholeheartedly commend this proposal for consideration, approval and implementation.