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To our Beloved in Christ at Christ Church Selly Park,

We wanted to write to you to say that you are very much in our thoughts and prayers at this time. We know that this has been a difficult season for you, bringing hurt and sadness. There is much to carry, much to make sense of, and much that remains uncertain as you look to the future.

We are praying for healing where there has been hurt, for grace where there is weariness, for peace where there is anxiety, and for a renewed sense of God's presence and faithfulness among you. We pray, too, for the future of Christ Church: that, in time, there may be fresh joy, renewed confidence, and a deepening sense of God's call and purpose for this community. We pray for strength for today and bright hope for tomorrow, trusting that God is faithful in every season, even when the way ahead is not yet clear.

We want to offer our heartfelt thanks to everyone who has stepped in and stepped up in recent weeks and months. To those who have taken on extra responsibilities, kept things going, cared for one another, prayed, offered encouragement, or simply continued to turn up faithfully: thank you. So much of what sustains a church happens without fanfare or recognition, but none of it is insignificant. Your faithfulness is seen and deeply appreciated.

Please know that you are not forgotten. Not by God, whose love for you is steadfast and whose grace is sufficient for each new day; nor by us, your bishops, who continue to hold you and the whole Christ Church community in our prayers.

We hope that, in the days ahead, there will be space for prayer, patient listening, and what may prove to be the slow and sometimes fragile work of healing. There is no need to hurry that work. Trust in the God who makes everything beautiful in its time.

Meanwhile, the vacancy process will continue to unfold, and we will work and pray with you for the right person, at the right time, to lead you into all that God has in store for you.
May the Lord bless you and keep you. May he give you courage for the road ahead, comfort in the days that are hard, and glimpses of the hope and joy that lie before you. And may Christ, who is our peace, hold you all in his love.

With our love, our prayers, and our every blessing,

+Michael Birmingham

+ Aston

The Rt Revd Dr Michael Volland
Bishop of Birmingham

The Rt Revd Esther Prior
Bishop of Aston