

Jonathan confirmed as Bishop of Portsmouth

THIS was the moment when the Rt Rev Jonathan Frost legally became the tenth Bishop of Portsmouth.

His new role was confirmed at a legal ceremony in London, at which he was formally given spiritual responsibility for our diocese. The Archbishop of Canterbury also gave him a special charge, urging him to share the gospel and to proclaim the hope of Jesus – to those inside and outside our churches.

The confirmation of election service took place in St Mary-le-Bow, Cheapside, famous for its ‘Bow Bells’ and used for such legal ceremonies because it was built on top of the Court of Arches, the ecclesiastical court for our province of the C of E. Family, friends, representatives from our diocese and cathedral, and from Bishop Jonathan’s previous role as Dean of York Minster, attended.

Among those taking part in the legal ceremony was Bishop Jonathan’s daughter Hannah, who has recently qualified as a solicitor. Her role was as advocate for her father. It was a proud moment for her and for her family.

The service began with the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Most Rev Justin Welby inviting Bishop Jonathan to re-affirm the promises he made at his consecration, including being diligent in prayer, promoting unity, peace and love, and being a faithful witness to Christ. The Bishop of London, the Rt Rev Sarah Mullally led the Litany of Prayer, and hymns were sung.

The vicar general then introduced



The Archbishop of Canterbury with Bishop Jonathan Frost at St Mary-le-Bow

the legal ceremony, which included our diocesan registrar producing letters patent from HM the Queen, Bishop Jonathan swearing specific oaths on the Bible, and a formal decree that gave him spiritual responsibility for our diocese.

Archbishop Justin then addressed Bishop Jonathan directly, saying: “As bishop, you will proclaim the hope of Jesus Christ and share this with all those who have not heard. You’ll share in the collegiate leadership of the Church of England, discerning the future shape of ministry in the Church of England, as we live out our vocations.

“As Bishop of Portsmouth, you will share the gospel with those in and outside the Church, encouraging other disciples to be bold in living and sharing their faith and refreshing the ministry of God’s Church. You will lead a journey of

transformation, holding together those who support change and those who do not. You will work in partnership with secular agencies, responding to economic and social challenges. And you have a particular accountability for ensuring that the Diocese of Portsmouth is a safe space for all, with the highest standards of safeguarding. May the Lord of Heaven and Earth give you strength to perform these things.”

On Saturday 12th March, he will be formally installed in our cathedral at a special service starting at 3.30pm. Dignitaries, community leaders, representatives from our parishes and schools, family and friends will all be invited.

For details of how to attend or to livestream the service – and to see photos of it afterwards – see www.portsmouth.anglican.org