

My dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ

3 March 2026

The Rt Revd Andrew Watson, Bishop of Guildford

It is with very deep sadness that I write to inform you of the death of our beloved Bishop Andrew. Following his diagnosis of inoperable pancreatic cancer last month, he entered into his eternal rest this morning, Tuesday 3 March, at his home, Willow Grange, in the presence of his much-loved family.

Words are inadequate to articulate the sense of loss marked by Bishop Andrew's death. I have expressed our deepest sympathy, together with the assurance of our love and prayers, to Beverly, Hannah, Sam, Joe, Lydia and the whole family. And whilst they mourn the loss of a much-loved husband, father, grandfather, son and brother, we mourn the loss of a much-loved diocesan bishop – as well as an inspiring fellow disciple, dear brother in Christ, precious friend and special colleague.

In the midst of the shock and sadness of the last few months, Bishop Andrew has been an inspiration. For me, personally, he has taught me so much about how we should live and, in these past months, about how we should die. In a last email to his leadership team, he ended with some words from 2 Corinthians 4:16: *'So we do not lose heart. Even though our outer nature is wasting away, our inner nature is being renewed day by day. For our slight, momentary affliction is producing for us an eternal weight of glory beyond all measure, for we look not at what can be seen but at what cannot be seen, for what can be seen is temporary, but what cannot be seen is eternal'*. Of the many memories that I shall treasure of Bishop Andrew, the primary one will be his total commitment to and trust in Jesus Christ, his Lord and Saviour. I know, without any doubt, that in the midst of our grief, he would want me to point us all, as a diocese, to Jesus as our source of comfort, hope, salvation and strength.

There will, of course, be opportunity in the weeks ahead to give proper thanks for Bishop Andrew's life and ministry. I will inform you of arrangements for his funeral and thanksgiving as soon as they have been made. Meanwhile, I ask that you hold Beverly and the whole family in your prayers as they come to terms with their loss. Please be assured that in these months ahead I, with the Bishop's Leadership Team, will give our very best, in the strength of the Holy Spirit, to love, lead and care for the Diocese of Guildford in the way in which Bishop Andrew did with such commitment and devotion.

The Cathedral will be open for prayer tomorrow and Thursday, from 8.00am until 8.00pm and I have written a prayer that you may like to use in your churches this Sunday.

*Heavenly Father, we give you thanks for Andrew, our brother and bishop:
for his faith and faithfulness to you in life and in leadership.
As we mourn his death and commend him to your everlasting arms,
give us the same faith, hope and love rooted in the death and resurrection of your son, Jesus.
We pray especially for Beverly, Hannah, Sam, Joe, Lydia and the whole family.
Comfort them with your Holy Spirit and protect them in their grief.
And bring us, at the last, with Andrew and all your children,
to that eternal joy where you live and reign in glory forever,
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*

With love in Christ and prayers,

