

Benefice of Waterfall



St James and St Bartholomew, Waterfall



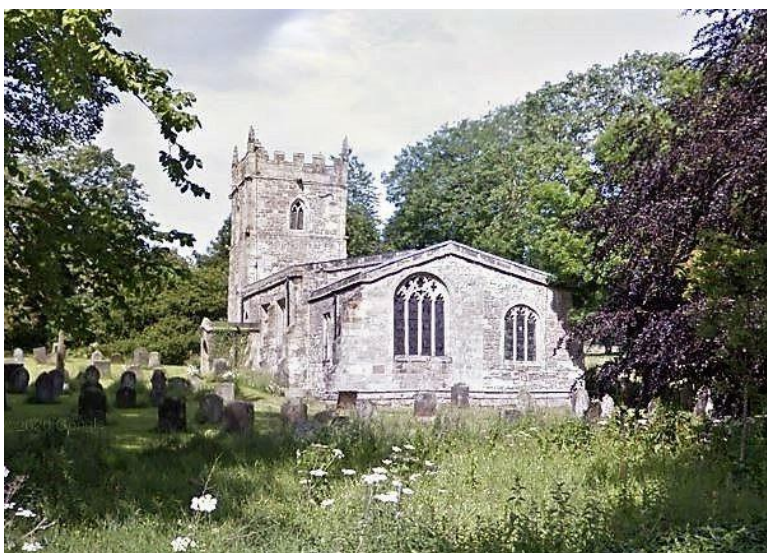
St Mary & St Lawrence, Cauldon



All Saints, Grindon



St Mary the Virgin, Calton



Saint Bartholomew's, Blore

Contents

Who might God bring?

Introducing our Benefice

The Alstonefield Deanery Rural Mission Area

The Vicarage

Waterfall

Grindon

Calton

Cauldon

Blore

Appendix



Who might God bring?

We are looking for a Rector who:-

- Is excited to work collegially with deanery colleagues in the new Rural Mission Area.
- Will help our parishes work closely together with parishes across the deanery
- Support our local primary school and take regular assemblies and nurture our young people
- Is committed to our young families and encourage them into regular worship
- Understands the challenges of a rural ministry
- Will help us develop new styles of worship
- Will go into the wider community of the Methodist church and church halls
- Will support our ageing community
- Has a great sense of humour, energy & enthusiasm for this position
- Stay! and offer us a sense of stability

In return we can offer:-

- Friendship and communion
- Support and encouragement
- Openness to new ideas
- Supportive and well-run PCC's
- Experienced and friendly members
- Communities that offer support to their church
- A good house
- Full expenses and a respect for the part-time nature of the role
- A strong and supportive clergy team in the deanery
- Support and enthusiasm for the new plan for the deanery



Introducing our Benefice

Welcome to our Benefice! We are so pleased that you may be interested in this role and warmly invite you to have a good read and reflection whether you may be being called to consider joining us on our journey of cherishing and nurturing faith in our little villages.

Nestled on the southern edge of the Peak District National Park in the North Staffordshire moorlands, Waterfall Benefice is made up of 5 parishes; Blore, Calton, Waterfall, Cauldon and Grindon. These are small rural, close-knit communities with a strong agricultural tradition and a deeply shared Christian connection between them, but also individually different in terms of their geography, size and unique setting. All are within easy reach of the market towns of Leek and Ashbourne, and the larger cities of Stoke and Derby, and surrounded by breathtaking upland limestone scenery on all sides. We have a reasonable bus service linking the towns and the ever-popular Moorlands Connect' supports those who live where there is scant public transport. Rail services are excellent with main line connections in Stoke, Macclesfield, Buxton and Derby, all within 20 miles and East Midlands Airport within easy reach.

With our Benefice in a tourist hotspot we are lucky to have many local attractions such as Dovedale, Churnet Valley, Rudyard Lake, Tittesworth Reservoir, Alton Towers and many more on our doorstep.

The downside of rural living however is that our church numbers are dwindling; young families with busy lives, elderly people becoming house-bound and isolated. The recent cost of living crisis has also hit hard in some places, resulting in a food bank at Cauldon Church. Currently the Benefice is largely traditional in its approach to worship, with the Book of Common Prayer still very much in use. We are looking to be able to provide a more "mixed diet" of worship, where congregations can be offered a wider choice of styles and forms of worship, and opportunities to develop new approaches, without losing the treasured access to BCP worship.



The Roaches, Staffordshire,
Staffordshire Wildlife Trust



Stepping Stones, Dovedale,
Neil Jackman for the National Trust

The Alstonfield Deanery Rural Mission Area



The group of churches in this profile make up the Alstonfield Deanery which covers a beautiful part of the south Pennines and Peak Park, with 19 churches and 6 church schools spread a geographical area larger than Liverpool and a population of just under 6,000 people (a small town). We are at a unique time in the life of our deanery as we implement the next phase in our Deanery Shaping Mission Plan where we move to become a Deanery Mission Area, working as a collaborative Ministry Team.

Clergy will continue to have prime responsibility for their own parishes but also be licensed across the deanery, building a strong ethos of working together in mission, and sharing skills and resources. The relationship between the parishes and benefices is growing as they work together towards a healthy future. Each family of churches is grouped together to ensure a fair and equal population and workload for each of the clergy in the team. This new approach allows us to work together, sharing skills and resources, to enable all our parishes to grow and thrive, share what we do well, find solutions to problems together and support each other.

There are 4 clergy posts in the deanery – 2 Full Time and 2 House for Duty. No specific Deanery portfolio is allocated to this House for Duty post, enabling the post holder to primarily focus on being a parish priest, sustaining and growing ministry and mission in their own group of villages, but areas of interest can be developed if desired. It is anticipated that the parish of Blore Ray, currently in the Waterfall Benefice, will receive pastoral care and leadership from the Vicar of the Alstonefield, Ilam and Wetton, to ensure equity of responsibilities in the team roles.

The collaborative style of working in the Deanery would ensure that a 0.2 Rector would be supported in making the most effective use of the time available to them for an effective, creative and responsive ministry.

The Deanery has 2 Permission to Officiate clergy and 2 Lay Readers based in Alstonefield and Ipstones. Specific lay ministries (e.g. Funeral Ministry) are developing across the Deanery as well.

The full details of the Deanery Mission Area are in the Appendix.



Situated in the heart of Waterhouses the vicarage is within easy walking distance of all the public amenities, including Waterhouses Primary School, and the Doctor's surgery. It is a 1970s detached house set in a large private garden with a detached garage. Downstairs there is a spacious kitchen, laundry, dining room, lounge, toilet as well as a large office. Upstairs there are 4 bedrooms, bathroom and separate toilet and loads of storage space. At the time of writing this, the house is currently being updated.



Waterfall

Waterfall is the largest of the parishes with a population of a hundred residents. It encompasses several settlements, principally the villages of Waterhouses, Winkhill and Waterfall, the latter itself with its church of St James and St Bartholomew.

Waterhouses is an expanding, more modern village with a diverse community of people reliant on local, light industry, farming as well as commuting further afield. It has a good primary school that feeds into Queen Elizabeth's Grammar School in Ashbourne, or the Middle and High school system in Leek. The primary school is CofE and the headteacher has a strong Christian ethos which is evident in the day to day running of the school. Schoolchildren attend services at Waterfall as well as Waterhouses Chapel, on a regular basis. There are further strong links with the Church with the new incumbent to serve alongside two others as its foundation governors. The school itself has many facilities including a large Hall and swimming pool. The Memorial Hall at Waterfall also hosts many different village and church activities and social get togethers. Waterfall also plays host to the only Mothers Union in the Benefice.



Special services 2020-2025

Weddings: 3

Funerals: 65

Baptisms: 35

Grindon

Grindon Parish church, All Saints, known as the “Cathedral of the Moorlands” was rebuilt in the Gothic style on the site of a previous 11th century chapel and reconsecrated in 1848. In the last two years extensive restoration of the church path in the Grade II listed graveyard has been carried out along with roof repairs. The church includes a kitchen and disabled toilet which facilitates social celebrations. The church is fortunate to be relatively self-sufficient in funding due to previous financial bequests and smart investing.

Residents pull together to maintain a social life and community feel; most recently seen with the revival of the Church’s annual Harvest Festival Service, pie supper and harvest auction, with all proceeds donated to local charities. The villagers arrange a number of well-attended events in the Old School Village Hall including musical evenings and regular fun social activities.

However the most prestigious and well-supported event in the Church calendar is the RAF Association Memorial Service in February each year marking the anniversary of the lost lives of the crew of the Halifax bomber 47 squadron that crashed on Grindon/Butterton Moor in 1945 while bringing supplies to the snow-bound villages. The service attracts dignitaries of the RAF, local Parish Council representatives and the Leek Mayor/Mayorress. As with other churches in the Benefice, Grindon has financially supported local families identified via the school, who need a little extra at Christmas.

The church experienced the shocking theft of the church path in 2022, which featured in a rural crime documentary, but through hard work and commitment of the PCC and friends, it has now been tastefully restored in a Gothic style and they now plan to embark on further security and safety measures such as path lighting and CCTV.



Special services 2020-2025

Weddings:

Funerals:

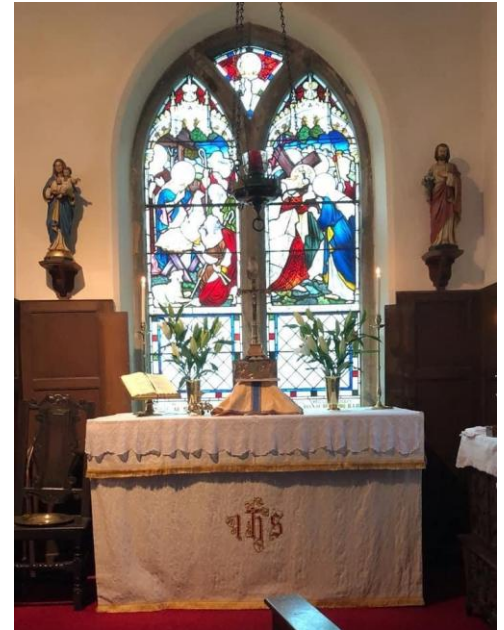
Baptisms

Calton

Calton sits just inside the Peak District National Park and next to the Manifold Valley trail, it is a smaller community but with an active village hall and strong focus around the church immediately opposite. There has been a church on the present site since the 16th Century, dedicated to St. Mary the Virgin.

With a progressive PCC, the church has introduced some innovative ideas such as 'messy church' and 'play days' to encourage younger families and children in the village itself and the neighbourhood. The church was lucky to have a significant bequest which has secured its future. The annual wakes, harvest supper and church nativity get good attendance. The hall also organises regular events in the village such as craft club, teas, cake and chat events, indoor bowls, as well as quizzes and entertainment evenings. A recent initiative has been to introduce an emergency 'crisis fund' for parishioners who find themselves in sudden emergency.

With the rise in poor mental health, loneliness and isolation the PCC are offering more support in a pastoral capacity and have started a 'warm hub' twice monthly meet up which has proved very successful - however we need guidance in this from our Rector.



Services at Calton tend to be from the Book of Common Worship and occasionally with the use of incense. Currently the PCC are in negotiation to fit a toilet and kitchen facility to make the building more user friendly.



Special services 2020-2025

Weddings: 3

Funerals: 9

Baptisms: 0

Cauldon

Another small parish community the oldest part of which is centred around its church of Saint Mary and Saint Lawrence, and also dates back to the Domesday book. The church plays host to a stunning annual flower festival which draws many visitors. Significantly the church is also the base for a small, but vitally important, local food bank which the other members of the benefice also support with donations.

The local community is mainly a mixture of farmers and people employed in the nearby quarry industry as well as in jobs elsewhere, and it has a variety of houses from traditional stone cottages to Victorian terraces and at Cauldon Lowe, groups of small, modern estate properties clustered near to the village hall.

The church has a happy relaxed atmosphere and is kept unlocked during the day and services here are conducted according to the Book of Common Prayer. Despite small congregations the church is well supported by the local community.



Blore

Please note – under the Deanery Mission Plan the incumbent of Alstonefield, Ilam and Wetton will have primary pastoral oversight of Blore Ray.

The smallest in the Benefice, Blore is an ancient parish with a much more dispersed population. It is mentioned in the Domesday Book and is centred mainly around Blore Hall and its neighbouring church of Blore Ray. Built around the year 1100, on the site of an earlier building, the Grade 1 listed St. Bartholomew's Blore Ray sits high on a hill- side above Ilam and the confluence of the Dove and Manifold rivers in the Peak National Park.

The church serves a community of eight residents in the hamlet of Blore within a parish of 120 people, most of whom are drawn from the neighbouring village of Swinscoe.

The Parochial Church Council works closely with the neighbouring population most of whom are to be found in church at some point during the year.

Visitors are made to feel very welcome and Sunday services normally attract some visitors from Blore Hall (a timeshare property) located opposite the church.

In 2006 the church raised £120,000 for the replacement of its lead roof and the PCC has a varied programme of community events culminating in a summer lunch that attracts well over 100 people.



Appendix

Alstonefield Deanery Rural Mission Area.

Aim:

- to enable growth in Discipleship, Vocation and Evangelism across a rural Deanery which is numerically small but geographically large
- To facilitate sustainable, life-giving, mission and ministry across the Deanery

Key areas of mission identified:

1. **Schools** 6 church schools, in different academy trusts
 - Longnor
 - Warslow
 - Hollingsclough
 - Ipstone
 - Waterhouses
 - Ilam

Warslow and Ipstones share an executive head, as do Waterhouses and Ilam.
Warslow and Hollingscough are in the same academy trust
Numbers in all schools are small, so they feel vulnerable.

2. **Tourism and pilgrimage**
Including scope for pop up café in holiday-let areas such as Longnor
Possibly offering spiritual care to Dovedale
3. **Farming communities**
4. **Carboot sale** at Alstonefield, last Sunday of month
5. **Ipstones** largest centre of population which relates to Stoke rather than the Moorlands.
6. **Buildings as mission**
7. **Occasional offices** most funeral have attendance of > 250, with repeated congregations (so opportunity to develop relationships)
Weddings – people ‘do time’ to develop a qualifying connection.

Current clergy posts:

- 1.0 Vicar Longnor Benefice
- 0.5 IM Ipstones Benefice
- 0.5 Vicar Waterhouses Benefice
- 0.2HfD Alstonefield Benefice

Licensed lay leadership:

- Claire Reader at Alstonefield
- Roger Reader at Ipstones (also Methodist lay preacher)
- Gordon Reader at Waterhouses

Active PTO clergy

- Rev Nicola Pepper
- Rev Arthur Hack

New clergy mission team

2 FT clergy plus 2 House for Duty clergy

- 1 FT mission responsibility for schools, Ipstones and oversight of ministry and pastoral care, and missional development of occasional offices. (Living in Ipstones)
- 1 FT mission responsibility for tourism and pilgrimage, buildings as mission, the farming community and key responsibility for developing fresh expressions, including the carboot sale and online presence. (Living in Longnor)
- 1 HfD (living in Waterhouses)
- 1 HfD (Living in Alstonefield)

Governance & structure

- No formal pastoral reorganization will take place unless in the future, when the mission are is well established, it is agreed that reorganization would be helpful.
- The aim is to share more governance functions across parishes whilst maintaining local independence where this is genuinely beneficial.
- Each benefice to have a leadership team (Ipstone and Longnor already have them) initially. This can then be constituted as a Joint Council to which PCCs can delegate whatever power they choose as they begin working together more closely. Eventually it would be ideal to move to one PCC per benefice, but with DCCs and as much local control of money as possible.
- Clergy initially to be licensed to the current benefice structure and also as assistant curate in the other parishes in the Deanery. Then to move to a group ministry.
- The FT clergyperson in Ipstone would take on oversight of Warslow and Elkstones parish, and the HfD Priest in Alstonefield would also oversee Blore, in order to even out responsibilities between FT and HfD clergy

Sunday worship

Principles:

- FT clergy do max 2 morning services +/- an afternoon or evening
- HfD clergy do max 2 services per Sunday
- Ongoing development of lay ministry and non-eucharistic services
- Clergy to sometimes lead non-eucharistic services to demonstrate that other forms of worship are just as meaningful and to allow support/supervision of lay people developing as worship leaders.
- Clergy shouldn't be putting so much time/energy into provision of Sunday services that there is no missional energy left.