
The Benefice of Berrow and Brean and the Benefice of Three Saints



**As Three Somerset Parishes become One New Benefice,
we are seeking a new Priest to lead and shape this exciting partnership.**

Our Story

We are three Somerset parishes, in the Diocese of Bath and Wells, excited to be working in partnership as we come together to form a new Benefice. This is part of a proposed pastoral re-organisation and the formation of the new united benefice is subject to the pastoral scheme going through. So the appointment of our new priest will initially be as Priest in Charge.

Our current three parishes of St Mary, Berrow, St Bridget, Brean and The Parish of Three Saints (TPoTS) are part of the Axbridge Deanery and encompass five villages on the north-west coast of the beautiful Somerset Levels. We are surrounded by peaceful countryside and wide sandy beaches, perfect for walking and riding.

Following the recent Deanery re-organisation, we are working hard to build links and relationships across the parishes as we look forward to seizing the opportunity which the joining together in a new benefice represents.

Each parish is a strong, visible and loving presence in its community, seeking to share God's love and speak His message where He has placed us. We serve our communities in various ways, including running village hub cafes, a pre-school group, school assemblies, Alpha courses, fetes (with classic car show), concerts, flower festivals, craft fayres, quiz nights, a new book group, a singing group and a Nosh and Natter outreach and fellowship group. The church families are also deeply involved in a wide variety of village and community groups.

We have active church families who meet together regularly with 3 services on Sunday, Zoom Compline, Morning Prayer each week. We share meals, host home/book groups and pray together. We have active 'Friends' groups which help to support us financially.

In essence, we are a family of disciples who seek to live out God's kingdom and share Jesus' good news in our lovely corner of Somerset.

Will you join us?

"Hallelujah! For the Lord our God the Almighty reigns." (Rev 19:6)



Our Challenges



We have been consulting with our congregations and the various community bodies which we serve. The outcome of this and a recent Partnership for Missional Church programme has shown us some of our main challenges.

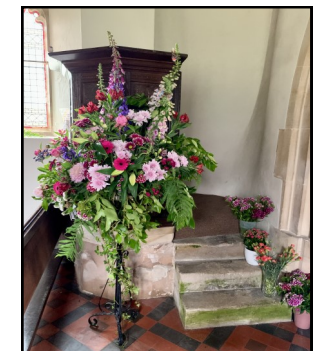
- ◆ Our next steps include the challenge of coming together in partnership as one new benefice. This process will involve uniting two church communities, spread over five villages. We are working through this together by having weekly shared times of prayer, inviting each other to both church services and social events and communicating via shared newsletters. We also enjoyed a joint Harvest Celebration together in September.
- ◆ The joys of rural life are great, but it is clear that people can also experience loneliness and isolation. As parishes, we are working hard to support and reach out to our communities, but can we do more to share the comfort of God's love?
- ◆ We are also aware that, as congregations, we are ageing. We are keen to engage with younger people and families. How do we remain relevant and discharge our duty to proclaim the gospel afresh in this generation?



Harvest



Christian Aid



Flower Festival

"I can do all this through Him who gives me strength" (Philippians 4:13)

Our Aspirations

As the body of Christ in this part of Somerset, we long to be a living witness to God's love by serving our communities

Our Local Schools



We have good relationships with our church primary schools, but we want to grow and strengthen them. We want to build a relevant presence for our older children and teenagers.

Our New Partnership



We are excited to see what God has in store for us as we join together in our new Benefice. We look forward to getting to know one another, sharing skills, simplifying our structures and growing God's kingdom here.

Our Local Communities



We want to use our resources, both people and buildings, to demonstrate God's love for everyone. We hope to continue to welcome our communities into our buildings by diversifying their use. We have already begun this journey in the recent re-orderings in Berrow and TPOTS to provide significant flexibility but we are sure that God has more planned!

“Unless the Lord builds the house, the builders labour in vain.” (Psalm 127:1)

What We Offer



Berron PCC



TPOTS PCC



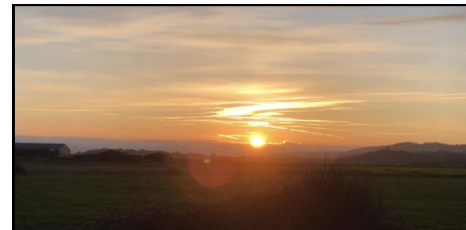
Brean PCC



The Vicarage



Brent Knoll



Sunrise at Berron



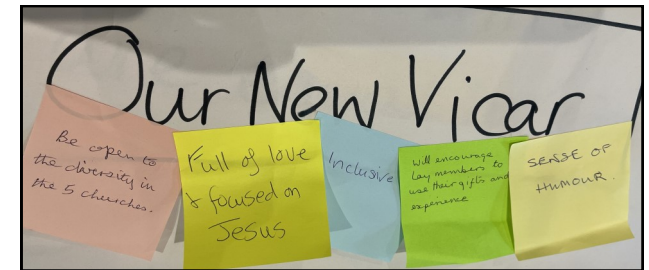
Lymsham Fete

- An enthusiastic team including: three active PCCs; six church wardens; one self supporting Associate Priest; one Priest with PTO; two experienced readers; a part-time administrator for TPOTS; two Safeguarding Officers; three Treasurers: experienced teams of lay pastoral assistants and lay worship leaders; two organists and a large team of hard-working and committed disciples.
- Five beautiful church buildings filled with centuries of worship and prayer, including one with fully flexible seating and one with a long-established local ecumenical partnership with Brean Methodists.
- Good relationships with our four church primary schools.
- Two regularly used church halls adjacent to the churches, which host people of all ages throughout the week. Activities include uniformed organisations, seasonal cream teas, toddler group and quiz nights.
- Spacious, modern living accommodation in the vicarage in East Brent.
- Dedicated office space close to the vicarage.
- A beautiful rural location with open countryside, wide sandy beaches and quiet country villages.
- Above all, we offer you our friendship, fellowship and prayer plus a shared commitment to meeting the challenges identified. We will support the on-going development of your ministry whilst giving you adequate time for family life and recreation, to help you maintain a healthy work/life balance.

Is This You?

We are praying our new Priest will be:

- * Prayerful and Spirit-filled.
- * A confident leader who will help us build a vision and create a stable future for our new benefice.
- * Inclusive and welcoming, helping us to broaden the diversity of our church family and nourish existing relationships with our church schools.
- * A person of empathy and compassion who listens, communicates well and has wisdom to inspire and unite.
- * Someone who will discern, develop and deploy the gifts of our enthusiastic and committed church family.
- * Someone who will help us to reach out to and engage with the wider non-worshipping community, including the many holiday makers visiting Brean in the summer.
- * A person who can show us how to care for them!



Feedback from our Open Meeting



Christingle



Berrow Sunrise Service on Easter Morning

"Go therefore and make disciples of all nations" (Matthew 28:19)

Facts and Figures

Worship Grid

	St Mary's Berrow 10.30am	St Bridget's Brean 10.30am	The Parish of Three Saints (TPoTS)		
			St Michael's Brent Knoll	St Christopher's Lympsham	St Mary's East Brent
1st Sunday	Praise	Holy Communion	<div style="border: 2px solid #00AEEF; padding: 10px;"> 10.00am Parish Eucharist rotates weekly around our three church buildings in a continuous loop. On the 3rd Sunday of each month there is an 8.00am BCP service in the same building as the 10.00am service. </div>		
2nd Sunday	Holy Communion	Praise			
3rd Sunday	Praise	Holy Communion			
4th Sunday	Holy Communion	Praise			
5th Sunday	Holy Communion alternates monthly between Berrow and Brean				



Quinquennial Reports

Berrow

QI 2021. Most priority 1 and 2 items complete plus some stone conservation and window repairs. Various items of routine maintenance and repair required within the Quinquennial period in cost bands 1 and 2 plus masonry work to vice turret in cost band 3.

Brean

QI 2023. Various items of routine maintenance and repair required within the next 2 months all in cost band 1.

TPoTS

Quinquennial inspections have been undertaken as scheduled on all three church buildings and extensive works have been carried out on all roofs and ceilings where funding has permitted.

St Christopher's is currently at the beginning of an internal re-ordering project.

2023 Figures

	Berrow	Brean	TPoTS
Electoral Roll	92	17	105
Baptisms	5	–	6
Weddings	3	–	3
Funerals	9	1	33

Facts and Figures

Finances (FY23)

Parish	Berrow	Brean	TPoTS
Income from Grants	–	–	10,510
Total Income (including grants)	44,928	18,427	96,308
Total Expenditure	48,833	11,010	111,165
Parish Share	38,884	4,561	25,508
Parish Share (% paid)	100	100	100
Restricted Reserves	–	–	120,000
Unrestricted Reserves	40,669	17,875	–

School Websites

East Brent <https://www.eastbrentcofeacademy.co.uk/>
 Lympsham <https://lympshamcofeacademy.co.uk/>
 Brent Knoll <https://brentknoll.somerset.sch.uk/>
 Berrow <https://www.berrowprimaryschool.co.uk/>

The Church Office



The Church Office is located in Church Road, East Brent, approx. 200m from St Mary's.

It is a well equipped working office with a photocopier, a meeting space with table and chairs, a small kitchen area, a toilet and parking.

This is currently the hub of TPoTS parish organisation, where you will always receive a friendly welcome from Mrs Carole Carter, our Parish Administrator, who works here three mornings a week.

Going forward we hope to share this great facility with Berrow and Brean, as part of our new partnership.

Village Websites

Brent Knoll <https://www.brentknollvillage.co.uk/>
 Lympsham <https://www.lympshamvillage.co.uk/>
 East Brent <https://www.eastbrentparishcouncil.co.uk/>
 Berrow + Brean <https://www.burnham-on-sea.com/>
 Berrow + Brean Good Neighbours
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/827150141241854/>



Deanery Statement



Axbridge Deanery is situated from the west coast at Brea as far as Easton at the other end towards Wells. We are mainly made up of rural villages, with the larger centres of population being mostly near the coast and with our main tourist areas around Brea and Berrow attracting over 50 000 people in peak tourist season. Axbridge Deanery is also home to the famous Cheddar caves, another area of significant tourism. The area around Highbridge and Burnham has recently seen significant housing development and population growth.

We have great respect for each other in all of our different contexts – chapter meetings are very supportive as we share our joys and our concerns over lunch and help each other through the often complex demands of parish or chaplaincy life. Deanery Synod gathers around four times a year and we encourage active participation through discussion in groups and in plenary to ensure that each meeting is a good learning environment.

Along with all other deaneries in the diocese (and most other dioceses) Axbridge Deanery is in the middle of significant changes when it comes to how we organise ourselves and ensure that together we can resource effective ministry for effective mission. The new vicar of this newly formed benefice will be working with other ministers to shape a new group ministry encompassing the parishes in the western half of the deanery (a similar group is to be formed in the eastern half). The intention is that this will strengthen the mutual support of both lay and ordained ministers that already exists and will offer a means of ministry that honours the link between a person and a place while opening up possibilities of wider ministry.

Axbridge Deanery is also committed to a Mission Plan that is based around the five Anglican Marks of Mission and so explores ways in which we can resource each other in specific areas around each mark.

The Area Dean Revd Prebendary Richard Neill (01934 713566) or Lay Dean Mr Gary Orriss will be happy to expand on who we are as a deanery or how we work together.

Diocesan Statement



We are delighted that you are considering whether this post of Priest in Charge of The Benefice of Berrow + Brean and The Benefice of Three Saints in the Diocese of Bath and Wells might be right for you. In order to help your prayerful discernment, we want to share a bit about our diocesan vision, within which we hope your own ministry might flourish.

Appointing a priest incumbent is amongst the most significant decisions that any benefice makes. When appointments work out well, they contribute significantly to parishes flourishing and growing in a host of different ways – in spiritual depth, in impact within local communities and in the numbers of people becoming part of the local church. Such flourishing is not, of course, all down to the person appointed as priest. It depends first and foremost upon God. It also depends upon everyone in a benefice being willing and able to contribute their unique gifts, skills, resources and abilities: working alongside their priest and sharing in the ministry of the benefice.

The flourishing and growth of churches always needs attention, but especially now as we come out of the shock created by the COVID pandemic. The impact of the pandemic created a sharp acceleration in the pattern of decline in church attendance that has been seen in our diocese over many years. Thankfully there are some signs that we are recovering from the COVID decline. For example, data showed that average adult weekly church attendance in our diocese rose between 2021 and 2022. Statistics only ever tell a partial story. It is even more encouraging to see churches around our diocese developing approaches that respond to the opportunities and challenges in their local context and enable growth to happen.

A vision for growth and transformation

Our diocesan context, described above, has convinced us that for our next season at least, our aim across all our parishes needs to be growing our churches, within and beyond our church buildings, in both numbers and depth of faith, so that we can better work for the transforming of our communities and the life of God’s Kingdom amongst us.

Shared priorities

To help us pursue this aim, and following consultation across the diocese in 2023, we are inviting all parishes to focus on four particular areas of our ministry together. It is important for clergy considering working in our diocese to know what these priorities are, even though what they look like in practice will vary in each place.

To value and cherish the people and resources we already have	We aim to ensure each person is well supported and equipped as a follower of Jesus Christ and for any ministries they may feel called to undertake, within the local church and wider community. We are committed to supporting the well-being of all our leaders and church officers, both lay and ordained. We have a fully funded clergy well-being service, the offer of peer support groups, and an excellent team of Diocesan support staff fully focused on supporting our parishes, chaplaincies and schools.
To develop new Christian worshipping communities	Whether it be new forms of worship in a wide variety of settings and times, church revitalisations or church plants, we long to see the good news of Jesus connect with the people in our communities that our traditional offerings struggle to reach.
To share in ministry and leadership	We are committed to the New Testament vision of the church as a vibrant body of people all using their God-given gifts. We are committed to a model of shared local ministry: raising up and equipping lay and ordained leaders able to share together in leading the church and serving God’s world.
To deepen and grow faith	This is foundational to all we do. We long to see people of all ages and backgrounds, but perhaps especially children, young people and young adults, having more opportunities to discover, explore and grow in faith.

Diocesan Statement

The outcome we are looking for

When he talks about his own ministry in 1 Corinthians, Paul captures the dynamic we are seeking to achieve. “I planted,” he says, “Apollos watered, but God gave the growth”(1 Cor 3: 6). We know that our churches will only flourish and grow as a result of God’s action among us – it is God who gives the growth.

But Paul is also clear that we have a part to play too – in watering and planting, in doing the things that enable the conditions for God’s growth to be supported. So, covered by prayer, our confident hope is that if we are intentional in seeking God’s guidance in planning and supporting growth, then God will honour that to see his people flourish and thrive - in spiritual depth, in impact within local communities, in the numbers of people becoming part of the local church and in transforming communities locally and beyond.

Local shaping and diocesan support

There can’t be any ‘one size fits’ all approach to turning the priorities outlined above into action. They always need to be adapted to local circumstances, opportunities and needs. The task of our diocesan support services is to get behind all that local benefices are doing and apart from their general support, there is specific support for exploring how to grow new Christian communities, how to discern and equip a growing range of ministries in your context and how to work well with children and young people. All these areas of support are grounded in exploring what it means to live out our faith.

What implications does this have for the appointment of clergy?

It is important for us all to appoint clergy to benefices who are ready, willing and able to pray for and share in the vision we have for the flourishing and growth of churches and Christian life in our diocese. We want to create an environment that could be described as high challenge, high support. This means appointing clergy who will not only value all that already exists but will be eager to work with others to build on and develop it. It means appointing clergy who are committed to learning, being creative, and to starting with the gifts God has given to them, their benefice and the wider community. We are therefore looking to appoint candidates who will

- be committed to praying and intentionally seeking the growth and flourishing of the benefices in their care
- relish and expect to work in an environment that is high challenge, high support
- work joyfully and collaboratively with those who share with them locally in ministry and leadership, with their congregations and with others in their locality, to identify ways to grow and develop their churches with the grain of local priorities, resources, skills and passions
- enjoy working in partnership with deanery and diocesan colleagues.

We hope this might be you! We hope that you’d like to join us on the adventure and course we’ve set for our next ten years. We’re praying that God will send us the right labourers for the harvest that God has set before us. Could this be you?



Bishop Michael



Archdeacon of Wells

5 Villages



St Bridget's, Brean



St Mary's, East Brent



St Michael's, Brent Knoll



St Christopher's, Lymsham



St Mary's, Berrow

(The Parish of Three Saints)

3 Parishes

All Brothers and Sisters in Christ
