

Westbury-sub-Mendip with Easton and Priddy

BENEFACTICE PROFILE

*We support all the members of our community
and offer the love of Jesus to all.*

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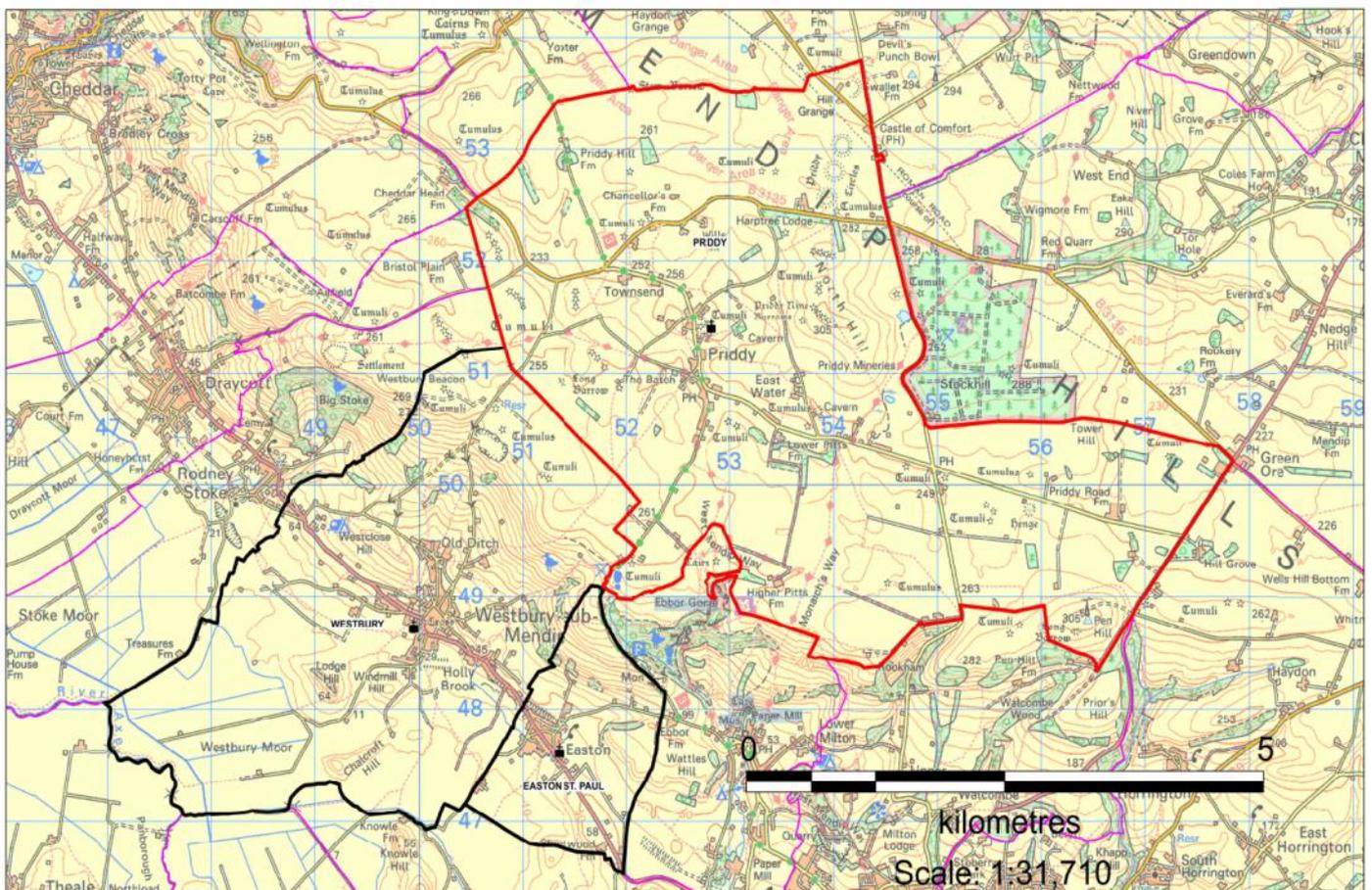
Vacancy Prayer

Welcome to the Benefice of Westbury-sub-Mendip with Easton and the Benefice of Priddy

Thank you for taking the time to read our Benefice Profile. We believe that our Benefices can provide a rich and rewarding opportunity for ministry and that this Profile will give you an insight into who we are, what we do and where we feel that God may be leading us. We pray that this helps you to judge whether you are the right person to help us move forward as God's people, living and telling the story.

*Loving Heavenly Father, we pray that you
Will call to our Benefices
A true shepherd
A servant of God
A minister of Christ
And help us, with them,
To grow in faith,
Love one another,
Care for those in need
And reach out to others
Amen*

Benefice of Priddy (red outline) & Benefice of Westbury Sub Mendip with Easton (black outline)



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Date: 13/08/2020

The Benefices of Westbury-sub-Mendip with Easton and Priddy

WHO WE ARE

- Serving our communities is our prime aim
- We are a diverse community with individual styles of worship
- We have a Reader who works locally and a Lay Worship Assistant at Easton
- We take part in Churches Together in Wells services



WHO WE WANT TO BE

- A broad church which supports all members of the villages and offers the love of Jesus to all individuals
- A community which involves more young people and families
- A setting which provides opportunities for varied worship

WHAT WE CAN OFFER An opportunity to guide us through the uncertain future where so much of what has been seen as normal may well need radical change.

- A comfortable vicarage in the Benefice where there is a community shop and pubs; with local cultural activities close by in Wells, Bath or Bristol.
- We will be fully supportive of him/her and respect holidays, rest days and sabbaticals as appropriate.
- The possibility of a Benefice Office
- A Preschool (Saplings) and a Primary School in Westbury and Priddy, with secondary schools in nearby Wells and Cheddar accessible by public transport.
- A monthly magazine, The PEW, which is delivered to many homes in the Benefice.



WHO WE ARE SEEKING

Our world is changing. We need a true shepherd to guide us through these uncertain times; all the while within the Diocesan Vision of *'Being God's people who live and tell the story of Jesus, in response to God's immense love for us'*.

The vacancy has allowed us to seek God's will for our future. A survey form was distributed to all households to reach out to the whole community and to help us to understand how the Church was viewed by all parishioners including those who do not attend the Church. This has helped us to organise our thoughts for the future.

We recognise that this is a part-time post; however we would like:

- A Vicar who enjoys taking part in the many and various activities of small rural communities
- A good communicator with a sensitive, flexible approach to worship, prepared to explore, with us, new ideas while honouring treasured traditions
- A guide who will work with us as we build on local school and family links and outreach projects
- Someone who will welcome the missing age groups into our churches, encouraging young people and their families to develop their understanding of God
- A key player in bringing together both the spiritual and community aspects of the Churches within the Benefices

BENEFICE SERVICE PATTERN

Below is the regular service pattern for Priddy, Easton and Westbury as it was pre-Covid.

	Priddy	Easton	Westbury
1 st Sunday	11 a.m. Mattins	9.30 a.m. Holy Communion	11 a.m. Mattins
2 nd Sunday	9.30 a.m. Holy Communion	9.30 a.m. Morning Prayer	11 a.m. Holy Communion
3 rd Sunday	6 p.m. Evensong	9.30 a.m. Family Service	11 a.m. Holy Communion
4 th Sunday	9.30 a.m. Holy Communion	9.30 a.m. Holy Communion	11 a.m. Holy Communion
5 th Sunday	9.30 a.m. Holy Communion		
	3 p.m. Joint Benefice Service*		

*A joint Benefice Service on the 5th Sunday of each month. Until recently it has been held at 11 a.m. in either Easton or Westbury. Plans had been made for 2020 to move this service to 3 p.m. and it would be held in Priddy, Easton or Westbury – due to Covid-19 that has not yet happened.

Currently, we try to rotate the services between the three churches so everyone can take part. During Lent and Easter, special services are held on Ash Wednesday, Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, Easter Day and Ascension Day. An 'All Souls Service' is also held later in the year.

Each church holds its own Carol Service and Crib Service. Priddy and Westbury hold Holy Communion services on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day and Easton holds a Holy Communion service on the first Sunday after Christmas.

The IF Group meets approximately 4 times a year to discuss Ideas for the Future. It is composed of the Vicar and anyone else in the benefice who would like to be involved in planning acts of worship. As well as the 5th Sunday service, this group has planned the Lent talks and Compline services (held in Westbury) and Taizé services in Westbury and Easton.

The church wardens also meet regularly with the Vicar to discuss and share information on what is happening in the Benefice.

BENEFICE 2019 STATISTICS

	Priddy	Easton	Westbury
Average attendance at an ordinary Sunday Service	10 adults	9 adults	28 adults
Electoral Roll	37	27	66
Easter Sunday	18	18	32
Harvest Festival	30	15	52
Remembrance Service	10	27	41
Carol Service	46	40	80
Crib Service	18	50	58
Midnight Communion	3	Not applicable	36
Christmas Day	6	Not applicable	27
Christingle	Joint Benefice Service		80+
Baptisms	1	1	3
Weddings	2	0	1
Funerals	0	3	7

BENEFICE TEAM (from left to right) Robin Maine, Priddy churchwarden; Juanita Glass, Priddy churchwarden; Sue Kreter, Easton churchwarden and Lay Worship Assistant; Linda Mogford, Westbury churchwarden; Richard Brown, Reader



Rev. Dr Mark Spurrell is a retired vicar, who leads Communion services in Priddy.

RECENT DEVELOPMENTS

During the current pandemic each village has provided community support in its own way.

In Priddy the community pulled together when the need arose and following lockdown one younger member of the village set up a Priddy Community Facebook page. This engages with people in the village to provide support to those who are shielding and includes newspaper, prescription and shopping collections.

Easton village, with the help of Sue, Lay Worship Assistant, has provided a weekly Sunday Morning Prayer Service and hymns via email or hard copy which has been regularly sent out in all three parishes. Members of the Village Hall Committee were instrumental in establishing a network to collect shopping and prescriptions and offer other support, providing a lifeline for community members who were shielding.

In Westbury, the Village Community Emergency Plan came into action. Every villager has been regularly contacted and offered support in many ways from finance to mental health and transport needs. We have also used the opportunity to try out a new pattern of weekly services which we are hoping to continue.

THE FEDERATION OF PRIDDY AND ST LAWRENCE'S SCHOOLS

These two popular schools are approximately 3 miles apart in the villages of Priddy and Westbury-sub-Mendip and serve all three scenic rural communities. Children from all the Benefice villages attend the schools in both locations.



The schools are very proud of their successful federation, and work closely together, providing a nurturing and caring environment and a wealth of opportunities for children, staff and the wider communities.

KS1 classes are taught on the Westbury-sub-Mendip site (a C of E, VC school) and KS2 on the Priddy site (a Community school). Saplings Preschool is situated within the site of St Lawrence's School in Westbury-sub-Mendip.

Saplings Preschool and KS1 St Lawrence's Primary School, Westbury-Sub-Mendip

The family atmosphere of the two village schools (ca 40 pupils over both sites) allows the staff to know each child very well and gives the children a sense of belonging as well as the valuable experience of being part of a community.

The Federation has good links with both village churches, with the vicar being a regular visitor. The schools hold regular services throughout the year to celebrate Christian Festivals. One of their aims is to provide a happy, caring and secure learning environment based on Christian values.



Priddy KS2 Primary School



Lily and Harry, who go to the Federation of Priddy and St Lawrence schools, said they wanted a vicar who continued to visit the school.

Harry said, "I liked it when Paula told us bible stories and we said prayers." He added, "I like to go to church if it is a happy church, especially the Crib Service at Christmas."

Lily said, "I don't really go to church, but I did like it when the vicar came to the school."

PRIDDY

<http://www.priddyparish.org/St-Laurence's-Church.php>



OUR SETTING

Priddy lies on the Mendip Hills and has a long history dating back to the early Neolithic stone circles, including Stonehenge, and a Bronze Age burial mound. The lead at Priddy was sought after for its high silver content and was mined on and off from Roman times until the last lead mine closed in 1908. Until recently, an annual sheep fair was held on Priddy Green, reputedly moved from Wells in 1348 during the Black Death.

An expanding community with approximately 700 people living in the area, the parish has a wide boundary and a dispersed community, also encompassing remote farming families.

There are three popular public houses with the Queen Victoria (Queen Vic) within Priddy and The Hunter's Lodge and The Castle of Comfort just outside.

We also have a popular and busy Village Hall in the same area as the church and the village school.



The Queen Vic



Priddy continues to enjoy the use of a large village green in the middle of the village and a smaller village green near the church and school.

There are regular local events on the greens which include the village cricket match, impromptu games of rounders, visitors picnicking and the Friendly Society sports day.

Sheep Hurdles on Priddy Green

There is a thriving farm shop at the Townsend area of the village providing locally produced goods and a hearty breakfast. The population expands every summer with visitors camping in the two campsites at either end of the village. The village is also the base for a caving community who come to explore the local potholes, the most central being Swildon's Hole, the longest cave on the Mendip Hills.

PRIORITIES

A recent survey of people in the village reflected the responses from the rest of the Benefice: that we want a church that is vibrant and welcomes young families, while continuing to recognise traditional forms of worship.

One villager commented, *"You can make Priddy life what you want it to be; the hustle and bustle of a rural village community or the tranquility of the Parish countryside; either way it is very rewarding. There are numerous active clubs and societies vying for your attention."*

THE CHURCH BUILDING

Saint Laurence can be found at the top green. Dating from the 13th century and dedicated in 1352, the interior includes a 15th century Rood screen. Extensive repairs and renovation were carried out in the 19th Century.



The next Quinquennial Report is due in January 2021. The church has recently undergone repairs to the roof following the theft of lead, and redecoration is planned.

A faculty has been granted to install a hearing loop in the church. replacing the roof. We have agreed to apply for a faculty to remove some of the surplus pews stored in the vestry area at the east end of the church. There is a well-maintained churchyard with an area dedicated to wildflowers. There are also Bronze Age Barrows to the North and South West, close to the Churchyard. The bells are rung regularly for services throughout the year.

FINANCE

Despite the expense incurred by the theft of lead from the roof, St Laurence continues to be solvent. We always pay the parish share on time and in full. We have a reserve of funds and agree charitable giving annually, recent examples being Water Aid and the Farmer's Benevolent Fund. A planned giving scheme has ensured that most of the weekly income from collections has not been lost during the lockdown period. Please email Juanita Glass on mother-glass@hotmail.co.uk to obtain a copy of the accounts.

OUR COMMUNITY

We have a highly active community with regular clubs held at the village hall including the Monday Club for older residents who enjoy talks and activities, and fitness clubs. There are many local events which include special occasions, and well-attended seasonal bingo and quiz nights.

The Priddy Friendly Society



Priddy and Westbury have two of the few remaining Friendly Societies in Somerset and exist to support our communities.

There is an annual Friendly Society day with roll call and a service in the church followed by lunch and games on the green for the children. In addition, they hold regular events in the village.

The Priddy Singers

We also host The Priddy Singers, a friendly group of around 50 local men and women. People range from local villages to as far afield as Glastonbury.

During lock down the choir continued to practice 'virtually' every week.



The Priddy Folk Festival

Since 1991 the village has played host to an annual folk festival.

Its chairman said, *"In 1991 the PTA started the Folk Festival as a fund raiser in the village hall. Since then, the Festival has grown into a nationally respected event with thousands of visitors, but still remains true to its roots."*

Easton

<https://www.achurchnearyou.com/church/10864/>



OUR SETTING

Easton is a small village in the Cheddar valley, three miles west of Wells and within the curtilage of St. Cuthbert Out Parish Council. The village nestles beneath the steep slopes of the Mendip hills to the north and the flat areas of the moors to the south, and is a lane away from the National Trust property of Ebbor Gorge. From the fields above Easton there is a panoramic view stretching many miles.

At the southern edge of the village, in Knowle Lane, there is a recreation ground with play equipment. This field was purchased from a local farmer. It is managed by the Parish Council and well used. Knowle Lane leads to the Somerset levels and is regularly used by walkers and cyclists.

There are approximately 250 houses in Easton, a Village Hall which was once a school, and a Church Room adjacent to the church which is owned and managed by our PCC.

OUR PEOPLE

Our Church has a dedicated group of PCC members who strive to make the church welcome for all and try to include the whole village by advertising services and events widely in the village.

Our congregation, though small and mainly elderly, is supportive and enthusiastic. Our special services, such as those held in the Easter and Christmas seasons are well attended. The church is full for our Crib service, with some families planning their Christmas Eve around the service so that they can come along.

"I was brought up in Easton and the Church was a big part of village life. I still enjoy the Family Service and other events in the church calendar. It's important to feel that support and belonging and to be able to come together to pray for others and express gratitude."

OUR WORSHIP

Our services are led by the Vicar, our Reader, our Lay Worship Assistant and visiting clergy. We have a rota of those members of the congregation who are willing to read the lessons. For special services, such as Easter, Harvest and Christmas, we invite representatives of our village organisations to take an active part in the service.

After each family service the congregation are invited to stay for coffee in the south transept. After other services there is always plenty of enthusiasm to stay to share fellowship in a less formal atmosphere.

OUR PRIORITIES

Following the PCC's Mission Action Plan and the results of our recent village survey, our priorities are:

- To broaden the church to support all members of the community, offering the love of Jesus to all
- To continue to provide a sense of stability in a changing world and a peaceful, spiritual place for quiet contemplation
- To continue to use a variety of service styles
- To involve families and younger people
- To improve our communication with others so that they are aware of what is happening and how they can be involved

"Easton. To be welcomed into a lovely family who worship together in various formats and to learn more about our faith and how to apply it to our everyday life."

OUR BUILDING

The Church of St Paul

"The atmosphere, even in the empty building, is friendly and warm and gives me a feeling of belonging that is conducive to reverence and praise."



The village church of St Paul is situated on the main road and is clearly visible from the road. It was built in 1844 in the Norman style using stone quarried in the village. In 2014/2015 money was bequeathed in memory of some parishioners to install floodlighting of the church; this was completed in the following year and has been greatly admired as a focal point during the hours of darkness in the village.

There are currently two faculties being sought: to remove the pews in the south transept to make a more comfortable social area; and to make a path from the west door to the outside tap and dustbin at the north side of the churchyard. The Quinquennial Report, last carried out in August 2014, is scheduled to be done again in 2020. Recommendations came under 4 headings – works required to be done urgently, works required to be done within 12 months, works to be done within 5 years and works beyond 5 years – with those listed under the first two headings being carried out within a year.

"What does our church in Easton mean to me?"

It means community, a friendly reassuring sense of inclusion. I love to see the Church lit up at night and to hear the bell on Sundays. I love that my children and I were members of the choir, and still feel connected to the Church. I love that I can be involved however small, by helping with concerts and suppers and making the harvest loaf every year."

The **church building** has several unique features:

- Three very fine stained glass windows, the largest of which, at the east end, depicts the crucifixion.
- Two large mosaics on the interior west wall, made entirely by the villagers in 2000 and 2004. A dedication service was attended by the Bishop of Bath and Wells.



OUR MUSIC

St Paul's has a small choir of dedicated singers who sing at most services. At joint Benefice services the choir enjoys joining forces with Westbury choir for rehearsals and the services. They have also joined with Westbury to rehearse and take part in the Deanery Choral Service. We do not have a resident organist at present although an ex-villager willingly plays the organ when he can. As we purchased the set of CDs to accompany our hymn book, our excellent PA system ensures that we are always able to have a sung service. This also links with our loop system for the hard of hearing.

"What the church means to me ...

It makes me feel calm. It is part of my week. I look forward to each Sunday. I love St. Paul's and Easton where I have always felt welcome. I have been going to St. Paul's for 26 years."

FINANCE

St. Paul's is solvent and we pay our Parish Share in full each year, and have a little in reserve. Our finances are reasonably healthy and our decision to donate 10% of our annual income to charities should be mentioned. We will also be able to afford the costs of the alterations to the South Transept and the enhanced path in the churchyard.

OUR MISSION AND OUTREACH

EVENTS

There is a thriving community spirit in Easton, despite the fact that it is the smallest of the three villages in the parish. Events managed by the PCC include:

The **Easton Church Room Coffee Morning** (started by Vera Parsons and Betty Hodges in 1994) raises funds for our picturesque Church Room. We have a very good and loyal team of ladies and cooks from Easton who are always willing to help when asked. The coffee mornings take place on the 3rd Saturday of the month. We provide tea/coffee, homemade cakes and biscuits. There is also a raffle full of interesting donated items, a produce stall, a book stall and a stall for plants and bric-a-brac. It is always a lively morning and a good opportunity to get together.

Lunches in Lent, held in the Church Room, raise money for our charities. Though started as an event run just by Easton, it was due to become a Benefice-wide event this year.

Fundraising Concerts.

We are fortunate in having a beautiful organ, which many visiting organists have much enjoyed playing. For many years we have organised fundraising concerts, which have proved extremely popular and successful. Our performers, whether soloist, choirs or instrumentalist, have all commented on the wonderful acoustics in the Church.

Carols on the Green.

This is held on the village green, usually the week before Christmas. We are extremely lucky to have the Wells City Band play for us on this occasion and the Carol Singing, along with mulled wine and hot roasted chestnuts, is an event that is well attended and much appreciated by the villagers.

The Church Room is also used by the **Ladies Guild** and a **drumming group**. The PCC have made it known that this facility is available for anyone who needs a meeting place.

CHARITIES

Every two years the villagers are invited to nominate a range of charities from which the committee chooses three to support (one local, one national and one international).

Charities supported include: Compass Carers; The Children's Society; The Hope Christian Trust; The Mission to Seafarers; the Samaritans; the MRI Scanner Appeal at Musgrove Hospital; and the foodbanks in Wells and Cheddar.

Events such as Lunches in Lent, the Harvest Supper and Carols on the Green are held to raise funds. Monies are also donated from special services including Christingle, Harvest, Remembrance Sunday, Carol and Crib services.



COMMUNITY GROUPS AND LINKS .

There are many activities including a drumming group, Yoga, Pilates and art groups, book club, dog training and motor bike classes. Organisations in the village include 1st Easton Brownies, Easton Ladies Guild and Easton Village Hall.

EASTON VILLAGE HALL

The Hall is run by a committee of Trustees from the village. Their aim is to facilitate a range of activities at the village hall, some as local fundraising community events and others through external hiring. Periodic surveys have been carried out in the village to gauge interest and support. The committee work closely with the church to ensure events complement and do not clash and to this end there are strong ties with a church representative on the village hall committee.

Recently, the Easton Wildlife Group has been set up to encourage a greater abundance and diversity of wildlife in the village. This group is currently working with the Parish Council to agree a planting scheme in the Jubilee Playing Field.

EASTON LADIES GUILD

The Easton Ladies Guild is a social group who meet in the Church Room monthly. Guest speakers deliver a mixture of interesting talks at these meetings. Several outings throughout the year are enjoyed by all members. In 2019 the Guild successfully raised enough money to provide two defibrillators for the village. 2020 saw the 80th anniversary of the Guild and planned celebrations have been put on hold but will take place as soon as safely possible.

Westbury-sub-Mendip

<https://www.achurchnearyou.com/church/10872/>



View over Westbury-sub-Mendip © John Waters

OUR SETTING

Westbury-sub-Mendip lies on the spring line of the Mendip Hills in what was the Bishop of Bath and Wells' Hunting Park. The first stone church dates from the 12th century and some of the original stonework remains at the east and west ends of the building.

There are 375 households; a primary school; community shop with Post Office; a popular pub; a hairdresser's; a service garage; a regular bus service (between Weston-super-Mare and Wells); a playing field with tennis courts; several active farms; and a small light industrial estate.

OUR PRIORITIES

- To be better equipped Christians for the challenges of the 21st Century
- To engage more with the younger people in the village
- To increase the use of the Church building for village activities
- To be a more relevant and flexible church in an ever changing world with so many differing needs

OUR WORSHIP

We have a regular robed choir at services and several trained Chalice Assistants. The Intercessions on most Sundays are led by members of the congregation. All regular services are followed by a time of fellowship with refreshments in Church.

We hold occasional evensongs, Taizé services and dramatised readings of the word. During Lent we hold mid-week Compline services led by Church members and preceded by talks. During 2019 we held special services celebrating 25 years of Women's Ministry, the Annual Bell Ringers' service and Poetry and Praise.

We have regular support from the local retired Clergy and two Readers. There is also an active Churchwarden.



Church of St Lawrence

On 5th July 2020, during the Covid pandemic, we reopened the Church for services and held a Morning Prayer service led by the congregation. As a result we have revised our monthly worship pattern:

- 1st Sunday Morning Service
- 2nd Sunday Holy Communion led by visiting Clergy
- 3rd Sunday Morning Prayer by congregation
- 4th Sunday Holy Communion led by visiting Clergy.

OUR MUSIC

ST LAWRENCE CHURCH CHOIR

Our choir's nine members meet regularly on Friday evenings to rehearse for worship in our church when we lead the singing of hymns and psalms.

We often sing an anthem on special occasions. In addition to this, we take part in Deanery and Diocesan choral events for which we have to learn new music. New members are always welcome.



BELL RINGERS



We are a cheerful bunch of 11 adult ringers and one young learner (3rd generation ringer!). We have 6 bells, use method ringing and we ring on the 1st and 3rd Sundays of each month for morning service, as well as for other special occasions and services when asked.

Monday evenings are practice nights after which we socialise together in the Pub! We are always happy to welcome new ringers and visiting ringers to join us .

CHARITIES

By regular giving we have supported: Cheddar Food Bank; Shelter; The Children's Society; The Farming Community Network; The Samaritans; Shelter Box; The Children's' Hospice South West; The British Legion.

FINANCE

Parish Share—The church is in the mid-range socio-economic grouping for our Parish Share, the contribution for which we aim to pay in full at the end of each year. We have restricted accounts for the churchyard and the building. We also have 72 regular Gift Aid pledges. For more details, please contact our Treasurer at randshealey@btinternet.com.

Friends of Westbury Church—We are very grateful that this village group organises several social events a year to support the fabric of the church. The money they raise goes towards the building maintenance.

The **Building Maintenance Group** oversees the practical aspects of the Church building. The last Quinquennial Report on the building was made in late 2019. We are acting on the recommendations and awaiting faculties for work on the windows, some parts of the roof and the organ.

COMMUNITY EVENTS

The Village and Church have a busy social Calendar, including:

Pancake lunch and races, led by the Church and Village hall.

Village Fete on the playing field with all stalls run by the Church and the music, races and barbecue run by other village organisations.

Strawberry Tea, led by the Friends of Westbury Church.

Winter Warmer Lunch, led by the Friends of Westbury Church.

Coffee, Cakes and Crafts for Christmas run by the Church and local crafts stalls.



Carol Singing round the village led by members of the Church and Wednesday choirs with refreshments by the Friendly Society.

Tea & Toys weekly in the Village Hall, sponsored by the Church

Monthly Thursday Tea for those at home.

Glow-worm counting.

Annual Cider Making event using local apples and also a **Wassail**, assisted by 'Footlights', our amateur dramatics group.



Primroses, Plants and Paintings Event in Church combining our village artists, our Gardening Club and our churchyard primroses.

Monthly Church Lunch in the pub after Sunday service.



The Westbury Inn

The Village Hall hosts monthly meetings of the W.I., the Gardening Club and winter Film Nights as well as fitness classes, table tennis and the Friday Painting Group.

Our Village Club Day includes a Church Service and Parade led by the Wells City Band.

Our Friendly Society is one of the oldest in the country and offers grants to help local organisations or young people.

WHAT DOES OUR CHURCH MEAN TO ME?



"From birth, it has given stability to my life, pointed me in the way I want to live that life and shown me what my priorities are. Westbury is a friendly, supportive and uplifting community and as Tower Captain it is good to share my faith with others. My church has been the centre of celebration in my life, both the highs and lows with family and friends in the past and I hope for future generations to come."

"For me the church is the central focus in the community. We are lucky to have a robed choir. It has a warm welcome for services and provides hospitality after them. It can be used by Village organisations for music, talks and exhibitions."



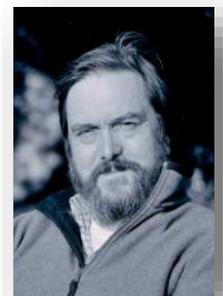
"We have missed the church locally during the pandemic. Not only have we lost a meeting place and the comfort of familiar rituals at significant life events but the absence of a vicar has meant that part of our social support system has not been there."

"It's very important to us and our young family to have a church at the heart of our community. The christening of our youngest, Sophie, was a special service with close friends and family. Katie, our three-year-old, said, 'I super loved it because of the singing and playing the instruments'. The church and the school work closely together, which is great news as our eldest is going to school in September."



"The Church is part of the glue that holds village life together along with the shop and the pub. The Church is not just the ancient stones that rise from the landscape but the whole community."

"To Westbury's non-churchgoers, St Lawrence is a reassuring presence. For more than a thousand years it has been an integral part of the community, and this is why many of us contribute to the upkeep of our historic church."



"Our church is a special place where we can go and meet people who will give friendship and comfort when you need it. Our daughter said, 'I go there and I can talk to Grandma and make sure Cluck Cluck (her hen who died) is ok.' The church gives our village a place in the community to feel part of a family."

The Diocese of Bath and Wells is one of 41 Church of England dioceses in the country. The diocese stretches from Portishead in the north to Crewkerne in the south, Minehead in the west to Frome in the east. Our vision, and the diocesan strategy that is emerging from it, speaks of the story of Jesus; his life, teaching and work, his death and resurrection; the story which is the context of our faith and the content of our message.

We seek **to live** this story as disciples of Jesus Christ in the world and **to tell it**, both in sharing the good news and how our own lives speak about Him. Bishop Peter's work on a new vision and strategy for the diocese began during his first year as Bishop of Bath and Wells, which he spent visiting parishes and listening.

The diocesan strategy is built around three priorities:

- To place mission and evangelism at the heart of all we do.
- To re-align our resources towards mission.
- To identify, develop and release the gifts of all our people.

This has been developed in a number of areas:

Deaneries. Each deanery now has a Deanery Mission Plan (DMP) to identify and address priorities for mission in the local area. This has encouraged a lot of collaboration across deaneries in mission and discipleship development. DMPs will continue to be important in the coming years as decisions about resource allocation will be made in the light of what the plans say.

Pioneering and fresh expressions. Our Pioneer Project (part-funded by the national church) seeks to encourage pioneering across the Diocese to reach those communities where we currently have little impact. Deaneries and parishes are being resourced to develop pioneering within their areas and to encourage the vocation of those who are called to work with people outside the inherited church.

Lay ministry and vocation. Our priority is to develop the ministry of all God's people, lay and ordained working in partnership. We increasingly emphasise lay leadership and ministry in our diocesan programme, and we are developing new pathways for lay vocations in order to allow this to develop.

Axbridge Deanery

Resourcing Effective Ministry for Effective Mission

If you visit the Axbridge Deanery website [[https:// axbridgedeanery.com](https://axbridgedeanery.com).] you will see that the Deanery has 10 Benefices with 8 full time and 2 half-time clergy posts and a number of curates and retired priests.

It is a friendly Deanery where the clergy and laity work together to support each other. Deanery is often associated with Synod. Our Deanery is a much wider concept than being purely meeting based.

The Deanery Benefices support the Deanery as a whole by encouraging licensed clergy to participate in a focussed Deanery role. No specific focus has emerged for this current post but we would like to ensure that a Deanery-wide role would be acceptable in matters such as Climate Change, Tourism or New Housing Development.

[Axbridge Deanery cont.](#)

We are looking forward to welcoming you here and if there is anything about the Deanery that you would like to ask please do not hesitate to ask either Richard Neill [01934 713566] or Tim Hind [01749 870356]

Our Benefices thank you for your interest.

We hope that we have been able to show you what we have to offer, who we are and, above all, our desire to share our Christian faith and to strengthen our Church and our Communities.

We assure you that we are willing—and eager—to help, support and follow whoever God guides to us and that, together with that guidance and God’s grace, our Churches and Communities will continue to thrive, grow and prosper.

VACANCY PRAYER

Lord God we pray for your guidance during our time of vacancy here in Priddy, Westbury-sub-Mendip and Easton.

We thank you that you have called us as your people for these Parishes.

Please unite us and strengthen us as we bridge the gap between priests.

Come Holy Spirit and fill us as we serve our community.

We pray for each of us to have the courage to use our gifts and talents to build a foundation for the communities here so that this may be a time where we all grow in faith

We pray Lord that you call clearly the person you have in mind to support us in our churches here.

We pray that you draw them to us and that they are equipped and encouraged to complement our activities here and lead us forward.

We pray for the recruitment process, that it will support your will for us. Please give those involved your wisdom and discernment.

We thank you for the opportunity of a new beginning ahead. Help us all to embrace the change and to be changed ourselves, becoming more like you.

In Jesus' name,
Amen.

