



# ***Benefice Profile***

***St Cuthbert, Wells***  
***St Mary Magdalene, Wookey Hole***



***Welcome to this introduction to our Benefice  
We are delighted that you have decided to have a look at our profile  
and to consider whether God might be calling you to come to join us here on the  
edge of the Mendip Hills.***

***We are two churches in different and glorious settings and, together, we are  
seeking someone who wants to share with us all that is good  
and all that is holy in these places.***

***We offer a warm welcome, our willing hearts, and our shortcomings.  
We are faithful in our worship; generous in our hospitality; and we seek to  
provide a spiritual space at the heart of our communities.***

***We need a vicar to enable us to assemble all our spiritual, social, community and  
pastoral work into a whole which can help us serve the people of the  
village of Wookey Hole, and the citizens of Wells.***

***We hope you will read on to find out more about us; and for our benefice, and for  
you, we pray for the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the  
fellowship of the Holy Spirit.***

***So that our congregations develop in their faith and grow in number  
and are able to share God's love more widely,  
we would like to:***

- ***Extend*** our churches' involvement with our communities; with the city and the schools in Wells, and at the heart of village life in Wookey Hole.
- ***Enjoy*** the richness of the church year and play a central role in the communities' celebration of festivals such as Harvest, Christmas and Holy Week.
- ***Enrich*** and develop our spiritual lives and deepen our understanding.
- ***Engage*** with those, both young and old, who want to explore and deepen their spiritual lives

- ***Welcome*** tourists and enable them to appreciate and enjoy the historical and cultural richness of our buildings, while ensuring that we retain the spiritual atmosphere and identity of these parish churches.
- ***Value*** the elderly and those reaching the end of their lives by offering them a warm welcome as well as practical and spiritual support.
- ***Develop*** a mission to the 'younger old'. Those such as the newly-retired or with empty nests, who may be seeking to find or re-discover God's love.

***To help us fulfil this vision we are hoping for a priest  
who can:***

- *Support the **church community** to develop and implement this vision while taking time to understand our journey so far, and value the needs both of the congregations and of individuals.*
- *Understand and value the different **roles** of a city parish, and a rural parish.*
- *Encourage and facilitate **communication** within the two parishes and across the benefice.*
- *Develop the current **pastoral care** provision and take a personal role in visiting and praying with those in need.*

- *Support the central importance of the **Eucharist**, particularly at St Cuthbert's.*
- *Respect the **liturgy and worship** loved by the congregations of the two parishes,*  
*and yet ...*
- *Show **creativity** in looking for ways to encourage new styles of worship.*
- *Review **resources**, including paid staff, to enable growth.*

## ***And a priest who is:***

- *A leader who can inspire others with their own love of God.*
- *A creative thinker and strategic planner.*
- *A sensitive communicator.*

- *A leader who can nurture individuals in their own ministry and encourage collaborative working.*
- *A resilient, caring and sociable person.*
- *Both a dignified priest and a warm human; serious about faith but perhaps not so serious about life.*

*Working together to support the work in the benefice*

*ORDAINED*



*Jennifer Coles  
Associate Priest*



*Sue Rose  
Supporting Non-Stipendiary Priest*



*Tobie Osmond  
Rural Dean*

*and the much appreciated support of retired priests: Valerie Bonham, Hugh Talbott, Catherine Llewelyn-Evans, and Graham Hendy.*

*LAY*



*Alistair Glanville  
Reader*

*Church Wardens*



*Graham Barrow and  
Antonia Gwynn  
(St Cuthbert)*



*David Scarth and  
Elizabeth Talbott  
(St Mary Magdalene)*

*Verger (St Cuthbert)  
Sheila Jenkins*

*and, of course.....*



Café volunteers

Servers

Organisers of fundraising



Lay Pastoral Assistants



Flower Arrangers



Magazine editor and distributors

School governors



Bell ringers



Choir members

Intercessors



PCC members

Office volunteers

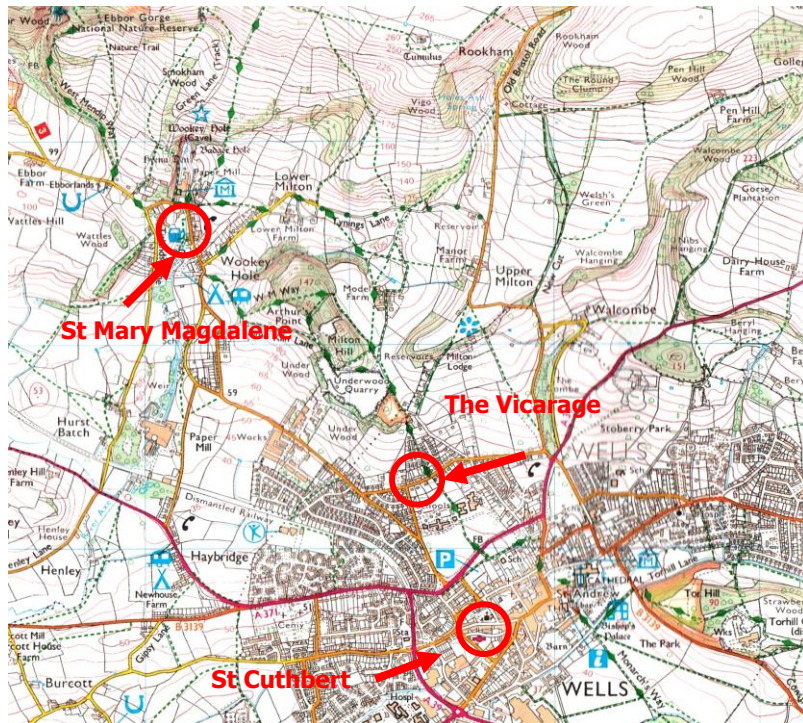
Lesson readers

## **WHERE WE ARE**

*The benefice is on the edge of Mendip Hills in Somerset, with the Levels stretching away to the south, and the coast to the west.*

[Google maps link](#)

*The two parishes lie next to each other with the churches about two miles apart. The parish of St Mary Magdalene is west of the city of Wells, centred on the village of Wookey Hole, and St Cuthbert's covers the western side of the city. The Vicarage is in a quiet residential area between the two churches.*



*Within 25 miles there are many attractions, including the caves at Wookey Hole and Cheddar Gorge; Glastonbury Abbey and Tor;*



*and a wide range of attractions offered by the nearby cities of Bath and Bristol.*



*The coast, the Mendip Hills and the Somerset Levels give opportunities for walking, caving, abseiling, horse riding, cycling and much more.*

*Bristol Airport is about 40 minutes away, as is the M5. There are rail stations at Castle Cary, Bristol and Bath, and good bus connections from Wells.*

*You can find out more about Somerset and the Mendip area on [Visit Somerset](#) , [Mendip Hills](#)*

## ***DIOCESE OF BATH AND WELLS***



*The Diocese is led by its Bishop Peter Hancock, and Bishop Ruth Worsley, the suffragan Bishop of Taunton.*

*Shaping the Future, a new diocesan strategy, has been developed in the last year. It has set out the following vision:*

*In response to God's immense love for us, we seek to be God's people, living and telling the story of Jesus*

*and identified three priorities for action:*

- To place mission and evangelism at the heart of everything we do*
- To realign our ministry resources towards mission*
- To identify, develop and use the gifts of all our people*

*There is lots more information about the Diocese on their website [Diocese of Bath and Wells](#)*

*The benefice is in the Shepton Mallet Deanery and is part of the 'Christians Together in Wells' partnership, and the Local Ministry Group.*

## ***OUR COMMUNITIES***

***Wookey Hole*** has a permanent population of about 500. Around 250,000 tourists visit the village each year to see the caves, the old paper mill and Ebbor Gorge. There is still a working paper mill in the area, together with an industrial estate of small businesses and a number of local farms.



*Wookey Hole is a lively community and many of the activities are centred in and around the church. In the last twelve months there have been two baptisms, two weddings and four funerals.*



*There is more information about Wookey Hole on the village website [Wookey Hole Village](#).*

**Wells** is the smallest city in England with about 12,000 inhabitants. Despite its small size there is a lot going on here!

Many visitors come to Wells to see the cathedral and its other historic buildings, including the moated Bishop's Palace, Vicar's Close, the Museum and St Cuthbert's Church itself.



The city has a thriving market twice a week, and a good range of shops, restaurants and leisure facilities.

There is an amateur theatre and a cinema and several concert venues, including the new Cedars Hall which attracts international performers.

A literature festival is held every October, as well as three other festivals which celebrate Food, New Music and Contemporary Art.



Within the St Cuthbert's parish there are three church schools: infant, junior and secondary. In the city there is also Wells Cathedral School which is particularly renowned for its music.

Wells City Council and St Cuthbert's Church have close historical connections and all civic services are held in the church. The City Mayor appoints a chaplain annually and this is often the incumbent of St Cuthbert's.



There are also two care homes and ancient almshouses with which St Cuthbert's has links.

The church is popular for 'rites of passage' ceremonies and in 2015 there were a total of 15 baptisms, nine weddings and 27 funerals, with numbers increasing in 2016.

The population of the benefice is growing. A number of new housing developments have recently been built within the St Cuthbert's parish and 173 new houses are under construction on the border of Wells and Wookey Hole, with permission agreed for 220 more. This opens up huge and exciting new opportunities for both parishes.

These websites will provide more information about Wells and its amenities:

[City of Wells](#)

[St Cuthbert's Infants' School](#)

[St Cuthbert's Junior School](#)

[Wells Blue School](#)

[Wells Cathedral](#)

[Wells Leisure Centre](#)

## **OUR ACTIVITIES**

### **WORKING TOGETHER AND PRAYING TOGETHER**

*The Benefice Lay Pastoral Assistants' Group works across the whole area and holds joint meetings and training sessions. This is working well and it is hoped that a similar group of Lay Worship Assistants might be set up. Home communions are also provided across the benefice.*

*There are also opportunities for developing our administrative procedures through a joint administrator; as well as, perhaps, sharing roles such as health and safety and safeguarding officers.*

*The monthly Parish News has served both parishes for many years.*

*The two parishes join together for occasional services, notably patronal festivals and Churches Together in Wells celebrations, including a service and procession to the Market Place on Good Friday walk, and a summer picnic. A Pentecost service for all the churches has been held in St Cuthbert's for several years; and St Mary Magdalene's Carol service is very popular with both congregations.*



*A Growing Faith discussion group, led by the previous Vicar, was attended by members of both congregations; and there have been joint prayer groups.*

*Members of the St Mary Magdalene congregation are involved in the Open the Book project with schools, and they are actively recruiting members from St Cuthbert's to join them in this work.*

*Friends and relatives of those whose funerals have been held at either St Cuthbert's or St Mary Magdalene during the year are invited to an annual Memorial Service on the Sunday nearest to All Saints' Day. It is very well attended and much appreciated by those who attend, many of whom are not church-goers.*

*Working together during the current vacancy has enabled the PCCs of the two churches, and the churchwardens to get to know each other better and to appreciate the benefits of closer links.*



[Copies of Parish News past and present are available here.](#)  
[PARISH SPOTLIGHT ST CUTHBERT, WELLS](#)  
[PARISH SPOTLIGHT ST MARY MAGDALENE, WOOKEY HOLE](#)

## ***ST MARY MAGDALENE, WOOKEY HOLE***



*There are 48 on the electoral roll and attendance at the weekly Eucharist is about 16. Matins on the third Sunday is attended by 11 on average, while the second Sunday Evening Prayer and 8.00 Eucharist on the fifth Sunday both attract around 10 people.*

*During the winter months the monthly Evening Prayer is replaced by lay-led services of various sorts.*



*Recently a silent meditation group has been set up which meets in the church twice a week. This attracts people who might feel uncomfortable attending a more formal service. There is also a popular Lectio Divina Bible Study house-group which meets once a month.*



*The church is at the centre of many village activities and services on big occasions such as Mothering Sunday, Harvest Festival attract between 40 and 50 people.*

*Many in the congregation are also involved in the village Residents' Forum and a monthly lunch for older residents of the village.*



*The congregation nominates four charities (two UK and two overseas) to support each year through church giving*



*Both the annual church fete and the 'bring and share' Harvest Supper are designed as community events and popular with many people who do not regularly attend church.*

*The church has a lively young organist and the village orchestra and singing group often take part in services. This brings younger people into the church*



***ST CUTHBERT, WELLS***  
***[St Cuthbert's Church](#)***  
***[St Cuthbert's Facebook](#)***



*There are 141 on the electoral roll, and church membership is around 98 and the 10.00am Eucharist every Sunday has an average attendance of 70. The Parish Share is paid in full.*

*An 8.00am BCP communion service is held on the first Sunday of each month with an average attendance of seven.*

*There is a well-attended Eucharist in the Trinity Chapel at 10.00 am on Wednesdays.*



*A service of Christian meditation is held in the Trinity Chapel every month on the first and third Thursdays.*

*There was a more informal Together@4 service once a month but this has not been held since the departure of the Family and Children's Worker in July 2016.*

*There is also a 11.00am BCP communion service on Thursdays, held in Bubwith Chapel.*

*As the parish church for the City of Wells, civic events are held at the church. These include Remembrance Sunday and Royal British Legion events.*



*The congregation appreciate marking the festivals of the church year with appropriate services and celebrations. Services are held on all the days of Holy Week and last year we held a Passover Seder supper on Maundy Thursday which was very popular.*

*Funding from the parish and a three-year grant from the Diocese recently enabled us to employ a Children and Young Person's Worker.*

*The holder of this post left after completing two years to begin ordination training. The final year's funding is being held in abeyance and its future will need to be*



*considered. In the meantime we will continue to build on our links to children and young families through our three Church schools.*



*St Cuthbert's Infant and St Cuthbert's Junior schools lie within the parish. There are links to both through foundation governors and through*

*school services in the church. Clergy from the church have led assemblies at the schools.*

*The Blue School is a co-educational secondary school dating back to 1641 of which the vicar is historically a governor. The school does not have a strong church affiliation but the links with the school's chaplain are being strengthened. At present the church provides a venue for the school's Founders' Day and its annual concert. It is also one of the Christian places of worship visited as part of the RE curriculum.*



*St Cuthbert's provides a weekly communion service at a local residential care home and also at the Chapel serving the historic Bubwith almshouses adjacent to the churchyard.*

*The church has an organist and the small but loyal robed choir leads the singing on Sundays and also sings at weddings and funerals*



*The church is a popular venue for concerts and until 2015 held an annual music festival. It is hoped that this can be resumed in the future.*



## **Groups and other activities at St Cuthbert's**

### *Christmas Festivals*

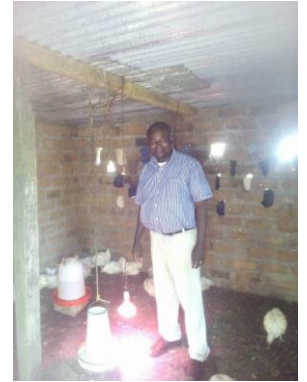


*Over recent years a festival has been held over several days in the lead up to Christmas. Since 2014, this has taken the form of a display of over 200 nativity sets of all ages and styles. The event has become very popular and attracts a large number of visitors.*

- *The Ladies' Group*
- *Coots and Curlews (a bird watching group set up by an enthusiast)*
- *'Over the Hills and Far Away', an annual walk somewhere in Somerset*
- *'Explore', a group for young teenagers run by the Local Ministry Group*
- *Christian Aid Week events*

### *Zambia link*

*A member of the congregation visited our link parish of West Livingstone in Zambia in 2015 and this has helped revive the project, with funds being raised recently to support the purchase of chickens to generate income and support children's education in Livingstone.*



- *A Local Ministry Group initiative called Pints of View*
- *Lent Course*



	<i>ST MARY MAGDALENE</i>		<i>ST CUTHBERT'S</i>	
<i>1<sup>ST</sup> SUNDAY</i>	<i>11.00</i>	<i>Common Worship Eucharist</i>	<i>8.00 10.00</i>	<i>BCP Holy Communion Common Worship Eucharist</i>
<i>2<sup>nd</sup> SUNDAY</i>	<i>11.00 6.30 4.00</i>	<i>Common Worship Eucharist Summer months: BCP Evening Prayer Winter months: Lay-led service</i>	<i>10.00</i>	<i>Common Worship Eucharist</i>
<i>3<sup>rd</sup> SUNDAY</i>	<i>11.00</i>	<i>BCP Matins</i>	<i>10.00</i>	<i>Common Worship Eucharist</i>
<i>4<sup>th</sup> SUNDAY</i>	<i>11.00</i>	<i>Eucharist</i>	<i>10.00</i>	<i>Common Worship Eucharist</i>
<i>5<sup>th</sup> SUNDAY</i>	<i>8.00</i>	<i>BCP Eucharist</i>	<i>10.00</i>	<i>Welcome Eucharist</i>
<i>WEEKDAY SERVICES</i>	<i>Lectio Divina Bible Study house-group Silent meditation groups</i>		<i>Wed 10.00</i>	<i>Common Worship Eucharist in the Trinity Chapel</i>
			<i>Thurs 11.00</i>	<i>BCP Holy Communion, Bubwith Chapel</i>
			<i>1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Thurs</i>	<i>Christian Meditation in the Trinity Chapel</i>
<i>SPECIAL SERVICES</i>	<i>Daily services during Holy Week Good Friday: 1 hour service/meditation led by priest Evening Carol Service, Christmas Eve Crib Service</i>		<i>Ash Wednesday and Maundy Thursday: Evening Eucharist Good Friday Christians Together in Wells service and procession Evening Carol Service, Christmas Eve Crib Service, Midnight Mass</i>	

## **BUILDINGS**

### ***St Mary Magdalene's Church in Wookey Hole***



*The church, surrounded by its garden, is right in the centre of the village. It was well-constructed in 1874 by a Victorian philanthropist to seat around 100, and the building is in good condition. It has been well maintained over the years and there is a faculty and the finances in place to undertake internal redecoration.*

*The fact that the building is open during daylight hours is much appreciated by the many visitors who drop in. We realise that we could do more to encourage tourists and visitors, and help them understand our faith as they appreciate the tranquillity.*



*We are in discussions with the Diocesan stewardship advisor to carry through a major project which will turn the Churchyard into a community garden, improve the access for all and upgrade facilities in Church to make it more useful. Many of the most enthusiastic members of the community garden working group are not churchgoers and were not previously involved with the Church in any way. This initiative is also attracting young people to be a part of an enjoyable community and church project.*

## *St Cuthbert's Church in Wells*



*St Cuthbert's is a beautiful medieval building with the tallest tower in Somerset, and a stunning painted roof.*



*Work over the past ten years has provided a well-equipped office and kitchen, together with toilets and storage space. The back of the church has been developed into an area where people can meet and eat.*

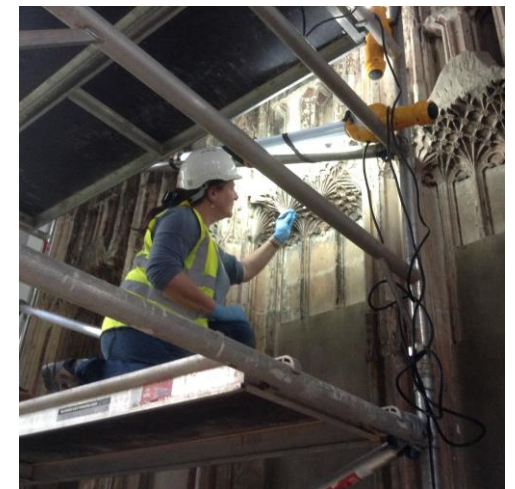
*The most recent development has been the creation of a peaceful space for prayer in the Holy Trinity Chapel.*



*Cuthbert's Kitchen which is run by volunteers at present, is open for coffee every morning and for a weekly Market Day Lunch, as well as catering for concerts and special events.*



*At present a major project (funded by various organisations, including the Heritage lottery Fund) is investigating two medieval reredoses in the church. This includes the cataloguing of several hundred fragments of painted stone statues. The project will help us make decisions about future funding applications for the conservation and display of this historically and culturally significant collection and how to balance this with retaining the spirituality of the building.*



[For more information see the Reredos Project website](#)

## *THE VICARAGE*



*The Vicarage is a modern, spacious four-bedroom house. It has plenty of parking and a good-sized garden. There is an annexe with a separate entrance, study and small meeting room.*



# Views from the Pews

I would like to.....

..worship God together with other Christians – in fellowship and fun

..serve the people in our community and strengthen my Christian faith.

..find encouragement for my Christian journey.

..worship God in a service of words and music which speak to me

..find spiritual guidance with time for personal reflection

..find God in Christ and to grow in faith: to find God in stillness and quietness

..worship God, meet friends and do a few things to help. There is always something to do even if it is only a smile or a kind word.

# Views from the Pews

I am hoping for...

.. a human who is humorous and has a sense of humour!

.. someone male or female; married or single; with modern views tempered with tradition

.. someone who will lead the congregation in worship in the beauty of holiness, taking us on the path to God

.. someone contemplative – not afraid of silence and stillness

..someone who can communicate well with the congregation.

..someone who will provide pastoral care for all, including personal visits

.. someone who is caring, who will listen to what is being said. And who is not afraid of introducing new ways and services

## The view from the Local Ministry Group (LMG)

**The Deanery Plan** for this area envisages these parishes working together as a part of the LMG to further the existing collaborative work between all the parishes involved in the three Benefices that make up our LMG \*.

The clergy in the other two benefices, led by the two Incumbents, are looking forward to working with the person appointed to share resources and ideas, to continue to help each other so that “no-one is alone.”

### **Possibilities for the future:**

- **Our key hope is that we and our church leadership, will seek to develop with the person appointed and the membership of these parishes, appropriate, innovative forms of mission, outreach and service working across parish and benefice boundaries, as the local population grows and changes. We look forward to exploring what this will mean in detail with the person appointed in the light of their interests, skills and gifts.**

- We clergy are looking forward to exploring these areas as equals.
- We both greatly value the existing high degree of friendship and fellowship in and around the clergy and ministers of all the churches in the Wells area, and we will continue to develop links through the LMG and with Christians Together in Wells and Area (CTWA), the Church Leaders meet once a month for lunch together.

### **Other things we already do together include:**

- **Worshipping together** in various ways; for example on Ash Wednesday we have a united LMG service. We have tried this with Ascension Day with some success as well, and could expand to other mid-week celebrations.
- Pentecost has become a city wide ecumenical service where churches of all denominations shut up shop and meet together resulting in over 350 Christians worshipping together.

- **For fellowship and collaboration** the stipendiary clergy with other clergy as available currently meet together weekly for Morning Prayer– and meet for lunch as well.
- The monthly small and friendly Chapter meetings over lunch are another key area of mutual contact, interchange and stimulus, which include the three clergy of the other LMG gathered around the town of Shepton Mallet as well as the two Wells Secondary School Chaplains.
- **In terms of shared ministry and mission**, we have jointly led an LMG wide Wedding preparation day for 3 years now, and we hope to continue and develop this further drawing on a wide range of people and skills.
- Children’s activity days, Youth work, Pilgrim courses and an evening in the pub with the vicars where anything goes (Pints of View).

**Rev Paul Clarke**

Incumbent of Coxley-with-Godney, Henton and Wookey, & Mission Enabler in the city of Wells

**Rev Tobie Osmond**

Incumbent of St Thomas Wells, Priest in Charge of Chewton Mendip with Ston Easton, Litton and Emborough, & Rural Dean of Shepton Mallet Deanery

\* **The Wells LMG** comprises the Parishes of this Benefice, together with (a) the Parishes of Coxley-with-Godney, Henton and Wookey, and (b) St Thomas’s Wells with Chewton Mendip with Ston Easton, Litton and Emborough. By the time the person appointed joins us there will be the two other Incumbents, and in (a) a very part time Associate Priest in the St Cuthbert’s / Wookey Hole Benefice (who works full time for the Diocese in lay training), in (b) a fourth year Training Curate, an ONSM priest who is available mainly Sundays, and an ongoing House for Duty post in the three Chewton Mendip parishes. There are also three or four active retired clergy.

***and finally ...***

*We hope that you may feel that God is guiding you to find out more about us and about this lovely place.  
We look forward to meeting you and perhaps beginning a wonderful partnership  
to serve God, the people of our communities, and the wider world.*

*Please join, with us, in our Benefice prayers.*

The Collect for St Mary Magdalene



Almighty God,  
whose Son restored Mary Magdalene  
to health of mind and body  
and called her to be a witness to his resurrection:  
forgive our sins and heal us by your grace,  
that we may serve you in the power of his risen life;  
who is alive and reigns with you,  
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
one God, now and for ever.

The Collect for St Cuthbert

Almighty God,  
Who called your servant Cuthbert from following the flock  
To follow your Son, and to be a shepherd of your people:  
In your mercy, grant that we, following his example,  
May bring those who are lost home to your fold;  
Through Jesus Christ our Lord,  
Who is alive and reigns with you,  
In the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
One God, now and for ever.

