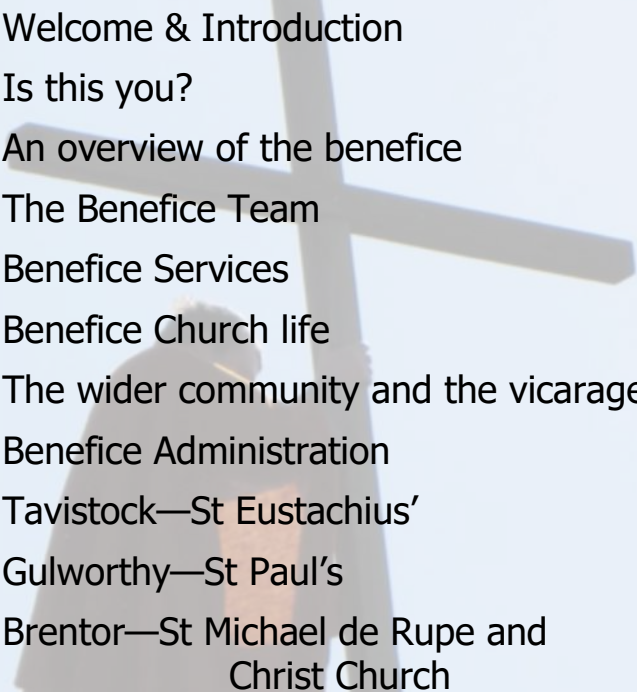




## The Benefice of Tavistock, Gulworthy & Brentor Parish Profile



# CONTENTS

A faint, artistic background image within the table of contents box shows a person in silhouette holding a large wooden cross. The person is wearing a hat and a long coat, and the cross is made of two simple wooden beams.

Page 3	Welcome & Introduction
Page 4	Is this you?
Page 5	An overview of the benefice
Page 6	The Benefice Team
Page 8	Benefice Services
Page 9	Benefice Church life
Page 10	The wider community and the vicarage
Page 11	Benefice Administration
Page 12	Tavistock—St Eustachius'
Page 16	Gulworthy—St Paul's
Page 19	Brentor—St Michael de Rupe and Christ Church



# INTRODUCTION

St Eustachius', St Paul's, St Michael de Rupe &  
Christ Church

## Welcome

Together we believe in shining God's light into our community, helping others and sharing the joy of Christian fellowship. We all believe in building the kingdom here in our community and we enjoy doing this in a wide and diverse fashion. We are excited to welcome a new priest in charge to join on this journey and strongly believe that this is a partnership, not the sole responsibility of one person. There are tremendous opportunities here in this benefice, which we look forward to sharing with you.

Thank you so much for taking the time to read this Parish Profile. We hope we will get the chance to get to know you.

## Archdeacon's Welcome

Tavistock Benefice bustles with activity with the 3 parishes offering a diversity of settings, opportunities, and ways of being church. The priest in charge is a key position within the archdeaconry and will require a priest of some experience to fulfil this rewarding role. You will need to be conversant with the Diocesan Vision and Strategy "Next Steps" and the remodelling of mission communities to meet those aims and objectives within the next few years within the Benefice, the Deanery, and the Diocese.



In the context of Tavistock Benefice, this will mean consideration of a minster model of ministry, building on its current strengths to offer ministry to other adjacent parishes where ministry is less sustainable in the medium term. Subject to the usual consultation, it is likely to involve pastoral reorganisation. The person appointed will need to lead any change sensitively and be fully engaged with this Diocesan vision. There is a need to strengthen this benefice as a Mission Community whilst not imposing uniformity. This will be a challenging but fulfilling role and the person appointed will find an able ministerial team to help lead out this vision.

As a Diocese we are committed to deepening our prayer life, making new disciples, and serving the people of Devon with joy. These aims find expression in the well embedded diocesan tagline "pray, grow, serve" and which are being grounded in 4 areas of our diocesan life: Children and Families; Young people aged 16 to 25; People over 60; and people connected to a local church but not regular members.

The Covid-19 pandemic has hastened a need to embrace changes with a mixed ecology required to continue to build the kingdom and this profile demonstrates that this benefice is well-equipped to meet these demanding challenges.

The Ven. Nick Shutt, Archdeacon of Plymouth



# IS THIS YOU?

## Person specification

### Essential characteristics

Cheerfully engage with everyone wherever they are, being a visible presence in the community and the church

Comfortable leading a wide range of styles of worship and liturgy

Collaborative and supportive leader who empowers and encourages others

Grounded theological and biblical understanding



### Desirable characteristics

Able to inspire and deepen the Christian faith and commitment of every age group

An interest in working with the wider community such as schools, residential homes and charities

Up for the challenge of growing God's Kingdom

Work with families to support their participation and growth within the church

Happy to use technology to reach out to a wider audience

Good sense of humour

An enjoyment of cake, chocolate, gin, wine and good company!

### What can we offer?

A large, diverse and capable ministry team

Supportive churchwardens and PCCs

A wonderful countryside location

Guaranteed days off and holidays

Time and support for reflection and study

A large, family friendly house and garden

Three active church communities with vision

Pilgrimage churches

Friendly church communities



We are excited at this opportunity and the possibilities in front of us. We look forward to sharing God's love with the community and journeying together on the path of faith.



# THE BENEFICE

St Eustachius', St Paul's, St Michael de Rupe &  
Christ Church

## Overview

Tavistock benefice comprises the three parishes of Tavistock, Gulworthy and Brentor. We are a benefice where everyone is welcome through the doors of our churches. Tavistock is a town of about 13000 people and is the main settlement in West Devon: Gulworthy and Brentor are small rural settlements 3 and 5 miles away. Each parish has a distinctive feel, with different strengths, but all contribute to 'the Church' in this exceptionally beautiful part of West Devon. The ancient market town of Tavistock is the thriving centre of the benefice, on the western edge of the Dartmoor National Park, and is notable for its history, as a World Heritage site, its architecture, community spirit and recreational facilities with many individual shops and businesses. Other amenities include a hospital, a bustling Pannier Market and a full range of schools both state and private. Tavistock is growing all the time with a number of new developments in progress, attracting families from many different areas as well as retired people who come to our area, either to be nearer family or simply because it is such a lovely area to live in. Hence there is a wide social mix within the benefice.

Plymouth is 16 miles away with fast Inter City rail links to London, Bristol and the North. There are also ferry services to Brittany and Northern Spain. Many residents travel to the city of Plymouth to work in a range of settings including the Naval Dockyard and the two universities and the medical school.

A major strength of the benefice is the leadership and support provided by the wide ministry team. As well as the incumbent there is one other ordained stipendiary curate, three non-stipendiary ordained clergy, several retired ministers who continue to play a major role in services, four lay readers and one in training, plus strong lay leadership in all three parishes. Between us we offer a wide range of regular services, from BCP Evensong to Messy Church.

Like many rural churches we have great festival services, from candlelit carol services to Easter Passion plays and Rogation walks. Each church is a key part of the community, with St Eustachius' leading civic services for every occasion, St Paul's, known as the miners' church, linked closely to the local school and farming community, with Christ Church a community church and St Michael's an outreach, pilgrimage centre.





# THE TEAM

Meet our active and engaged ministry team



Mike Loader is a retired physics teacher who has spent time teaching in Jerusalem, Kenya and Cyprus, as well as the UK. He was ordained Deacon at St Paul's Cathedral in Nicosia, and since returning to Tavistock he was ordained Priest in 2014 and serves as Assistant Priest, PTO. He leads the weekly bible study at Tavistock.



Sue Tucker was a Reader for sixteen years, and the Diocesan Rural Officer for ten, before being ordained in 2016. With a background in nursing and church choirs, she has an active pastoral ministry. She serves as Assistant Priest, PTO.



Judith Blowey moved to Higher Woodley Farm in 1983 and joined the congregation of St Paul's Church in Gulworthy. Over the years her journey to ministry has involved being a Churchwarden and PCC secretary for St Paul's and a member of the benefice Pastoral care team, before considering ordination and becoming Assistant Priest, SSM, in 2018.



Rosie Illingworth is our stipendiary curate, having been ordained in 2020. From a Northamptonshire Baptist background, she was introduced to the Church of England at Launde Abbey. After university and some time working for the NHS, she trained for ordination and joined us in 2020.



Our other curate, SSM, Hazel Butland is a medical doctor by original training. After many years as a GP in the community and in her local hospice in Aylesbury, she retired early following a tough cancer journey during which she felt called to Christian ministry. After serving as a Lay Reader, she pursued a call to ordained ministry and was priested in 2021 with Rosie.



Tony Vigers, PTO, retired early as a vicar over 20 years ago and enjoys leading services at Christ Church. He also leads the Brentor home group, and has been active in the parish's LLF courses. He has a long family connection with the parish, his ancestors having lived and farmed in the area in centuries past.

The Ven John Reed, PTO, retired as Archdeacon of Taunton in 2016, and supports the ministry at St Paul's, Gulworthy.



Wendy Roderick has been part of the ministry team as a Licensed Lay Minister since 2008, serving in the UK and in the Diocese of Cyprus and the Gulf. She is an experienced Headteacher, an English specialist and a school inspector. Having lived and worked in the Middle East she is particularly interested in interfaith dialogue, music and outreach.



Christopher Pancheri has been a Licensed Lay minister since 2011. He is a chartered architect with a passion for heritage and works with four Dartmoor churches. He is also passionate about pilgrimage and the walking ministry associated with the Archangel's Way, starting at Brentor.



Sally Pancheri has been a Licensed Lay Minister since 2011. She has a particular focus on pastoral and outreach work, and for many years ran the Tavy Mission Community Family Camp. She also has a knack of finding young people to give chocolate to!



After training as a physiotherapist, Liz Bastin underwent a period of searching, including time in Charismatic and Pentecostal churches. She then returned to the Church of England, and has been a Licensed Lay Minister since 2020.



Amanda Harris is currently in training as a Licensed Lay Minister and is looking forward to exploring scripture with others and apply it in our lives. She is an Engineer, has two small children and helps with the family small holding.



Fiona Lang as the Children and Families Worker for St Eustachius is developing relationships with local schools and communities and working with our Vestry Group, Messy Church and choir. Fiona is currently studying for a Bachelors in Divinity, as well as discerning her call to ordained ministry.





## Our Services

Church	Sunday services	Other regular services	Festival services
<b>St Eustachius'</b>	<p>7.30am Morning Prayer Common Worship, Daily Prayer</p> <p>8.00am Said Eucharist Common Worship, Order One (trad) (14)</p> <p>9.45am Sung Eucharist Common Worship, Order One (60-70)</p> <p>6pm Choral Evensong* BCP</p> <p><i>*Every 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday Evensong is replaced by a Eucharist for healing and wholeness and every second Sunday Compline</i></p>	<p><b>Weekday Eucharist:</b></p> <p>10.30am Wednesday Common Worship, Order One (trad) (16-20)</p> <p>8.30 am Friday Common Worship, Order One (Trad) (7-9)</p> <p><b>Weekdays and Saturdays:</b></p> <p>8am Morning Prayer Common Worship, Daily Prayer</p> <p>5pm * Evening Prayer Common Worship, Daily Prayer</p> <p>*6pm Friday Messy Church in term time</p>	<p>Festival services at Palm Sunday, Easter and Christmas in particular</p> <p>A range of civic services</p>
<b>Christ Church</b>	<p>9.45 every Sunday Holy Communion 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Sundays</p> <p>Prayer and Praise 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday</p> <p>Family service 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday</p> <p>Morning Prayer 5<sup>th</sup> Sunday (15-20)</p>		<p>Harvest Festival</p> <p>All Souls' service</p>
<b>St Michael de Rupe</b>	<p>6pm every Sunday Easter to Michaelmas</p> <p>Evening Prayer every 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Sundays</p> <p>Evensong BCP other Sundays (8-12)</p>		<p>Easter Passion Play</p> <p>Christmas Day carol service (100+)</p> <p>Occasional services during the winter months eg Epiphany, Candlemas, Advent</p>
<b>St Paul's</b>	<p>11.15 Holy Communion every Sunday (15-20)</p>		<p>Festival services at Palm Sunday, Easter and Christmas including our outdoor nativity</p> <p>Rogation</p>



## Church life

### Music

This is an especially important aspect of church life, particularly at St Eustachius' and Brentor.

St Eustachius' has a robed choir of some eighteen voices which sings twice every Sunday and has a wide repertoire. We have a very talented and enthusiastic Director of Music who is always anxious to bring out the full potential of his choir. In the past the choir has been asked to sing at Exeter and Wells Cathedrals and twice at an ecumenical service in Cornwall. They try to sing a variety of music and not stick to the same old favourites, which is challenging but enjoyable. They have also sung with the Exon Singers, a chamber choir who have an annual festival in Tavistock as well as performing concerts of their own to raise funds. They also take part in the Tavistock Music and Arts Festival which is held during the spring and brings an eclectic mix of music to the church.

St Eustachius' has a fine Walker pipe organ and a Steinway grand piano, both of which are regularly used to enhance our worship. There is also a fine organ at St Paul's.

There is also a choir at Brentor, led by lay reader Wendy Roderick, who has composed new music to celebrate festivals in the parish, including the dedication of the church, Christmas and Epiphany. The Brentor community is also invited to sing for pleasure at Songs and a Sandwich mornings on occasions, a very popular Saturday morning outreach event.

### Bell Ringing

The tower at St Eustachius' has a peal of ten bells, the last two being added to celebrate the millennium. There is an enthusiastic team of ringers who ring twice on Sundays as well as frequently for weddings and occasionally for national events. We also welcome ringers from other churches as well as visiting other churches on "Ringers' Outings".

Bell ringing is also important at St Michael's, where the five bells can be heard for miles across the countryside. The oldest bell there was cast in the 15<sup>th</sup> century and has a particularly fine tone.

### Food

As part of our commitment to community, refreshments and food are very important here – often we are outdoors, or walking, and we need to meet up with friends and refuel! So there is Friendly Friday Coffee at St Eustachius', the Ministry of Cakes and the Harvest Beer festival at Brentor, Christmas lunches and Rogation teas at St Paul's.



## The wider community

### The Pastoral Care Team

This is one of the most important groups within the church. There are 29 members across the benefice who work incredibly hard to keep in touch with the many people in our area who cannot get to church. They visit those who are sick and take home communion and during the last year have been absolutely invaluable. They have made literally hundreds of phone calls to those who have found the lockdown especially difficult, not only our own congregation but many in the wider community. They have kept in touch with 8 nursing and residential homes in the area and have provided printed copies of pastoral letters to those who don't use computers.

### Tavistock Area Christians Together

This is an ecumenical group drawn from local churches, including the benefice, and including Roman Catholics, Methodists, United Reformed Church, The Salvation Army, the Quakers, Kings Community Church and the Abbey Chapel. They meet regularly and have developed a number of initiatives, including Street Pastors, School Pastors, Catalyst, Tavipraise and Taviprayer and the Foodbank.



## The Vicarage

The Vicarage is an attractive Grade II listed house built of Hurdwick stone in about 1812. It comprises six bedrooms, three large reception rooms, one of which has been used as a study, and a large kitchen. Outside there is a driveway, with some limited parking for people working in the church, and a single garage. To the rear of the house is a large walled garden and a further walled paddock beyond this. Also within the grounds are items of great historical interest, including early Celtic Christian memorial stones and some remains of the former Abbey.





## Finances

All the parishes in the benefice are in a healthy financial position, giving significant funds to the diocese for the Common Fund. Whilst there were shortfalls due to the COVID pandemic, all PCCs have made paying the Common Fund a priority to support the work of the diocese.

The parishes are in the following positions:

Tavistock Parish had a small deficit in 2020 of £3000 against expenditure of £168,000. Fundraising is ongoing for a range of projects, with £90,000 and £42,000 raised for different projects already. It is currently on track to provide £95,000 to the Common Fund in 2021.

Gulworthy Parish did not have a deficit in 2020 and is currently meeting the Common Fund for 2021.

Brentor Church had a small deficit of £900 in 2020 and without capital works would have had a surplus. It is currently meeting the Common Fund for 2021.

## Meetings

There are a range of meetings to help and support the running of the benefice:

Ministry meetings happen every month for the team within the benefice

Tavistock Parish has a PCC meeting every 2 months, with a standing committee meeting 2 weeks before this

Gulworthy Parish has a PCC meeting every 2 months

Brentor Parish has a PCC meeting every month



## Administrative support

We believe in providing support to our ministers within the benefice. A number of people support this:

Tavistock Parish has a part time administrator working out of the Parish Office and a vergers

Brentor Parish has a part time, flexible working administrative assistant

Gulworthy Parish has a range of volunteers to support ministers within the Parish

Following on from the pandemic, we now have both in person and online services which are produced within the benefice to support the wider community.





# TAVISTOCK

St Eustachius'

## Who we are

St Eustachius' is at the heart of the town and has the capacity to seat well over 400 people, making it the natural venue for all civic occasions and a popular visitor attraction in its own right. We welcome everyone through our doors throughout the week for visitors and pilgrims.

## Our context

Tavistock is situated on the edge of Dartmoor, a beautiful national park in the county of Devon, on the banks of the River Tavy. It is a pretty market town, which prospered in medieval times from mining and the wool trade and from a large Benedictine Abbey, the ruins of which still exist today in both the churchyard and the grounds of the vicarage. It is famous for its ancient charter market which still survives today, and also has a wide variety of shops and restaurants. There are also a number of well attended local events including a Steam Fair, a Carnival week and the famous Goose Fair in October and Dickensian Night at the beginning of Advent, both of which draw crowds from all over Devon and Cornwall.





## Our worshipping community

We have over 200 on our electoral roll, with strong lay participation in many services. At the 9.45am family service there is a small group for children, and members of the congregation play an active part in this. We normally have regular Sidesman, Bell Ringers, a choir, those who read and lead the intercessions, take up the offertory and administer the chalice, although many of these have not been the same since the Coronavirus pandemic. We hope that all these activities will be able to resume before too long.

We were also in the habit of serving coffee and biscuits at the back of church after this service, but this is similarly in abeyance at the moment.



The Vestry Group for children meets during the 9.45 Sunday Eucharist service. This group started in the vestry but now meet at the base of the tower where they have more room to move around and get on with their various activities. They learn about the scriptures in a fun way and are very creative. Sadly we do not have all that many young children at present, but they are very enthusiastic and, from time to time, take part in the service by doing the intercessions or taking up the offertory. Obviously all this had to stop last year but they soldiered on by

having virtual vestry groups, which kept the continuity going. In the past they have enjoyed various trips and we hope that this will resume before long. They also enjoy making Mothering Sunday posies, Christmas decorations and an Easter Garden.

Messy Church has been running once a month for over 5 years and involves Bible based craft activities, a worship session with song, prayers and scripture, and fellowship in the form of a hot meal. It was extremely well attended before the pandemic; 'Virtual Messy Church' continued during the lockdowns and we have now re-started with Covid compliant 'Mini Messy' sessions.

We have completed the LLF project that has led to some constructive and insightful discussions.



## Our buildings

We are very proud of our beautiful 14th/15th century church, which stands right in the centre of the town and attracts many visitors from both the UK and overseas, many of whom have ancestors who came from the area, and is one of only two in the country dedicated to St Eustachius. The church which you see today is the third building on the site and became the Parish Church in 1318. It initially contained four aisles and then the fifth one was added later as an indulgence, paid for a lady called Constance Coffyn, who had had three husbands who all worked in the cloth industry, hence this aisle is known as the Clothworkers' aisle. We have some beautiful 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century stained glass windows, the one attracting the most interest being the one designed by William Morris, whose sister married into a local family. The church is open all year round and many of our regular visitors come simply for the sense of peace they experience.

The Parish Centre is a modern building opposite the church, has been completely refurbished during lockdown thanks to the Friends of St Eustachius', and provides an ideal meeting place and office space, with catering facilities.

St Eustachius' runs a consolidated programme of work both to maintain and to improve the buildings and facilities of the church and the Parish Centre, assisted by fundraising drives as required. Recent big projects included re-roofing the vestry, replacing the church boiler, roof repairs, installing a new sound system and refurbishing the Parish Centre. The main current project is to install a galley, storage and toilets facility in the north-west corner of the church, which is close to obtaining Faculty approval.

## Serving the community

**Bible study groups**—We have 2 study groups who meet regularly, one in the Parish Centre and one in their houses. They follow the liturgical calendar to further develop biblical knowledge alongside the weekly sermons

**The bereavement group** meets once a month in the Parish Centre, providing invaluable outreach and support to the community

**Parish Organisations and Groups**—There are a number of groups within the Parish who organise themselves and come together for fund-raising activities, especially the Christmas Bazaar, the Summer Fete and the biggest event of the year, the Christmas Tree Festival, when the church becomes full of colour and music, with some sixty odd trees. There are also craft stalls and the ever popular stall selling jams, marmalades and chutneys.

**The Friends of St Eustachius'** was formed in 2001. This is a large group of people, individuals and businesses, who do a huge amount of work raising money for the church and also establishing links with the wider community. They also organise Quiz Nights, Dinners and other social events. We are hugely grateful to them for substantially funding a new roof for the choir vestry and the big project now is the provision of a new kitchen and toilets at the back of the church. We normally have a number of concerts in the church during the year and at many of these the Friends serve wine and soft drinks, which is very much appreciated by the performers and their audiences.

**The Handicraft Group and Vintage Green**—Make items for the craft stalls and so on at the Tree Festival etc. They work throughout the year and produce some beautiful things – children's clothes, quilts, bags and so on.

**Friendly Friday Coffee** reaches out and attracts people who do not normally come to church.

**Holiday Club** was run for this first time in the Summer holidays 2021, and was well supported by 'children' of all ages. It provided many craft projects, activities and refreshments, and we aim to repeat this in future years.





## Serving the community

### Church Stewards

These are very valuable people who give of their time during the summer months to greet visitors to our church and are very much appreciated by said visitors. They are there to answer any questions which may arise and also to advise on the best place to get a cream tea!

### Companions of the Melanesian Brotherhood

This is a small group linked to the Melanesian Brotherhood in the Solomon Islands. It came about because in 2001/2 we had two Melanesian Brothers to help out in the parish, one a priest and one who was then still at University. We are very proud of our links especially as Brother Leonard, who was then still training, is now Archbishop of Melanesia.

### Schools

There are two church schools in Tavistock, St Rumon's, the infant school, and St Peter's, the junior school. These have now come together as the Tavistock Schools Federation and share the same Head Teacher and Chair of Governors. Members of the congregation serve as Governors and give regular support with things such as "Open the Book" and our clergy take regular assemblies.

The other schools in the town comprise the Community Primary School and Tavistock College and Mount Kelly College, a co-educational public school of which our present curate is Chaplain.

All these schools come to St Eustachius' for services at Christmas, Easter, Remembrance Tide and for Founders' Day and Graduation services and end of term services.



### Civic and other services

We also hold an annual Civic Service attended by the Town Mayor and Councillors, to which various organisations in the town are invited followed by a reception in the Town Hall. Then we have a couple of informal services for children, the Christingle Service which comes at the end of the Tree Festival when the children very much enjoy making their Christingles, and also the Crib Services which are held on Christmas Eve and are so popular that we have to hold two. The biggest attraction seems to be the sheep and a "real" baby, although whether we will always be able to supply the latter remains to be seen. One of the other highlights of the Church's year is the Palm Sunday Service, when we parade around the church, led by a donkey. Unfortunately he has been known to forget himself once inside the church!



## Areas for further development

We would very much like to encourage more young families to be involved with our church life and to attend services. We have recruited a Children and Families worker to help us reach out to young families in the growing Tavistock population, and we run Messy Church which attracts a lot of families, but we aspire to offer further services which would appeal to this sector of our parish, whilst maintaining traditional services for the currently predominantly older congregation.



# GULWORTHY

St Paul's

## Who we are

Gulworthy is a rural, thriving parish with a strong community spirit, lovely people who are friendly, and is renowned for its hospitality and enterprising functions. While our services are traditional, suiting our congregation, our focus is very much on supporting the local community.

## Our context

**Gulworthy** is a rural parish of 19 miles circumference and about 350 souls. It is bounded by the rivers Tamar and Tavy with Tavistock to the east and the villages of Lamerton and Bere Alston to the north and south. The church is at the heart of the parish on the A390, 3 miles from Tavistock and 1 mile from the River Tamar which is the border with Cornwall.

There is no village of Gulworthy, as such, but the Church is situated between the Parish Hall, which does not belong to the Church, and the County Primary School which has 75 pupils. The hall has been enlarged and updated in recent years and is much used by the Church and the rest of the Community. The school, which has an excellent reputation, draws families from other areas and is federated with Lamerton C of E school. All were built in the 1850s to serve the many mining families who came to extract the copper and arsenic which were found in abundance. There are only 3 houses in the immediate vicinity and no shops or other facilities. The parish lies in the 'Tamar Valley AONB' and is part of the West Devon Mining Landscape World Heritage site. We like to think of St Paul's as 'the Miners Church'.

The deep and scenic river valleys are rich in agriculture and often heavily forested. Most of our farming parishioners are in dairy, beef and sheep. Shooting and fishing abound with many farmsteads catering for the growing tourist trade by offering very English bed and breakfast. Local attractions include an Industrial Archaeology tourist centre (Morwellham), Tamar Trails, downhill mountain biking, tree surfing, canoeing, pilot gig rowing and sailing. The parish supports 2 sawmills, 2 caravan sites, a war games centre, 2 pubs, a hotel, a small industrial estate, a monumental mason and a barn construction business. There are also a significant number of newcomers to the Parish who commute to work all over the County.





## Our worshipping community

As a separate parish, within the joint benefice of Tavistock and Brentor, we have a service every Sunday. In recent years we have experimented with different types of service, but at present we have Holy Communion at 11.15am each Sunday.

Churchmanship is best described as 'middle of the road', bearing in mind that, whilst reaching out, we must also respect the faithful traditionalists, who form the greater part of our regular congregation of 15-20 people, but at St Paul's we are outward looking and seek to involve the Community as much as possible.

Although few children come to church on a Sunday, our close relationship with the school facilitates other opportunities, Open the Book is presented fortnightly at the school assembly, this has continued via zoom during the pandemic. The clergy visit the school and pupils and teachers come into church several times a year for their own Christmas, Harvest, Easter and end of term services.



## Our buildings

St Paul's church, which is Victorian, unadorned, stone built and cruciform is entered from the south as the North door has two large steps and is difficult to climb for the older members of the community. There is a small vestry, a good organ and seating for 140. It is heated by radiators served by a wood pellet boiler housed outside in a pod under the east window. The PA and Hearing loop system was updated in recent years. The churchyard is closed, but there is a local council owned cemetery 200 metres away.





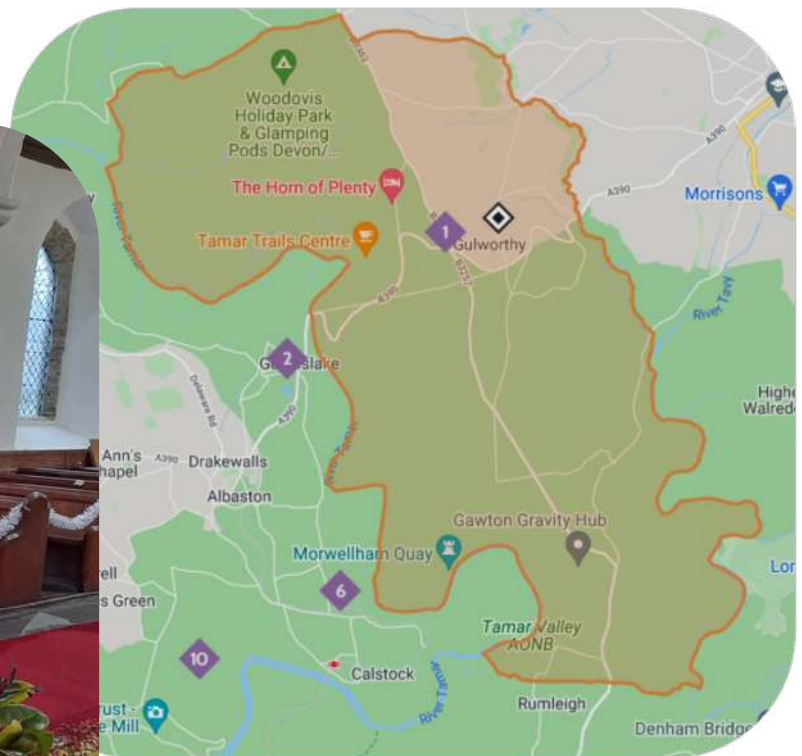


## Serving the community

Gulworthy is well known for social and fundraising events and in particular for the food provided. Every Christmas all pensioners associated with the Parish are given a traditional turkey lunch. In July there is the annual fete and dog show shared with the hall management. The parish boundary is walked every Rogation tide, combined of course with an outdoor service and tea at a parishioner's home.

We are members of the Benefice Pastoral Care Team and take communion to the housebound and those in residential care. We try to make contact with every household in the Parish when we distribute newsletters and Christmas cards.

The PCC meets every 2 months in a member's home. Our finances are kept healthy when we are able to do fund raising and we continue to pay our full parochial share.



## Areas for further development

- Develop the facilities for the congregation within the church
- Taking the church out into the community
- Engaging further with the school





# BRENTOR

St Michael de Rupe and Christchurch

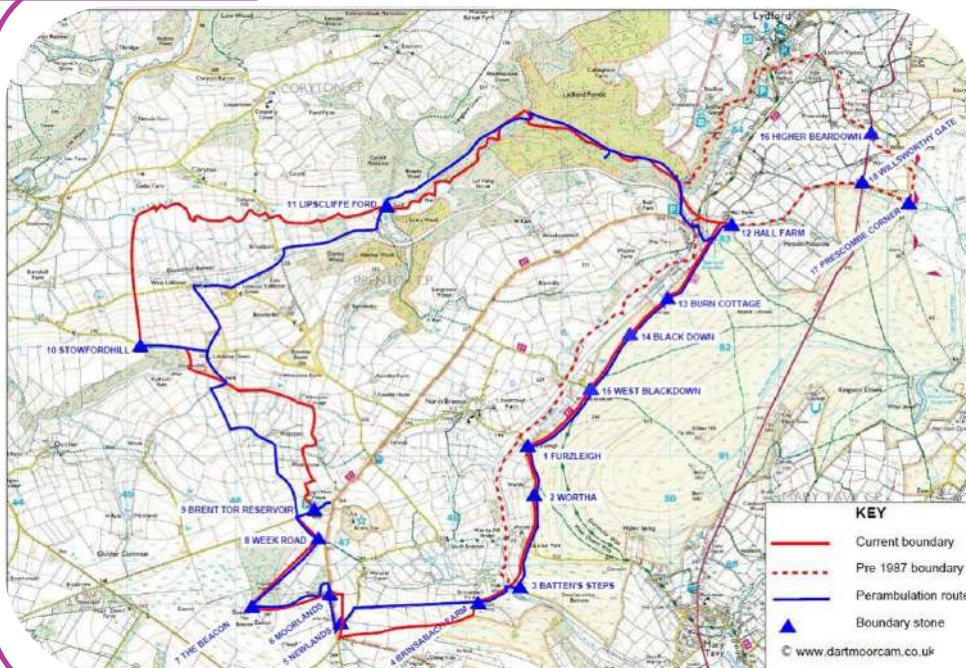
## Who we are

We are a friendly and outward looking church, inclusive and engaging with everyone. We enjoy a wide variety of services, from BCP Evensong through to contemporary worship with Prayer and Praise. The equivalent of 8% of our Parish community worship with the church each Sunday, significantly higher than the national average, and pre-pandemic we have seen our congregation grow consistently over the last 5 years.

Whilst we are focused on supporting our congregation in discipleship, through bible teaching and a home group (currently looking at Living in Love and Faith), we also look out towards our community and pilgrims. Within our community, we support the vulnerable through the charity Brentor and Moor Compassionate Neighbours (BMCN) and last Christmas we gave every household in our Parish a Christmas present to lift spirits during the pandemic. St Michael's has over 10,000 visitors a year and is a local and regional, uplifting landmark with a national profile. Both churches are Small Pilgrim Places, and St Michael's acts as one anchor on the newly launched pilgrimage route the Archangel Way, encouraging more pilgrims to come to the church.



## Our context



We are a rural parish; most households are in the village of North Brentor, but there are also smaller hamlets and some in the more remote locations! With no post office, pub or shop, the Church is one of the key cornerstones of the community. Whilst there is a large proportion of home ownership, our local area is average nationally for deprivation.

There is poor internet locally, but Airband is installed on the church to help improve this.



## Our worshipping community

Our worshipping community is made up of groups of overlapping congregations with a wide range of ages from 1—90 years old.

- St Michael's congregation—there are regular attendees and then a wide variety of people who walk into a service. Congregations meet from Easter to Michaelmas, with evening prayer and BCP sung Evensong with Eucharists at the start and end of the season. Pre-pandemic, we had an average Sunday congregation of 15.
- Christchurch—generally a community church congregation with regular attendees. There are a wide variety of services from Eucharist through contemporary services such as Prayer and Praise to Family services. We have some children attending, but this is an area we would like to further develop



- Digital congregation—we have been filming services from the start of the pandemic and we intend to continue into the future. We have a wide variety of people engaging with this, with people from all over the world watching and we are now in contact with people from several different countries who regularly "tune in".
- Festivals—We have a wide variety of services for festivals that engage a wider group of people. For example we have Christmas with a nativity service, midnight mass and a festive carol service at St Michael's. At Easter, we hold a Good Friday Easter Ascent where we re-enact the Easter passion going up the Tor to St Michael's.
- Ministry of cakes—Part of every good church service should be a time of community. We believe that this best served with a plethora of good cake at the end of services—although due to location, this does tend to be at Christchurch!



- Outreach events—We strive to have a range of services each year that are specifically designed to be easily accessible for anyone to visit. We have done a range of holiday, nativity, harvest, commemoration and animal services and are always looking for new ways to engage everyone.
- Many of our congregation volunteer in a range of activities to allow all of the above to take place!



## Our buildings



### **St Michael De Rupe**

Founded 1130AD on the top of a local tor and a 10min walk from the road. The church is Grade 1 listed and includes a scheduled monument in the churchyard. The roof was recently replaced in 2016—with the help of local farmers to get materials up there—and solar panels installed in 2017 to provide electricity for the first time. There is a ring of 5 bells, the oldest of which originally dates to the 15th century, which are rung regularly by our tower crew.



We have a running schedule of maintenance carefully overseen by our fabric officer meaning that the building is safe, structurally sound and in generally good condition.



### **Christchurch**

Founded in 1857 within the village of North Brentor, it was originally a chapel of ease. The church and churchyard are grade 2 listed, with 3 Commonwealth war graves. It currently houses a transmitter for Airband Community Internet, to help provide faster internet for the village. The roof was thoroughly renovated in the 1990s and, other than the tower, it is in good condition due to the hard work of our fabric officer. We are working with our architect and Historic England to repair the tower and reorder the west end to allow for more community and family space. We are currently building an accessible toilet for the church. We manage the churchyard and church pond (opposite the church) for biodiversity, as a community space and in line with 'Caring for God's Acre'.

### **Other buildings**

The church owns a semi-detached cottage that has had significant recent maintenance with a new roof, chimney and other maintenance work. It is currently rented out to fund the work of the church.

The church also owns some barns, a paddock and a pond where we do pond dipping for children!



*We also have many active local photographers—thanks to Helen, David, Colin Sargent, and others for the illustrations!*



## Serving the community

- BMCN—Brentor and Moor Compassionate Neighbours is a charity that was set up in this parish with strong PCC and congregational support, to work with a range of vulnerable people with life limiting conditions. Working within the local area in conjunction with GP practices and the local hospice with trained volunteers, this charity has done some fantastic work and helped many nearing the end of life. BMCN runs autonomously under the PCC.
- Pilgrimage—We have been excited to join the new Archangel Way pilgrimage route, set up by the diocese of Exeter, which starts at our church of St Michael's. With one of our Readers acting as a hospitaller, we strive to welcome everyone and give them a place of quiet reflection. Of the thousands of people who visit St Michael's each year, some come simply for a walk and others as a part of pilgrimage, but for all we have a prayer request book that are always prayed during the services. It has been truly inspiring to hear of some of the times when prayers have been answered.
- Support grants—We have the Herring Grants which gives grants for people within the parish to retrain. We are also looking at organising another grant to support in need local families
- Brentor community support group—During the pandemic, we were aware that people often required additional help and support. To this end we worked with BMCN to set up a support group where people could phone to ask for further assistance.
- Beer festival—we use this as a community event to bring everyone together at harvest time. It is also exciting to support local micro and nano breweries.
- Song and a Sandwich—A time for songs, food and fellowship. This brings people together for some joy and it has been exciting to start this again recently.
- Support for local charities—regular donations are made to the Foodbank, Derriford NICU, and St Luke's Hospice, amongst others.



## Areas for further development

- Family engagement—whilst we successfully engage with some families, we would like to better link outreach services and the church as a whole
- More effective follow up from weddings and baptisms
- Increase face to face community support
- Further develop and grow our home group





