

BECKINGTON BENEFICE PROFILE

October 2023

Introduction

Welcome to Beckington Benefice! We are a group of five rural and semi-rural parishes situated around the edge of the lively market town of Frome, Somerset. We have a growing unity between us and seek to be a transforming Christian presence in our communities.

We reflect and celebrate the distinctiveness and diversity of rural ministry and seek a full-time Priest in charge with a passion for rural ministry and connecting with the community: someone with a desire to see the Bible taught and disciples grow, who will respect and enjoy our diverse patterns of worship and lead us in our mission to connect with and bless the wider community.



Welcome video
Click on image to play

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Our Vision

Our vision is to increase our connection with the communities which we serve, working together and in unity to share the love of God in practical ways and to share his good news, the gospel of Jesus Christ. We believe that the future thriving of our benefice and our ability to be a transforming Christian presence in our communities will depend on working in partnership with our Priest in charge.



A picture expressing our vision of the light and love of Christ permeating our communities

We have very good relationships with the schools in our parishes, who welcome our involvement, and there is a huge opportunity to reach children and their families through working together.

We also have a vision to share our resources and work in new ways across the benefice to lighten the administrative burden of church officers and clergy and free us all to engage fruitfully with others.

Being a
transforming
Christian
presence in
our
community





Who We Are Looking For

We seek a Priest in charge whose outlook is also outward, who recognises both the need to feed the flock but also for us all to be equipped and inspired to live out our faith from Monday to Sunday. We now have strong relationships across our benefice and are increasingly working together to share resources, for example utilising software to manage wedding bookings, pooling safeguarding resources and experience and we are actively working towards sharing financial, administration, communication and building expertise. This important work needs to continue, shaped by the leadership, needs and gifts of our new Priest in charge.



We want to work together with our new Priest in charge to increase our presence and witness in our schools through assemblies, shared festivals and other services, by reviving 'Open the Book', spending time in the staff room and through other opportunities. We have members who have previously been involved in schools and youth ministry prior to the COVID-19 pandemic and would like to re-form a team with our new Priest in charge to re-establish this work.

We have
strong
relationships
across our
benefice and
are working
together





Who We Are Looking For (cont'd)

We seek a full-time Priest in charge, male or female, who has or is

- A passion and energy for rural ministry
- A desire to be active and visible in the community
- The enthusiasm and skills to engage intentionally and often with our three local schools, leading a team for this.
- Friendly and adaptable, comfortable working with all ages



- A team player and enabler, able to work in partnership with a willing lay team
- An inspirational teacher, mentor and encourager, able to adapt their style to their hearers
- Grounded in the Word of God and led by the Spirit i.e.
 - Someone who sees scripture as our primary source of God's revelation of his nature, His purposes for us and His world
 - Open to the leading and working of the Holy Spirit
- A leader who is also outward looking and will facilitate our desire to connect with our communities
- Has a heart for guiding couples getting married
- Approachable, pastoral and a good listener
- Able to celebrate our range of worship styles, in liturgy and music, from music group to choir, respecting the old but being willing to explore and introduce the new

Passion,
active and
visible in our
rural
community





Who We Are

During successive vacancies we have learned to look after ourselves and encourage lay gifts and ministries, but also recognise our need for a leader and Priest in charge to offer vision, spiritual direction, encouragement and oversight.

We are well aware of the scale of the task and pressures on clergy and we want to work in partnership, sharing the load and working to lighten the administrative burdens, as above, so that we and our vicar can be 'out and about', in ministry and mission.



We offer an opportunity to cooperate and share in the task of rural ministry and would be open, for example, to the establishment of a leadership and ministry team to support the new Priest in charge.

We have an established network of house groups and experienced group facilitators. We have in previous years successively organised and run benefice away-days and weekends.

We offer unity and enjoy being together, with strong relationships now across the benefice.

We want to
work in
partnership,
sharing the
load





Our Benefice

A strong lay team sustains the life and ministry of the benefice and has grown together through sharing and praying together. Churchwardens from across the benefice meet together regularly to plan, share and support one another. We have strong, warm, loving relationships between us even though each church within the group has their own distinct ministry. The Beckington benefice has for several decades comprised the four parishes of St George's, Beckington; St. Mary's, Berkley; All Saints', Rodden and All Saints', Lullington with St Mary's, Orchardleigh. As part of the current re-organisation of the Frome Deanery, we are delighted to be joined now by St. Katharine's, East Woodlands, a rural parish church previously paired with an urban church in Frome.

There are many friendships between members of the different churches, and we are continuing to look for opportunities to strengthen relationships within the group.

Our journey over the last few years has not been an easy one: a five-year vacancy related to a CDM measure was followed by an appointment that prompted a significant number to leave some of our congregations, and then after only two years we entered another vacancy. All of these have taken their toll and we have greatly valued the contributions and support of local clergy and others who have helped us in our time of need.



Our
friendships
have formed
through
tough times





Our Benefice (cont'd)

Despite the challenges, we are growing together in unity, service and shared purpose. During these vacancies we began to meet monthly to pray for the benefice, our future and our future Priest in charge, and through these times we have grown in faith and trust that God has indeed prepared the right person to come and work alongside us to build his kingdom.

We also meet together occasionally for shared lunches, picnics, etc. We have regularly organised and run a benefice Advent and Lent course.

We have all embraced the challenge to make our churchyards places to encourage wildlife, in our rural setting.

Our monthly benefice newsletter is circulated online to church members and others on request and our monthly Network magazine is delivered to 1,300 homes across the benefice, sharing news, keeping people in touch and helping us to communicate. We are actively looking at ways to refresh our magazine and make the most of this opportunity.

We are in the process of developing the new benefice website and there are plans afoot to unify and upgrade our digital presence.



Encouraging
wildlife in our
churchyards

Modernising
our comms



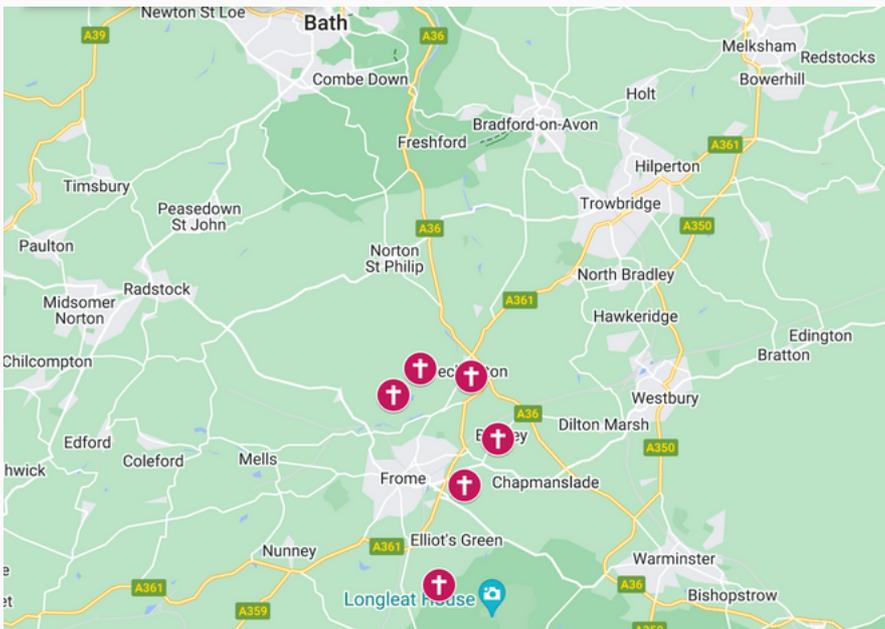


Our Context

The benefice wraps around the north and east of the Somerset town of Frome, 13 miles south of Bath, and is mainly rural. Situated on the edge of the beautiful Mendip Hills, Frome is a lively, thriving and eclectic market town with many independent shops. Frome Agricultural Market also lies within our benefice.

Our corner of Somerset offers something for everyone, with a wealth of local amenities, things to do and places to explore.

Beautiful Mendips, charming Frome



Church	Sunday Services/ Month	Membership	Population	Parish Share Paid 2022
Beckington	4	46	1,122	£36,012
Berkley	2	14	1,257	£6,649
Lullington & Orchardleigh	3	7	81	£4,783
Rodden	2	7	991	£3,300
Woodlands	2	11	250	£11,000
	13	85	3,701	£61,744

Worship

We embrace a number of different styles of worship, ranging from the informal, through Common Worship to the Book of Common Prayer and ensure that we have a pattern of services across the benefice that meet the needs of all. There are monthly all-age services for the benefice at Berkley, some of which are shared with the neighbouring school. The existing benefice worships together in a communion service on 5th Sundays, rotating venues around the benefice. All non-communion services can be, and often are, lay-led.

Our very informal monthly 'Connect' benefice evening service at St. George's, Beckington is where we have been exploring how to connect. Through this service, we have enjoyed and benefited from connecting with each other on a deeper level and explored how to connect with those on 'our front lines'. Themes so far have included 'Connecting with... rural communities, the poor (CAP), refugees, young people, politics, the lonely and isolated and the environment.

We join together for benefice services on Ash Wednesday, Maundy Thursday, Good Friday and at Easter sunrise.

Sunday	Time	Service	Beckington	Berkley	Lullington	Orchardleigh	Rodden	Woodlands	Format
1st Sunday	10:00 am	Matins	x						BCP
	10:00 am	Benefice All Age		x					CW
	11:00 am	Communion			x				BCP
	11:15 am	Communion						x	Varies
2nd Sunday	10:00 am	Communion	x						CW
	6:00 pm	Evensong					x		BCP
3rd Sunday	10:00 am	Communion		x					CW
	11:00 am	Matins				x			BCP
	11:15 am	Morning Service						x	Varies
	6:00 pm	Benefice Connect	x						Informal
4th Sunday	10:00 am	Morning Worship	x						CW
	11:00 am	Matins			x				BCP
	6:00 pm	Communion					x		BCP
5th Sunday	Varies	Benefice Communion	Rotates						CW or BCP

Vestments are usually worn for the more traditional and communion services but not for all services. Musical accompaniment varies from a small music group to organ, and a four-part choir (Woodlands).

Different styles of worship

Connecting



PSALM 127:1 "UNLESS THE LORD BUILDS THE HOUSE, ITS BUILDERS LABOUR IN VAIN."

Connecting: the future

We long to be a people who are fed by God's word in scripture and open to the transforming working of the Holy Spirit: people who are distinctively different through our faith but who connect well, sharing the love that God has shared with us on to our communities, as a transforming Christian presence.

We have a vision to connect with those in need and to connect them with the help that they need: one churchwarden had a picture of an old-fashioned telephone switchboard.



Our vision is also to connect more with our communities and to encourage positive connections within them. The village survey in Beckington, for example, highlighted the feeling of a loss of connection in the community with the building of many new homes and with fewer people apparently willing to volunteer for and lead community organisations. Encouragingly, they also saw the church as both a very important presence and one that could have a very positive influence in connecting the community. We recognise the limitations of our own resources for this but believe that with God's help we can bring hope to individuals and enrich community life.

Sharing the
love God has
for us

Connecting
need with
help



Connecting (cont'd)

Surveying school heads and pupils during our vacancy revealed that they really value the link with a Priest in charge and the teams and individuals who have previously gone into schools, including 'Open the Book', assemblies, shared services and the previous Beckington initiative of interactive Easter and Christmas Journeys, running over several days.

The pupils want more of everything: 'more Bible' and Bible stories, more time with the vicar and other Christians, more time in church, more responsibility and more opportunity to ask questions, etc.!

We lost some members of these teams at the time of our last appointment but we see the renewal and strengthening of these links post-pandemic as a wonderful opportunity and an important priority.

[What Pupils Said 1](#)

[What Pupils Said 2](#)



School pupils
want 'more of
everything'



Administration

Our congregations have in recent years generally grown older and smaller, with a smaller number of people to share the administrative load of each parish. Nevertheless, parish and benefice life have been sustained over time and through successive vacancies by a strong and willing lay team.

One of our priorities is to further increase cooperation, share resources and develop administrative, financial and IT systems so that:

- our smaller and more elderly congregations can be supported and
- we are freed up to spend more time with people and less time with administration.

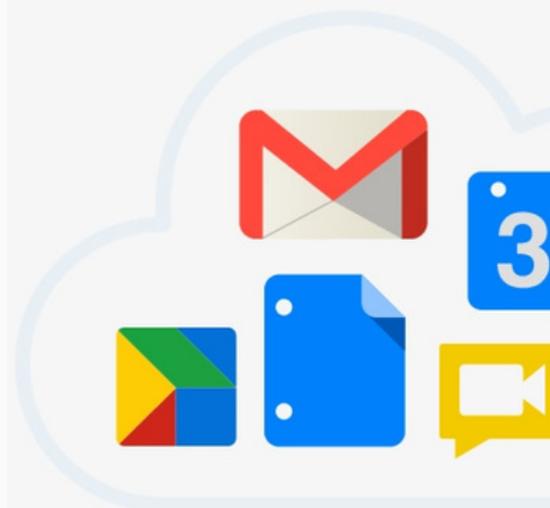


Another churchwarden had a vision of a wheel, its shiny hub representing our new minister, connected to the community (the rim) around us through the spokes of our five parishes, holding us and linking us together “at the centre of everything but not doing everything” “crucial to the whole, but needing every part to be effective”. A further interpretation saw the tyre as the strength and love of Jesus encompassing all.

Finally, we hope for and need a sustained period of leadership stability, following a previous prolonged vacancy and then a relatively short subsequent appointment. Nevertheless, we are genuinely hopeful for our future.

Shared
leadership
and admin
support at
the hub

Bound
together by
Jesus



Google™



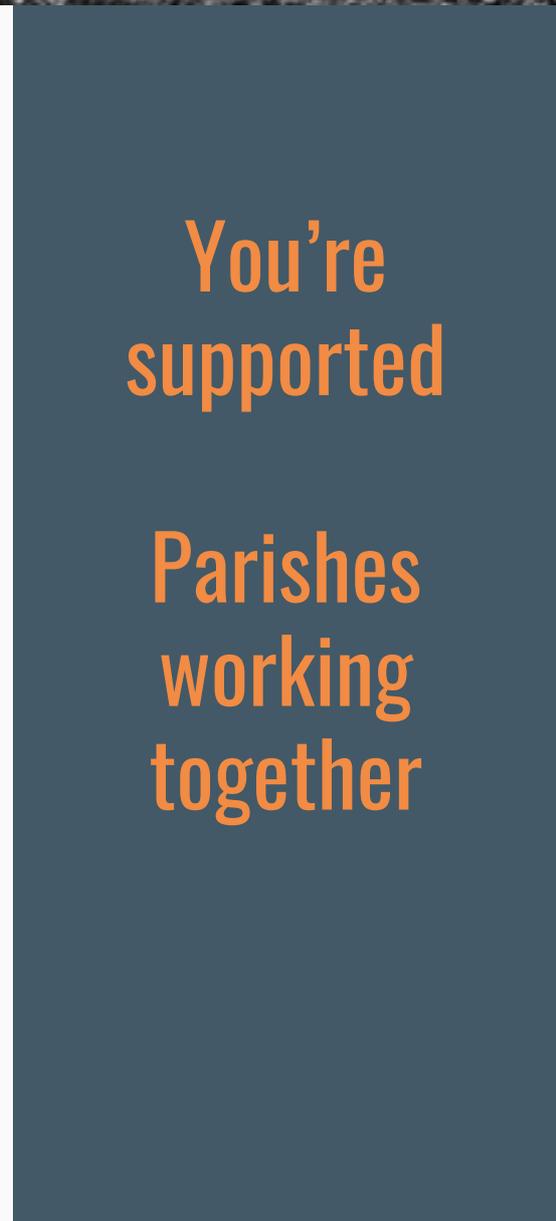
What We Offer

We are blessed to have willing volunteers in each parish in various roles, with a high proportion of those who attend our churches also taking active roles. Across the benefice we have for example willing and effective fundraisers, competent administrative helpers, audio-visual and IT support, event organisers, etc.

We have recently introduced a part time Benefice Administrator, who works from home (for up to 8 hours a month) and there is scope to expand this role further: she has, for example, recently become safeguarding administrator for Beckington Parish, working with the PSO in a model we hope to roll out across the whole benefice. She produces our monthly Benefice Newsletter and as a volunteer she also edits the benefice 'Network' magazine

We recognise that we are privileged to have a full-time Priest in charge but also recognise that time off, holidays and private space need to be respected. We believe that the skills, commitment and attitude that have carried us successfully through recent vacancies put us in a strong position to manage the benefice during those periods when the Priest in charge is not available.

We would also actively encourage our Priest in charge to have and maintain external spiritual support for spiritual growth and renewal, navigating challenges, avoiding burnout, accountability and growth, deepening faith understanding, support in times of crisis, balancing leadership and spirituality, and enhancing leadership skills.



What We Offer (cont'd)

Rev Ward Jones, a retired Methodist minister with PTO takes services at Rodden and Rev Andrew Kellett, a retired Baptist minister, leads services at Beckington.

We currently have one Reader, one Lay Pastoral Assistant, and one Lay Worship Assistant. Some churchwardens take lay-led Matins or Evensong services, when no clergy have been available during our vacancy. St. Katharine's, East Woodlands also have their own Reader, who will migrate with the parish.

All parishes in the current benefice contribute to a shared benefice account to cover the expenses of the incumbent, administrator and other shared expenses.

Each parish organises their own intercessors, organists, flower arrangers and welcome team/sides people with several organists residing and playing in the benefice.

All of our parishes have a well-functioning PCC but not necessarily a full complement of officers. Each parish has either two (Beckington, L&O) or one (Rodden, Berkley) churchwardens, with the exception of St. Katharine's, East Woodlands who have no official churchwarden but a very active and capable parish coordinator. In recent years churchwardens have had regular meetings with a good level of mutual support and shared expertise. We have recently begun to share expertise and resources between PCCs, such as the treasurer function.



Sharing the
load, to
release you
to minister





Your Home

The Rectory is a 1970s 4 bedroomed detached house in the village of Beckington, close to St George's Church. There is an excellent study separate from the rest of the living area. Set back from the road with front and rear gardens, a drive and garage, the house is adjacent to Beckington First School. Access to the front door is via a set of steps and both the study and the Rectory overall offer good private space.

There are a good range of local facilities including a doctors' surgery, village hall with playing fields and children's play area, 2 pubs, a delicatessen and café, farm shop, several B&B's, a family-run garage and a M&S shop and BP garage complex.

Public transport is good with easy access to Bath and national rail links from the nearby towns of Westbury, Trowbridge, Frome and Bath. There are frequent bus services to Bath, Frome and Chippenham and a family-run taxi firm in the village. The M4, M5 and A303 are all reasonably accessible when travelling further afield by car.

There is a very good range of local state and independent schools.



A
comfortable
home, good
facilities and
schools





Churches and Communities

Please see the individual parish pages for outline details of our parish communities and buildings. We have 6 church buildings in our 5 parishes, all of them older stone buildings.

Our other meeting spaces:

Rodden has a church hall adjacent to the church, with servery and toilet.

Beckington has shared use of the church school hall opposite the church, with kitchen and toilets.

St. Katharine's makes use of the nearby East Woodlands Village Hall.



Frome Agricultural Market lies within our benefice and currently has a retired farmer as lay chaplain. It hosts a weekly wellbeing hub for the farming community. Their recent Harvest Festival Service was well attended and was supported by the area dean and church wardens from the Beckington Benefice. We hope to extend our support to the cattle market in the future.

Space to serve





Beckington, St George's

Beckington is the largest village in the benefice and a thriving and friendly place with a population of approximately 1000. The parish includes two small rural communities in Rudge and Standerwick giving a total population of about 1,300 people. The village has grown by over 120 new homes in the past decade or so, with a variety of housing making for a friendly and supportive community with a wide range of village activities, clubs and societies, including Cricket, Tennis and Fitness, bellringing, monthly Lunch Club, annual pantomime, Village Choir, Royal British Legion and WI. There are thriving farms and local businesses.

The village hosts art and craft exhibitions, scarecrow trails, village carol singing and a monthly community coffee morning. Many of the church family are actively involved in village activities, events and organisations, and we recently organised a village clean-up.

St George's is a large village church with a Norman tower and a 15th century nave. Some of the Victorian pews have been removed to provide a more flexible use of the space, with a comfortable prayer corner and a children's area. The church is kept open every day, which is appreciated by both those who come to sit and pray and a small but steady flow of visitors. The church building is generally in a good state of repair and we are in the process of replacing the heating system. The building has good acoustics and lighting with a modern sound and projection system. It lacks a kitchen or a toilet but these facilities are provided across the road in the church school hall and we are currently looking at providing a servery and toilet facilities at the church, with a vision to increase the use of our building as a community space.

The hall was opened in 2004 as a joint venture between the school and church. St George's have priority of use on a Sunday and it is where we enjoy refreshments after services, shared lunches, teas and occasional church meetings.

Values: We value a strong Bible teaching ministry, looking to Scripture as the principal source of our knowledge and understanding about God, his character, and his plans and purposes for his world. We pray regularly "Your kingdom come, your will be done on earth..." and we believe that Jesus, as the king of this kingdom, should be central to all that is taught, and shape how we interact with one another and the world around us.

We embrace the graces and gifts of the Holy Spirit, empowering his people to live out the life of God that flows through us, loving and caring for one another and for those outside of our church family, so that by his grace, lives and communities can be transformed.

We have a culture of lay ministry and seek a leader to come alongside and work in partnership with us, helping us to encourage growth in discipleship and enable more people to use their gifts within the body of Christ.

We have warm relationships with mission partners in Thailand and South Sudan and also support Scripture Union, MAF and local initiatives; we have for many years had a policy of giving away a tithe of our non-designated income. We operate a collection point for the Fair Frome foodbank in church.

Worship: Services are predominantly contemporary and include both traditional hymns played on the organ, and more modern music, led by a small worship group. There is also a monthly BCP Matins service. There is a team of organists who share playing at all services plus weddings and funerals. Attendance is up to 36 people at the CW services and around 20 at BCP Matins. Festival services are well attended by the local community, with our traditional Candlelit Carol Service attracting about 80 people. On Remembrance Sunday we welcome the Beckington British Legion, their chaplain, the Beckington Bandits band and village choir to our service (128 attended in 2022). We have a keen group of bell ringers who ring on Sundays, at weddings and other special occasions. We average 5 weddings, 7 funerals, 4 burials of ashes and 1-2 baptisms each year.

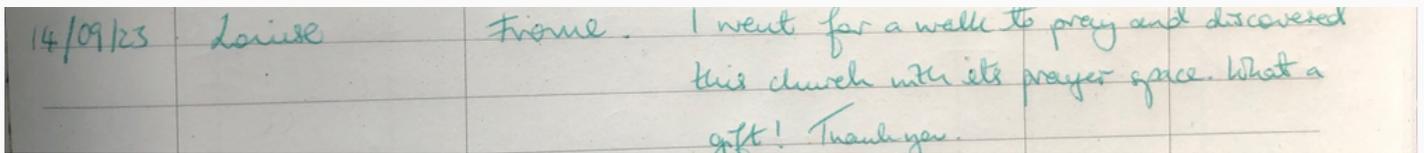
People often comment on the real welcome they encounter, a strong sense of family and prayer. We have been encouraged by people deepening their faith and serving in numerous ways to build up the church community.



Beckington, St George's (cont'd)

Nurture and Discipleship: We encourage all church members to offer their experience and develop their gifts and skills to participate in the life and mission of God's kingdom in this place. There are three Beckington based home groups, that include members from other parishes within the benefice, each following their own pattern in developing fellowship through Bible study, discussion and prayer.

Prayer: Prayer is a priority for us and we meet to pray for our mission partners, our benefice (with shared tea!) and for weekly midday prayer. We have a quiet prayer corner with prayer tree, an email prayer chain and takeaway cards to encourage prayer for our streets.



Schools: We have close links with the two schools in the village:

- Beckington CofE First School, with some 90 pupils, is just across the road from the church. We have previously shared festival services and some assemblies are held in the church.
- Springmead Independent Preparatory School (3 to 11 years) is also nearby. The school has a strong Christian ethos and hold their own harvest thanksgiving and carol service in the church.

Both schools come to a joint morning assembly in St George's once a term. There is also a Preschool in the village.

The Beckington Group Mothers' Union: is active, serves the whole Frome Deanery area and is led by a member of St George's.

Friends of St Georges: The Friends have been raising funds for maintaining the fabric of St George's Church since 2000. While the PCC aims to raise the funds for ministry from church members, FOSG is well supported by the wider community. Popular events include a Plant Sale & Coffee morning, pop up produce stall, Autumn Fayre, Open Gardens and a St George's Day Celebration. 'Open Arts' exhibitions and concerts have been held in the church.

The Friends are always ready to support special services with refreshments, including mulled wine and mince pies after the traditional Candlelit Carol Service. Their superb efforts cover all of the ongoing maintenance costs of the church building, draw members of the community together and deepen our connection with them.

The PCC: The PCC meets bi-monthly and functions well as a team, carrying out a lot of its responsibilities through sub-committees, namely Faith Sharing, Fabric, Friends of St George's and Eco committees.

Finances: We are financially afloat, with good reserves, and continue to pay our full parish share as Category C but expenditure currently exceeds income and so we need to increase our regular parish income. We see the need for renewed teaching on generous giving, with regular reviews, and undergirded by prayer. We have faith that God will provide the funds we need to grow his kingdom here. Regular giving by Gift Aid is actively encouraged and we intend to join the Parish Giving Scheme, with plans to improve our facility for contactless giving.

We look forward to welcoming our new minister and working together to see Jesus' kingdom grow.

[Financial Statement](#)



Berkley, St Mary's

The church of St Mary's is a small church in a reasonable state of repair. Built in 1751, it has a Wren style dome in Wedgwood blue with alabaster decoration. St Mary's, Berkley is a place of calm and joy. Attendance allows our congregation to revisit this revered state regularly, giving space to pray, express gratitude, seek advice and socialise. It allows us to feel at peace and gives us respite from the hustle and bustle of our daily lives.

We are a scattered, rural community of farms and houses with no clear village centre or hub, but there are nevertheless good relationships across our parish.

The church family at St Mary's is currently a fairly small but a warm, welcoming and faithful one. We work closely with our extended church family, especially those at St George's, Beckington. We enjoy two joint services each month with them in Beckington and they come to our All-age Service on the first Sunday of each month. We hold Easter, Harvest and Carol Praise Services which are attended by the whole community. The Carol Service has, historically, been very well attended but depends on the timing on Christmas Eve as 6pm has proved to be the most popular. The All-age Service has developed under lay leadership. Existing good links with Berkley C of E VA First School, (situated right next door to our church) have been strengthened and there is increasing participation by the children and the congregation on the first Sunday of the month and is popular. Services in which the school participate can sometimes be as many as 50 people which is wonderful. It is our mission to continue to develop this outreach to the children and their families to enable them to hear the word of God through a Bible-based approach. Members of both St. Mary's and St. George's congregations contribute to the three joint services with people leading the intercessions, carrying out the readings and, at the All-age Service we welcome the contribution of Beckington Music Group. Refreshments are usually available after joint services, which are important to us all in building on and developing our close links.

We value other combined enterprises such as the Lent Course and being part of a home group is important for several members of our church. We currently belong to a group comprising people from 3 of the churches in the group, meeting weekly to study the Bible, pray together and share fellowship.

The church has a fine organ, which provides the musical accompaniment for the services. We have a small but dedicated and experienced choir enabling us to worship the Lord joyfully through song.

Graham Hayward, our organist



Our dedicated PCC works hard to maintain both the church buildings and to look after the people of our church and community. We support the Barnabas Trust and also the Revd Joseph Bilal, who is working for the good of the people of South Sudan and where he has opened a university.

We are fortunate to have a committed and loyal Village Committee who lead the fundraising for the church. The importance of this group is not only the essential funding that they provide but also the opportunities for people to meet together socially with members of the local and wider community. We have recently been fortunate to receive a substantial financial donation restricted towards the upkeep of the building, which will greatly assist in meeting future fabric costs. We use Gift Aid Envelopes to encourage regular giving. We continue to pay our parish share in full each year.

We have recently had a hearing loop installed in church.

Further information:

Our average attendance at Holy Communion services is 10

Our average attendance at All-age services ranges from 15 to 50 when the school join with us.

We have not been having our own Easter Day service but when we have a late afternoon Christmas Eve service about 20 attend, but in earlier years when we enjoyed a 6pm service about 50 people attended.

We have an average of 2 weddings, 3 funerals and 2 baptisms each year.

[Financial Statement](#)



Rodden, All Saints'

Contemplative Beauty

The existing church was rebuilt in 1640, with changes in the 19th Century including addition of the tower, and is located in a picturesque setting within farmland on the banks of Rodden Brook. There are 5 public footpaths which come to the church. A number of the many walkers and ramblers who use these public footpaths sit in the churchyard where they appreciate the peace and tranquillity that the site offers. A small and attractive church hall, previously a school room, is next to the church. It has a well equipped servery and a WC. It is interesting to note that during research on the church by John Day (a former churchwarden) an unbroken record of rectors was traced from the year 1200 when a medieval chapel stood on the site.

A number of the congregation reside outside the parish, but attend because they are attracted by the strong commitment of Rodden to the Book of Common Prayer.

A Warm Community

Rodden prides itself on its strong sense of community and the warmth of its welcome to new worshippers. There is a programme of social events, including coffee mornings, soup and pudding lunches, cream teas and a Harvest Supper. Such events enthuse those who organise them, deepen the congregation's relationship with each other, attract a wider group of individuals than our regular church goers and communicate the sociable, Christian warmth which is the essence of Rodden.

Finances

Despite the difficulties thrown up by the COVID pandemic, we have continued to finance ourselves and make a donation to the Diocese by way of the Parish Share (Band F), from regular giving, other donations and the income generated by our social events. Our beautiful church requires maintenance and insurance, both of which we have funded out of income. The quinquennial report was carried out last year - no major problems were reported and we have a rolling programme of minor repair works to be carried out.

[Financial Statement](#)

Our Worship

We are keenly committed to continuing the use of the Book of Common Prayer for our Sunday services and to making the Prayer Book services for baptism, matrimony and burial available to all who wish them to be used for the christening of their children, their wedding or the burial of those they love. We consider it greatly beneficial if our new Priest in Charge is happy to conduct services using the Book of Common Prayer as our congregation is used to and appreciates it. Occasional worshippers also come because the Book of Common Prayer is being used. To encourage all people of Christian faith, we do, however, acknowledge that occasionally different services may be used.

The Future

Our ageing congregation has made great efforts over the last few years to maintain our worship and provision of pastoral care, but we are very much aware of the need to draw in new members, including younger people, to join our congregation. As to the substantial new housing development within the parish boundaries, we recognise the inability of the present congregation to engage effectively. We need to look to and welcome support and leadership not only from a new incumbent, but also from others in the benefice and deanery. We look forward enormously to being led, in doing so, by an enthusiastic and sympathetic new Priest in charge.

[Financial Statement](#)



East Woodlands, St Katharine's

East Woodlands

East Woodlands, which includes Blatchbridge, Feltham, West Woodlands and Friggle Street, is a small rural village of approximately 250 inhabitants on the edge of the Longleat estate, some three miles from the southern boundary of Frome. It covers a wide area of houses, cottages and farms.

The Building

The original church was built in about 1714 by Longleat estate, on the edge of the remains of Selwood Forest, a previously bandit-ridden haunt within the bounds of the extensive lands of the Marquesses of Bath. The Thynne (family name of the Baths) Ecclesiastical Trust still provides some funding for the repair and maintenance of our church, together with two other churches still on Longleat lands.



The church is in a good state of repair. We have a quinquennial in September 2023 but have had work done over the years and hope that it will not reveal too much that needs to be done.

Setting

Not only is the church in a beautiful rural setting, surrounded by woodland and farmland, but it also has ample parking and the very pretty village hall (the old school) is 50 yds away and used extensively after funerals, christenings, weddings, etc. as it seats about 80 people and has all mod cons. The church works with the Hall Committee and together put on shared events such as cream teas during the year, the income from which is then shared.



Worshipping

We currently have two services a month, on the 1st & 3rd Sundays, the first being Communion and the second Morning Service. Our wonderful Reader, Janet Caudwell, takes the service at both, with our previous vicar carrying out communion duties until our current vacancy commenced, in September 2023. Our congregation is small but faithful and many come from outside the parish to worship with us. As with many rural churches, we fill up on high days and holidays. We have 63 on the Electoral Roll. The church has an enthusiastic four-part choir with a very talented choir director and organist. We have an appreciation of church music and would welcome someone who shares our passion. We are 'middle' church following a service that has traditional parts in line with the BCP and other more modern elements. We use the BCP for particular services during the year.

Finances

Although we anticipate some necessary expenditure from the Quinquennial our finances are solid and St Katharine's benefits from monthly giving and legacies, as well as the bi-annual donations from the Thynne Ecclesiastical Trust.

Financial Statement

The Future

Having been part of St John's, Frome benefice for many years we are preparing to leave the urban link and join a benefice of other welcoming rural parishes. We feel this would be beneficial and are optimistic about the future. As a lady on the PCC said recently, we are looking for a vicar who likes wearing wellies, and perhaps likes dogs too??





Lullington, All Saints' & Orchardleigh, St Mary's

Congregation

Our two churches attract between 6-8 worshippers to services that we hold. Our ages range from 55 - 75 years old. We are a friendly bunch who know each other and enjoy sharing a sherry or fruit juice after each service, when we share and care for each other, passing on the love God has given us to others.

We host 30 weddings each year, so have 4-6 wedding couples attending each service to create their qualifying connection. We see this as a brilliant opportunity to share the love of God with people who may not be regular attenders at church, and hope our new Priest in charge would share this vision. We do also engage a team of like-minded priests in this ministry who will continue to conduct many of these weddings, 80% of which are on weekdays.

Community & Church Life

Our agenda is to serve our community as well as hold services.

Our community is a close-knit group of 25 homes who look out for and care for each other.

Every month we host a coffee morning that is well attended and warm.

Every two weeks we host a home group that also draws in people from Frome.

We are also introducing a contemplation group.

We reach out to villagers by holding a Village Pub in the church each quarter that is attended by nearly everyone in the village. At other times in the year we hold music evenings and history evenings.

Our 'mayor', the owners of Orchardleigh Estate and Mike Wilsher, churchwarden meet every month for a beer. Our agenda is to strengthen relationships between Orchardleigh and Lullington.

The community is involved in flowers for the church, maintaining and making our churchyards wilder. The church collaborates closely with the Parish council, regularly arranging meetings to follow each other.

Buildings

St Mary's Church dates back to the 1300s. According to records, the first priest at the church was William of Selwood in 1313. In the 19th century, St Mary's was not taken care of, but in 1878-81, it was fully restored by Sir G. Gilbert Scott and his son Oldrid. In 2006, St Mary's was the most popular church in England to get married in.

The original Norman church of All Saints', Lullington was built around 1160. The church was added to four times before being restored in 1862.

Both churches are in excellent condition.

Finances

The church finances are healthy, thanks to the contribution of £10,000 from 30 weddings each year. Our parish share in 2024 will be circa £4,500, which we will pay in full.

We have reserves ring fenced for buildings and maintenance of £105,000.

[Financial Statement](#)



Frome Deanery

Working together across the Deanery, we seek to be a Transforming Christian presence in every community where more and more people catch God's love and choose to be Jesus's disciples.

Whilst developing the Deanery Plan we have been thrilled to share with Beckington Benefice in their prayer times and are excited about the new way forward for them and us as a Deanery as St Katharine's, East Woodlands moves to be part of the benefice.

We seek to give God the glory and draw people to Christ, with clergy and non-clergy sharing in building God's kingdom in ways that are affirming and energising for all involved.

We see ourselves as a pioneering deanery returning to the values of the early church as described in Acts 2:42-47 – fellowship based on love and prayer.

This is all underpinned by four strands:

- Planning - which is fundamental to making our vision succeed
- Resourcing - so that initiatives are cross-deanery and include both the rural and the town churches working together
- Communicating - Sharing our successes and struggles, supporting each other and using social media to communicate well with the wider community
- Supporting - we appreciate that our vision is challenging, but we are confident that we can succeed if we have the right mind set and support each other.

[Deanery Leaflet](#)

**Giving God
the glory and
drawing
people to
Christ**



Our People (and there are many more!)



Deborah Bailey

Admin, Wedding Verger,
Comms, Beckington

Romans 12:12



John Beaven

Reader

Semi-retired GP, loves
bikes, butterflies, bees and
so much more



Maria Beaven

Churchwarden, Musician,
Beckington

'Beckington's Mary Berry'



Judith Craig

Churchwarden, Beckington

Retired GP, musician and
budding theologian



Janet Caudwell

Reader
St Katharine's
East Woodlands



Jim Dowling

Churchwarden, Rodden

Retired farmer, loves
skittles, cricket and bridge



Jeannette Hayward

Churchwarden, Berkley

Loves to sing



Ward Jones

Retired Methodist minister

Loves cricket, football, veg,
gardening, watercolour
painting and local history



Andrew Kellett

Retired Baptist minister

30 years in inner city
Bristol, now enjoys
growing veg.



Jane Kellett

Lay Pastoral Assistant,
Beckington

Retired nurse, Samaritan,
Pastoral Team, Lee Abbey



Caroline Walker

Area Dean

Passionate about building
teams working together
across the Deanery



Lorna Wheeler

Chair of PCC, St Katharine's,
East Woodlands

Retired lawyer, farmer's
daughter & country girl



Caroline White

Lay Worship Assistant,
Beckington

Coffee Connector



Mike Wilsher

Churchwarden, Lullington
& Orchardleigh

Equips game changers,
loves spinning, gardening
and community



Wendy Wilsher

Churchwarden, Lullington
& Orchardleigh, Treasurer,
Beckington

Partner in crime.

A great team

PSALM 127:1 "UNLESS THE LORD BUILDS THE HOUSE, ITS BUILDERS LABOUR IN VAIN."

Finally

*“We are all called to do ministry and even minister, but in all kinds of different ways so that the gospel can be proclaimed, the kingdom can be built, and God can be glorified – it is the calling of God.”**

We invite you to consider prayerfully whether you are called to be our next minister.

If you would like further information or to hear more of our journey before applying, please contact our Reader Dr John Beaven, initially at safeguarding.beckington@gmail.com

*Robert Hampshire, Christianity.com
www.christianity.com/church/what-is-ministry.html
accessed 19 Sept 2023

Called to
minister
together

Seeing His
kingdom built

