



MARLBROOK



Parish Profile 2025

Oldfield Park & Twerton Bath



MARLBROOK

Where the river flows,
everything will live



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Experience the power of community as we gather as one big church, worshipping together in **both our church buildings** or in smaller family-sized groups we call Missional Communities.

Date February 2025

Version 0.6

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Diocesan Statement

Our vision for growth and transformation



Introduction

We are delighted that you are considering whether this post of Priest in Charge of the Parishes of Bath St Michael's, Twerton-on-Avon and Church of the Ascension, Oldfield Park in the Diocese of Bath and Wells might be right for you. In order to help your prayerful discernment, we want to share a bit about our diocesan vision, within which we hope your own ministry might flourish.

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

The flourishing and growth of churches always needs attention. It is especially important for us today, as we seek to recover from the effects of the Covid pandemic which accelerated the pattern of decline in church attendance that we have seen across our diocese. Thankfully there are signs that we are recovering from the impact of the pandemic. Not only does national church data show that our average adult weekly church attendance rose between 2021 and 2022 but, even more encouragingly, we have seen many churches around our diocese develop approaches that respond to the opportunities and challenges in their local context and enable growth to happen.

A vision for growth and transformation

In light of the challenges and opportunities we face, we feel our aim across all our parishes needs to be growing our churches, within and beyond our church buildings, in both numbers and depth of faith, so that we can better work for the transforming of our communities and the life of God's Kingdom amongst us.

Our shared priorities

To help us pursue this aim, and

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

To value and cherish the people and resources we already have

We aim to ensure each person is well supported and equipped as a follower of Jesus Christ and for any



ministries they may feel called to undertake, within the local church and wider community. We are committed to supporting the well-being of all our leaders and church officers, both lay and ordained. We have a fully funded clergy well-being service, the offer of peer support groups, and an excellent team of diocesan support staff fully focused on supporting our parishes, chaplaincies and schools.

To develop new Christian worshipping communities

Whether it be new forms of worship in a wide variety of settings and times, church revitalisations or church plants, we long to see the good news of Jesus connect with the people in our communities that our traditional offerings struggle to reach.

To share in ministry and leadership

We are committed to the New Testament vision of the church as a vibrant body of people all using their God-given gifts. We are committed to a model of shared local ministry: raising up and equipping lay and ordained leaders able to share together in leading the church and serving God's world.

To deepen and grow faith

This is foundational to all we do. We long to see people of all ages and backgrounds, but perhaps especially children, young people and young adults, having more opportunities to discover, explore and grow in faith.

The outcome we are looking for

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

But Paul is also clear that we have a part to play too – in watering and planting, in doing the things that

enable the conditions for God's growth to be supported. So, covered by prayer, our confident hope is that if we are intentional in seeking God's guidance in planning and supporting growth, then God will honour that to see his people flourish and thrive – in spiritual depth, in impact within local communities, in the numbers of people becoming part of the local church and in transforming communities locally and beyond.

Local shaping and diocesan support

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

What implications does this have for the appointment of clergy?

It is important for us all to appoint clergy to benefices who are ready, willing and able to pray for and share in the vision we have for the flourishing and growth of churches and Christian life in our diocese. We want to create an environment that could be described as high challenge, high support. This means

appointing clergy who will not only value all that already exists but will be eager to work with others to build on and develop it. It means appointing clergy who are committed to learning, being creative, and to starting with the gifts God has given to them, their benefice and the wider community. We are therefore looking to appoint candidates who will

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

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

Bishop Michael
Archdeacon of Bath

Community lunches

“its great to spend time sitting and chatting together”

“we love helping with the washing up and contributing to this family event”



Welcome to Marlbrook

Join us on an exciting journey of faith and community!

At Church of the Ascension in Oldfield Park and St Michael's and All Angels Church in Twerton we serve two distinct and dynamic communities in the heart of the beautiful city of Bath.

Whilst we are two separate parishes with individual PCCs, we are united as one Marlbrook family - praying, worshipping, and growing together.

Come and be part of a community where openness, connection, passion for God and the Bible are at the centre of everything we do.



Our values

We are a **welcoming, compassionate** and **authentic** community, united in our dedication to the transformative message of Jesus.

Our churches are filled with **love** and a **missional heart**, devoted to serving others, creating disciples and nurturing a church family that feels like home.

We value:

- **friendship** and **fellowship**: sharing testimony, time with God and time with each other
- **prayer** and **scripture**: listening to God and discerning His will for us
- **accepting everyone**: recognising and responding to our differences in positive, meaningful ways

Life at Marlbrook

Life at Marlbrook is varied and goes far beyond our Sunday services.

Outreach

We are on mission in our local community through our outreach centres at Rose Cottage and Lighthouse Centre in Twerton, our missional communities, and our work with the young, old and vulnerable. For more details, please visit www.marlbrook.org/outreach/

Prayer

We have a regular pattern of prayer meetings throughout the week both in person and on Zoom. These include both open and themed prayer meetings, such as inter-church prayer and prayer for the persecuted church. We also offer to pray for individuals at the end of every service.

Discipleship

We have several established small groups that meet regularly to study the bible and learn together. We also have our Firm Foundations group that meets once a month to study the New City Catechism and learn the basics of the Christian Faith.



Our thriving 9am reflective service at Ascension led by our lay reader, Clare

We embrace the beautiful chaos that children bring into our midst



Our fortnightly Community Lunch at Ascension following the 10:30 service



Our mission field

We are deeply rooted in our community. In addition to our regular worship at St Michael's and Ascension, we are actively on mission in our local community, providing a witness to the power and presence of God.



Rose Cottage

Rose Cottage is St Michael's community hub and home to the Lighthouse Cafe, situated in the heart of Twerton High Street. The building is a critical place of connection and engagement for many in the community and offers a welcoming space operated mainly by volunteers. We employ a part time cook and offer home-made food at affordable prices. We regularly see God at work in people's lives through Rose Cottage - bringing them closer to Him as they move from visiting to volunteering, joining a missional community and attending church services.

For more details, please visit www.marlbroom.org/outreach/lighthouses

Ascension Church

Through our outreach projects and initiatives like the Film Club, Community Lunch and school partnerships, Ascension Church is used to embody God's love in action.

St Michael's Church

St Michael's Church is used to host large scale events aimed at families, including an annual Light Party, Christmas Party, Easter Party, and holiday club.

Lighthouse Centre

The Lighthouse Centre run by St Michael's serves as a vibrant space for charities and services dedicated to supporting the local community. Our partners include Bath Foodbank and Bath Community Kitchen.

Local Schools

Ascension has strong links with Oldfield Park Infant and Oldfield Park Junior Schools. Parents and pupils come to Ascension for key events such as Leavers Assemblies, Harvest and Christmas celebrations. Throughout the year there are also opportunities for church representatives, together with our Children and Youth Leader, to liaise with the school's RE Coordinator. There is a desire to develop this further on both sides.

St Michael's has a deep relationship with St Michael's Junior School. Members of the church serve on the governing body and volunteer in a variety of ways. We help to fund a school chaplain who provides pastoral support to pupils and staff.

Our Children and Youth Leader also visits regularly to lead assemblies.

Missional Communities

Designed to extend our reach and enable us to share God's love with even more people, our missional communities have helped us to strengthen our community links. We currently operate eight missional communities appealing to a range of interests from scripture to food, film and games.

For more details please visit www.marlbroom.org/outreach/missional-communities

Twerton Hackers

Twerton Hackers are a team of five volunteer gardeners from local churches. They transform overgrown gardens into peaceful spaces, primarily supporting elderly, disabled, and single individuals in the parish. By restoring gardens, they restore dignity and joy. Every home they visit receives a copy of the Gospel of Mark and an invitation to connect with our church community.

For more details please visit www.marlbroom.org/outreach

We witness the fruit of these missional activities through baptisms and inspiring testimonies from people coming to the Lord.



Baptisms

13 Baptisms took place on Easter Sunday in 2023



Our challenges

Our differences

Whilst our two churches share a strong bond, they are different - both in character and in parish demographics.

At Ascension, we are committed to serving a community with a mixture of young families, single older residents and students in rented houses. We have recently taken steps to evolve our style of worship to reach these groups. We know this is just the beginning of our journey.

St Michael's is in an area of multiple deprivation, known in our diocese as a Magnificat parish. We are focused on bringing Christ to those

facing financial hardship, vulnerable adults and those with difficult life circumstances. We know the scale of need here will always outstrip our resources - but not God's!

Our buildings

At St Michael's we have not been able to make the significant improvements required by our last three quinquennials. We need a clear vision for the building and fundraising efforts.

Our finances

Both churches have struggled to pay their parish share in full over the last few years. Whilst we are committed to paying more and we are making

strong progress, this remains a challenge.

Prayers of Living in Love and Faith

We have found it particularly challenging to navigate our differences in opinions on the Prayers of Living in Love and Faith.

Both PCCs voted to endorse the CEEC Basis of Faith. However, there are divisions within the St Michael's PCC and the wider church family.

We are committed to working together to remain a family despite these differences. We will need pastoral support to help us on this journey.

Our Aspirations

Things we want to nurture

We are keen to nurture and grow:

- Our **missional communities** which allow us to be **salt and light** in the community
- Our **small groups**, so we can study the Bible together and disciple each other
- Our culture of engaging in **singing, prayer, and worship sessions**
- Our **church leadership**, including the development of new lay leaders
- Our practice of sharing **testimonies** regularly



"He sets the lonely in families"

Psalm 68

Opportunities

We are blessed with numerous opportunities to grow and serve our community:

Expanding our children and youth ministry

We are blessed with an energetic Children and Youth Leader and a chaplain at St Michael's Junior School who is on fire for God! We successfully run several children's events including Christmas and Light parties.

We believe there is a huge opportunity to reach more children in both parishes and to build on our relationships with all local schools.

Reaching students

Oldfield Park is home to students from the University of Bath, Bath Spa University and Norland College. We would like to attract more students into Ascension.

Supporting older people

We would like to do more to support elderly and lonely people in both parishes.

Reaching our local deaf community

We previously had strong links between St Michael's and our local Action for Hearing Loss centre at Poolemead and we were fortunate to provide signers who were a wonderful gift to our church family, although currently this is not possible.

Although these links have dwindled due to COVID and staff changes at Poolemead, several residents still come with their carers on a Sunday morning. We would love to rekindle

this relationship and help this part of our community to know God in their lives.

Supporting the homeless

Ascension has a hostel providing temporary accommodation for the homeless within its parish. We would love to make connections there.

Partnerships with other churches

We long to grow partnerships with other churches to foster joined-up thinking and collaborative efforts across Bath. We believe that sharing resources will enhance our ability to serve God effectively.

Growing local awareness

We know we need to shout more about all the amazing things that happen in Marlbrook to show local people how our awesome God is working in people's lives. There is an opportunity to develop our communications to help us reach out to the community.

Developing our worship at Ascension

We are committed to developing our worship and exploring ways of going deeper with God and each other.

Developing our outreach through Rose Cottage and the Lighthouse Centre

We actively encourage volunteers to join our community efforts and are excited about recruiting a new Outreach Leader to strengthen our initiatives.

Looking ahead, we aim to secure funding to sustain and grow the work at Rose Cottage and the



Lighthouse Centre. We've connected with a Christian entrepreneur who is enthusiastic about supporting the development of Rose Cottage, and we are exploring additional opportunities to expand our ministry. Our medium-term goals include securing funding for our outreach worker and renovating the kitchen at Rose Cottage to enhance its usability and impact.

Our buildings

There is scope to make better use of all of our buildings so they become more sustainable.



Is This You?

We asked the children at our church school who they'd choose as their new minister:

Many painted a picture of someone who is **“loving, caring, and friendly”**, with a dollop of energy and a sprinkle of humour - **“but not too silly”!**



As one child put it, **“We want someone who listens to us and takes care of the school.”** It perfectly sums up what the children are looking for - a warm, approachable, and engaging leader who can connect with them in meaningful, memorable ways.

Now, if you've survived reading this with your composure intact, wait for what the adults have to say!



They envision a **“joyful storyteller”** with a knack for communication and a flair for **“leading assemblies”**.

In their words, our future minister should be someone who **“knows the Bible well but can explain it in simple terms”**. **“Loving kids”** is a must, as is a keen **“interest in our school”**, complete with a talent for **“chatting and getting to know everyone”**.

There's bonus points for drama, acting, and music skills with a particular fondness for someone who can **“introduce new songs”** and **“has a vision for a peaceful world”**.





Rose Cottage

“We like Rose Cottage because of the camaraderie and community feeling. There is decent food at a decent price, this is the way to get a meal at a good price. It is very friendly.”

“It is a really important part of this community. It brings people together, it is friendly safe space for the kids. We like the food it is affordable and the rooms are warm.”

“It is the soul of this part of the community, a place to meet, its more than just a cafe”



Your qualities

Do you possess **positivity, integrity, and empathy**, and are you a **team player** who values **honesty, openness, and kindness**? If so, you might be the perfect fit for our community.



Compassion, a kingdom focus, and the ability to be vulnerable and respectful are essential traits we value.

We are looking for someone who is **mission-hearted** and **big-hearted**, someone who is **authentic** and submits to **God’s word**. You will ideally be **outgoing** and **personal** with a **real** and **fun** personality.

As an enabler guided by the **Holy Spirit**, you must be **approachable, adaptable, and a good communicator**. We seek someone who is a **pastoral role model** with a passion for teaching the Bible and mission. A **strong leader with humility** who is able to set boundaries will thrive in our community.



Your skills

We are looking for someone with:

- **Strong organisational abilities and the bravery to tackle challenges head-on** because two churches, two mission centres and a range of missional communities means you could have a lot of balls in the air at any one time
- **Strong communication skills**, including active listening and communicating the gospel
- **Conflict resolution and mediation skills** to help us manage our differences around difficult issues such as the prayers of living in love and faith, and to balance the competing needs of a diverse community
- **The ability to delegate tasks efficiently** so you can empower our enthusiastic team of volunteers who minister and support our community
- **The ability to think innovatively and creatively**, particularly about finance and partnership building, as we have a big heart and big ideas, but limited resources

What we offer

Our PCCs offer a genuine partnership with you - rooted in friendship, fellowship and a shared commitment to build God's Kingdom. We don't expect one person to come in and carry the weight alone - we are eager to journey together, combining our passion and collective mission to bring about meaningful change.

While we recognise that our efforts may not always be polished, we bring unwavering enthusiasm, dedication, and a genuine desire to serve.

You will be supported by a lay reader and a dedicated staff team, including an Outreach Leader, Buildings Manager, Finance Administrator, Children and Youth Worker, and a School Chaplain.

We also offer the St Michael's rectory consisting of a modern four bedroom house in Twerton.



Rectory

St Michael's has a rectory and Ascension has a vicarage. You will be offered St Michael's rectory, which is a detached, modern four bedroom house close to the church in Watery Lane. It has a kitchen/diner, utility room, dining room, lounge and study.

There is an integral garage to which french doors have been added to provide a 'den'. This could easily be reversed, if required, but a new garage door would be needed.

There is a generous and attractive garden to the rear with fruit trees and flower borders, a driveway to the front that can accommodate several cars and also a large carport.

Ministers



Vacancy
Priest In Charge



Clare Hudson
Licensed Lay Reader

Admin Support



Jennie Brind
Buildings Manager



Leigha Shakespeare
Finance & Bookings Administrator

Lighthouse



Morgan Lynch
Lighthouse Cafe Cook



Beth Cook
St Michael's School Chaplain



Mike Smith
Outreach & Evangelism

Wardens, Safeguarding & Youth



Jo Curd
Ascension Warden



Sue Carr
Ascension Warden



Chris Tatchell
St Michael's Warden



Mike Smith
St Michael's Warden



Jerry Curd
Ascension Deputy Warden



Andrew Wallis
Ascension Deputy Warden



Clare Hudson
Safeguarding Officer (Ascension)



Jo Fee
Children & Youth Leader

Outreach activities

Gathering	Name	Where	Description
Outreach	Bread & Bread	Lighthouse Centre	A simple meal followed by an accessible Bible study
	Twerton Hackers	Local Area	Gardening and practical help for members of the community
	Mini Toddlers	Lighthouse Centre	A free weekly toddler group for local families
	Coffee Morning	Rose Cottage	2nd Thursday of the month at 10am
	Lighthouse Café	Rose Cottage	Mondays - Thursdays 9am-2pm
	Food Bank	Lighthouse Centre	Tuesdays & Thursdays 9.30-11.30am
Missional Community	Roots & Shoots	Home & Rose Cottage	Thursdays (various times & locations)
	Wild Church	St Michael's school forest	Outdoor activities, cake and hot chocolate for local families
	Film Group	Ascension Hall	Fortnightly film
	Board Games	Ascension Hall	2nd & 4th Sundays 2.30pm
	Community Lunch	Ascension Hall	2nd & 4th Sundays following 10.30am service
	Bell Ringing	St Michael's Church	Thursdays 6:45-8:30pm
	Agape	Rose Cottage	2nd & 4th Sundays 1pm (includes lunch)
Home Group	Wild Church	Home	Monday evenings weekly
	Roots & Shoots	Home	Thursdays mornings weekly
	Bible study, prayer, and fellowship group	Ascension members' homes	Mondays, fortnightly
Other	Knitting Group	Ascension Hall	1st Wednesday & 3rd Monday of the month at 10am
	Gardening & Maintenance	Ascension Church	2nd Saturday of the month

You can find out more about all of these activities at our website. marlbrook.org


Prayer

What	Where	When
Inter-church prayer	Rose Cottage	Tuesday 8:30am
Open prayer	Zoom	Thursday 7am
Prayer for the persecuted church	Zoom	Saturday 8:30am
Pre-service prayer	Lighthouse Centre and Ascension Prayer Room	Sunday 9:30am
Hour of Prayer for the Malbrook Churches	Ascension Church	Third Sunday of the month 6pm
Ascension prayer ministry group	Zoom	Thursday 9:30am



Worship pattern

01




1st Sunday

9:00am
Reflective Service
Ascension Church

10:30am
Celebration Service
St Michael's Church

02




2nd Sunday

9:00am
Reflective Service
St Michael's Church

10:30am
Celebration Service
Ascension Church

03




3rd Sunday

9:00am
Reflective Service
Ascension Church

10:30am
Celebration Service
St Michael's Church

04




4th Sunday

9:00am
Reflective Service
St Michael's Church

10:30am
Celebration Service
Ascension Church

05



5th Sunday

10:30am
Celebration Service

Alternative Venues
Ascension and
St Michael's Church



Links

St Michael's Junior School: www.stmichaelsbath.org

Oldfield Park Junior School: www.oldfieldparkjuniorschool.com

Twerton Infant School: www.twertoninfants.com

Oldfield Park Infant School: www.oldfieldparkinfants.co.uk

Bath Food Bank: www.bath.foodbank.org.uk

Bath Community Kitchen: www.bathcommunitykitchen.org.uk

Curo Temporary Accommodation: www.curo-group.co.uk/support-services/other-curo-services/temporary-accommodation

Moravian Church (Western District - Coronation Avenue Moravian Church): www.moravian.org.uk/congregations



Games group

"Its challenging and fun to learn and play new games together"

"this has opened up a whole new hobby for me"

Finances

Both parishes have struggled to pay their parish share in full last year, but are proactively working towards paying more to the diocese.

St Michael's and Ascension PCCs have both voted to give its parish share via a restricted fund established by the diocese for those who have endorsed the CEEC Basis of Faith.

St Michael's

Twerton is an area of multiple deprivation, known in our diocese as a Magnificat parish. The nature of the area and the type of programmes we run has enabled us to tap into a variety of external sources for grants and donations. We continue to explore these options to help us sustain our staff team whilst increasing the amount of parish share we are able to pay.

Ascension

Prior to the COVID19 pandemic finances at Ascension were strong and we paid our parish share in full. The rising cost of utilities and the reduction in giving mean that finances continue to be a challenge. We are currently working on creative ways to increase our income.



	St Michael's	Ascension
Total Income	£142k*	£43.8k
Total Expenditure	£149K	£51.2k
Parish Share	£33k	£43k
Parish Share (% paid)	50%	40%
Unaccounted restricted reserves	£23k	£14.2k
Unrestricted reserves	£34k	-

* including Gift Aid



Buildings

St Michael's and All Angels Church

The church is a beautiful Grade II listed building located on How Hill in Twerton on a large housing estate in the west of the city. It was built in the 12th Century with only the original tower remaining today. It was enlarged and rebuilt in 1839 by G. Manners incorporating some



of the original building. Victorian Restoration was carried out by E.W. Buckle which led to its consecration on 21st January 1886. The Norman

doorway and font date back to 1174-1191. Included in the church is a prayer room, vestry, kitchen area and WC.

Ascension Church

The church is a Grade II Edwardian church situated in a late Victorian terraced context. It was built in 1907 and 1911 designed by E.W. Buckle. The building has undergone many improvements throughout the years including a new doorway for improved access, a first floor build and conversion of the vestry to a prayer room.

The church hall is attached to the church. Today the hall is regularly utilised not only through church events, but uniformed organisations, a pre-school and is available for hire.



Our area

Twerton

Bath's perception of Twerton is generally poor but the people who live here are fiercely defensive of their home. Home to 6,900 people, Twerton is a tight-knit community where we know Jesus can really make a difference. St Michael's, the Lighthouse Centre and Rose Cottage are all a short walk away from Bath City Farm and the family-orientated Bath City Football Club.

Oldfield Park

Oldfield Park is mostly made of closely built terraced Edwardian houses and local businesses. Its 3,900 residents fall into four groups: local families who have lived here for generations, newer families from further afield, single person households and university students living off campus. Locally we have



Moorland Road, which is a small but thriving high street with a strong community.

City of Bath

Bath is famous for its history and architecture, particularly the beautiful Bath stone Georgian buildings and spas. Significant stages of English history are represented within the city, from the Roman Baths to Bath Abbey and the Royal

Crescent, to the modern Thermae Bath Spa.

Bath has a Premiership League Rugby Club, two universities, a large service sector, and ICT and creative industries. Tourism is the principal industry and Bath has an endless provision of restaurants, places to eat, to drink and a lively nightlife. On the whole, Bath is an affluent city.



General information

Marlbrook: www.marlbrook.org

A Church Near You (Ascension): www.achurchnearyou.com/church/11067/

A Church Near You (St Michael's): www.achurchnearyou.com/church/11068/



Film club

"Film club is a huge source of inspiration and fellowship, listening to and sharing views on the films"

"Film club has helped me think through my faith"



