

BENEFICE PROFILE

TAUNTON MINSTER AND ST JOHN THE EVANGELIST



Our vacancy prayer

Lord Jesus,

**We hold before you all who live and work in our benefice,
and all who worship you in our churches.**

**We know you have plans for us, and that these plans are
good.**

**Give us your joy, your thankfulness,
and help us to be faithful in prayer, word and worship.
Inspire us to grow in faith, love one another, care for those
in need.**

**Help us to share responsibility,
as we reach out to others and welcome newcomers.**

**Sustain those with interim responsibilities;
give wisdom to those involved in appointing the new vicar
and prepare the heart of the right person.**

**Ever-living God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit,
may we see your kingdom come here,
to the glory of your name.**

Amen.

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Our invitation to you



Could you be our new vicar?

Are you someone who has a strong faith in God, as revealed in Jesus Christ? Do you care deeply for others, and have a desire to serve, lead, and encourage the gifts of God's people as we seek to strengthen and develop our benefice?

We are hoping to be led by someone who can help us develop our prayer life, support our people, and strengthen our faith. We are hoping to improve the pastoral care we provide, and for someone to lead us in building on our missional outreach to the local community and beyond.

We want to welcome and support more children and families, and are keen to explore ways of being more welcoming and inclusive to everyone.

It is our prayer that our vicar will bring new ideas and fresh energy to work with us to fulfil God's purposes here in Taunton.

If you sense that God may be calling you to us, please read on and we look forward to meeting you.



Why this role matters

This is an opportunity to serve in a benefice with a wide reach across town, diocese and community life, serving two town centre churches in the heart of the community.

We seek to be places of prayer and worship, and centres of mission and service. Through our worship and our witness, we seek to draw people to the love of God. We love serving the people and communities of Taunton with joy and sharing with them the fullness of life in Christ.

As a minster church, Taunton Minster has a visible role in civic and diocesan occasions, alongside its regular parish ministry. With a strong base and a number of developing areas, this is a role with real scope to shape what comes next.



OUR VISION

Who we are and who we want to be

AS A JOINT BENEFICE WE HAVE WORKED TOGETHER TO IDENTIFY THE THINGS THAT WE VALUE AND CELEBRATE, AS WELL AS THE CHALLENGES THAT WE FACE.

Our vision for the benefice is centred on three things: to be **prayerful**, **pastoral**, and **mission focused**. These three pillars of our faith shape who we are as churches and our vision for who we want to become.

Our faith ministry

Our benefice is characterised by our worship and ministry: this forms the backbone to everything else we do. At its core is our weekly pattern of prayer, starting with our Sunday services and running through a range of mid-week services (you can find out more about our services in Annex 1). Our services include traditional BCP, family eucharist, contemplative prayers and contemporary worship, as well as more traditional Anglo-Catholic liturgy at St John's.

Taunton Minster livestreams its Sunday morning services via Facebook.

This backbone of prayer includes smaller groups of people meeting to pray, both clergy and laity, such as our Home Groups, Prayer Vine and weekly Parish Prayers.

We want to be churches where all are warmly welcomed and celebrated because of their differences.

We delight in sharing a wide variety of worship and liturgical styles, brought alive by a diverse range of music. At Taunton Minster we are blessed to have both an adult and a children's choir, led by a skilled Director of Music. Music styles are eclectic, from Tallis via Taizé to Townend. There is more about our music in Annex 2.

We are looking for a vicar who would support and encourage our musicians in their Christian journey.



Ministry team

Taunton Minster



**GWEN, ASSOCIATE PRIEST
AND TRAINING INCUMBENT**



LOUISE, ASSOCIATE VICAR



CARYL, CURATE IN TRAINING



VALERIE, LAY WORSHIP ASSISTANT



ALLI, LAY WORSHIP ASSISTANT

Ministry team

St John's



JULIA, ASSOCIATE PRIEST



**SIMON, CONGREGATIONAL WORSHIP
LEADER**

Staff team

Taunton Minster



MILES, DIRECTOR OF MUSIC

**PARISH ADMINISTRATOR
(VACANT)**

Our people ministry

Our constant rhythm of prayer provides an underpinning backbone that gives us the stability and strength for our wider work, as we seek to be a place of prayer and worship, and a centre of mission and service. The people-focused nature of our parishes is important to us, with strong friendships and relationships at the heart of how we share our faith together. At Taunton Minster we have over 100 volunteers, who help keep the Minster church open seven days a week and offer a warm welcome to everyone. As support for our ministry team, our trained Lay Pastoral Assistants are available to offer a listening ear in the coffee shop and to support those who need it before, during and after Sunday services and through the week. This might involve talking about our faith, giving a free Bible, or praying with someone. We can also give practical help and signpost, or refer to other agencies.

We also rely on our volunteers for a number of roles at our Sunday services. Our volunteers at the Minster greet everyone who walks through our doors and are available to talk or pray with people. St John's also has a core group of volunteers who assist in worship and the range of events held at the church.

As well as welcoming, the Minster volunteers take on a number of other roles, including working with the expanding numbers of young musicians and choristers and staffing the (award-winning!) coffee shop and book shop, which are some of our greatest areas of ministry. There are over 30 different groups and activities connected to our benefice, including our active and growing Mother's Union group, and providing a venue for Alcoholics Anonymous or breastfeeding groups to meet (a full list of groups is available at Annex 2). We follow safer recruitment processes, and our volunteers are trained and receive ongoing support. We are blessed with the number of volunteers at the Minster and would love to offer increased assistance to them, possibly through the recruitment of a Volunteer Manager.

We are proud that the Minster is a designated 'Warm Space' and to offer support to those who might be struggling, through the Warm Clothes Hub, free period products in our toilets, or providing something to eat and drink free to those who need it.



Our partnership ministry

This pulse of mission stretches beyond our churches into our partnerships, whether ecumenical, inter-faith or community based. Taunton Minster, as the minster church, plays a civic role in diocesan and county services. We also have strong links with local charities and organisations, such as Young Somerset and Charis (a Christian charity working with refugees and asylum seekers in the Taunton area), as well as being a space to host community events, such as art installations like Luke Jerram's *The Moon and Gaia* (which attracted 22,000 and 15,000 visitors respectively) and regular music concerts.

St John's has a wide-reaching base in local music groups who are welcomed into the church and hosts events such as Holocaust Memorial Day and a successful series of Lunchtime Concerts. It also is a part of the three churches group in Taunton with the Temple Methodist and United Reformed Church, arranging joint services and study groups.



Our Earth ministry

Taunton Minster has an active Environmental Task Force and is a Demonstrator Church for the Church of England net zero plans. We hope to lead by example in working towards reaching net zero and to be able to support other churches in their own journey. There is more information about the Environmental Task Force, the Demonstrator Grant and where the Minster is in the process at Annex 4.



Our community ministry

In our outreach to the local community, we seek to serve the people of this town with joy. At the Minster, our links with local schools are growing and strengthening, especially through outreach events at Christmas and Easter, where we offer exploratory sessions to local Primary Schools. These have proved to be really popular and are growing year on year, which is something we are keen to continue and expand. We also host 'Moving Up' services each year, which brings in over 600 children from the church primary schools in this part of the Diocese. We are establishing key relationships with inter-faith colleagues and are keen to continue to nurture these.

Taunton Minster is Taunton's highest capacity concert venue, and we frequently host concerts by local performers and groups, as well as by well-known names. St John's has links with its local schools and hosts musical events for them as well as carol services with them, County Hall, and local businesses and is very proud of the concerts held in support of local and national charities. We see these relationships as an important part of our mission and are keen to continue building on them.



Since June of 2023 St John's has hosted services held by the Mar Thoma Church, a reformed Oriental Protestant church in communion with the Church of England. Services are conducted in Malayalam and English. At first a planting from the church of St Thomas in Bristol, the arrangement has grown so that the congregation in Taunton and Yeovil now stands by itself, having been inaugurated in March of 2025. They have just been granted the status of "Parish" by their Bishop, and will be known as the church of St Mark. Members of the Mar Thoma congregation attend St John's and some are on the Electoral Roll. This is a mutually beneficial arrangement; attendance at a Mar Thoma service is a delight! St John's receives a payment for each service and also their help with cleaning and maintenance.



Church links to the community and beyond

As well as those already mentioned, Taunton Minster has certain civic responsibilities, including Remembrance Services with links to The Rifles and 40 Commando at Norton Fitzwarren. We have also provided for Mayor Making and events are sometimes attended by the Lord Lieutenant and/or High Sheriff. The Minster also serves the Diocese by hosting ordinations, confirmations, and conferences. We have links with CHARIS, a refugee partnership of three local churches, working alongside other refugee agencies in the town. The Minster also has a link to the Cathedral of the Holy Cross, Lusaka, in Zambia since 2010 but contact has reduced in recent times.

A list of groups, activities and additional external links at Taunton Minster is at Appendix 2.



WHERE WE NEED HELP

Challenges and opportunities

As we rejoice in these many blessings, we are conscious that we hold a responsibility to live them out in the best way possible. We strive to be clear-eyed about areas where we can improve.

Spiritual development and growing disciples

We warmly welcome more opportunities to explore and grow in faith. There is a real desire for greater spiritual and theological growth within our congregations, and for deeper learning both about our faith and about one another. This could be through revitalising some of our Home Groups, or through running courses or discussion groups.



Faith sharing and making disciples

We want to develop ways of sharing the good news more widely in our communities (through courses or training) and help to equip us to be able to share our faith with those we meet.

Supporting people

With so many volunteers involved in the life of Taunton Minster on a daily basis (and we would be lost without them!), we recognise the need to offer them training, supervision and pastoral care to ensure that together we follow best practice and that our policies are adhered to. At Taunton Minster we are working towards having clear and accessible policies in place for all, building on the brilliant work of the Minster safeguarding team. As well as caring for our volunteers, we want to increase support for our elected and paid staff through better accountability and staff development opportunities. We recognise that we need proper structures in place if we want to keep growing in those areas where there is growth or promote growth in other areas. Our vicar will need wisdom in how to work with a variety of people, and demonstrate an ability to delegate when appropriate.



Young people and families

We would love to encourage more young people to be part of our weekly church life, in addition to being part of our choristers, readers and social groups and attending family services, and to support young people and young adults. We would also love to be spaces where families with young children feel welcomed and encouraged to be part of our bigger family. We would like to work towards appointing a Children and Youth worker to help us with this.

There are real opportunities to do this with the work envisaged by the Minster House project (see annex 5 for more information on this) and our partnerships with the local community. We have hopes that the Minster House could offer an after-school club with food for teenagers, a breakfast club for young people, a baby and toddler group, a Children and Youth worker...we are excited for these possibilities! We are hoping for a vicar who shares our enthusiasm for the possibilities, as well as being realistic about the challenges we face with encouraging more young people and families.

Outward-looking and outreach

There is a heart for mission within our benefice and a desire to support other churches in the diocese, as evidenced in the church survey. We would love to reach more people in our community who are not yet part of our congregations and build on some of our existing relationships to share our faith. Our benefice has a clear vision to be welcoming to all.

Sharing who we are: communications

We recognise a need to improve our self-understanding as a church, our role within the community and the way we communicate both within the Minster and to the wider world. Even internally we do not always communicate our decisions or achievements and we would like help on working to become a closer family, building stronger and broader relationships within and across our congregations.

Financial challenges

While we are keen to develop our outreach and mission, there is also a recognition there are big financial challenges facing both churches and an ongoing need to improve facilities. The opportunity for sharing resources could help to reduce the pressure on our volunteers and finances.

FINANCIAL SUMMARY

Both PCCs independently run prudent and close financial controls; at the Minster through a dedicated Finance and Property Committee, with strong risk management experience, while St John's has formal trustees who look after their investment funds. Revenue and cost budget is balanced, with two months' expenditure covered by a General reserve. A key challenge is meeting the Benefice Share, with the Minster currently covering 87% of the diocesan requirement and St John's fully meeting its commitment. The Minster anticipates paying our 2026 parish share in full, apart from the 'shortfall' underpayment from the past four years.

The Minster revenues are boosted substantially through our Coffee Shop and Gift/Book Shop, with additional revenue from Planned Giving and visitor donations. The Minster also benefits from rental income from external music and arts events.



The Minster PCC is very aware of future capital requirements which will arise, principally from our commitment to net zero and the maintenance required for our beautiful bell tower.

At the Minster, we are proud of the completion of a major capital project in 2025, with the development of the Minster House. This now provides a new steady income stream from the rental of a first floor flat with the remainder of the property used as a hub for youth activities and external use by Young Somerset. This is core to our central aim of the Minster being dynamically involved in community life, with a focus on young people.

As well as its investment funds and income, St John's receives Planned Giving and generous donations, as well as donations from its concert programmes.

WHO WE ARE LOOKING FOR

Person specification

We are seeking a prayerful vicar with a heart for the congregation and for the community, who will help us discern God's calling to us, and who shares a deep call to the vision we have identified: to be prayerful, to be pastoral, and to be mission focused. Our prayer is that our new vicar will both come alongside us and lead us.



To maintain and develop our focus on **prayer**, we are hoping for a vicar with a deep sense of the life-giving value of prayer, who brings strong liturgical knowledge and flexibility, including recognition of Anglo-Catholic traditions at St John's, and leadership for both our congregations.

To increase and support our **pastoral** care, we are hoping for a vicar who brings a welcoming, humorous and sympathetic approach, and who is an inclusive leader who will work well with our staff and volunteers. Some previous experience in youth work would be beneficial, as we particularly want to improve our pastoral care towards families and young people.

To continue developing our **mission**, we are hoping for a vicar who is proactive and committed to the development of a real outward-reaching vision for the Minster. A commitment to diversity, inclusivity and a willingness to use the Prayers of Love and Faith are desirable. Applicants will need good public speaking skills, and be comfortable in public and civic life.



We are hoping for someone:

- who shares a deep call to our priorities of prayer, pastoral care and mission.
- who will work with us to help us specifically focus on ways to grow in our spirituality, faith and evangelism.
- who will both come alongside us and lead us as we seek to fulfil our missions, including our spiritual development and aim to grow disciples.
- who will value, cherish and enable us to flourish.
- who embraces the breadth of church traditions, the value of unity, and the diversity offered by our two churches.
- who has a willingness to allow the use of the Prayers of Love and Faith. Both churches support the use of the PLF and St John's is a member of the Inclusive Church Network.
- who will develop, support and strengthen our pastoral care.
- who is excited by the opportunities to share the good news with our wider community.
- who will be an animator to help us live out our vision.
- who has experience in encouraging children and youth work.
- who enjoys working alongside others and in teams.
- who is committed to ensuring our churches are welcoming places for all people.
- who will be confident in the civic role we hold.

Our benefice has strong hopes to build on its established strengths and reputation, fulfilling God's work and playing a vibrant and dynamic role within the county town of Somerset. We are hoping for an incumbent who is a relaxed and clear communicator, has strong organisational skills and natural resilience. It is also essential that the incumbent has a strong focus on environmental awareness and safeguarding. Commitment to growth across both churches is essential.

The demands on the benefice incumbent will thus be undoubtedly challenging, exciting and fulfilling!



WHAT IT IS LIKE TO LIVE AND MINISTER HERE

Taunton is known for being the county town of Somerset. It has many independent shops, schools and open spaces. It is home to the Somerset County Cricket Club and is highly accessible by train from the rest of the South West and London. Beyond the town, you will find unspoilt villages, and the beauty of the Blackdown Hills, Quantock Hills and Exmoor.

Taunton Minster's mission is 'To know Christ better and make Christ better known.' The Minster title, given in March 2022, not only acknowledges the significance of the town in the Diocese of Bath and Wells but is also a call for the church to engage with renewed confidence and energy in the life of the community. Taunton Minster supports the ministry of the Bath and Wells Diocese, in a similar way to Bath Abbey in the north of the diocese.

St John's mission statement is: "To know the love of God; that all may be drawn to love". The church partakes fully in the life of the Deanery and Diocese.



Taunton Minster has 175 people registered on our 2025 electoral roll and around 140 people at our Sunday morning services. St John's has a Roll of 28 and attendances averaging 20 at Sunday worship.

We value and celebrate our history and achievements, especially how we have tackled big challenges, such as renovating the bells and organ at Taunton Minster and building Minster House as a focus for young people. At St John's the sound and lighting systems have been renewed and we have major fabric and redecorating plans, supported by a generous investment fund. The Father Willis organ is a part of its Listed Grade 1 status and used for guest recitals and, together with the Minster, takes part in the National Organ Days.

Both churches care deeply about the amazing heritage of their Grade I listed buildings and protecting them for the future and are active participants in National Heritage Days.

The vicarage is a modern four-bed property with garage adjacent, close to the Minster in Whirligig Lane. The church office is near the vicarage and both share a private driveway with plenty of parking. More details, including a floorplan, can be found in Annex 3.

IN CONCLUSION

Writing this benefice profile has been an opportunity for us to reflect on who we are and who we want to be.

Three things have stood out clearly to us for our ongoing vision: firstly, that we want to be **prayerful** and prayer-led; secondly, that we have a real heart to be **pastoral** to all; and thirdly, that we feel called to be **mission-focused**.

We offer a supportive and collaborative ministry team, alongside a committed and active group of volunteers. The benefice has strong connections with the local community and provides opportunities to develop both existing and new areas of ministry.

We recognise the demands of the role and are committed to supporting our new vicar in their ministry and wellbeing. During the vacancy, we have been praying for all who will be considering this post, and particularly that God would prepare the heart of the right person.

It has also been an opportunity to take a step back and recognise where we need help. We are hoping and praying for someone to come alongside us. Thank you for prayerfully considering whether that could be you. We are so excited to meet you!





EDITORIAL NOTE

This profile has been prepared by Editorial teams from both churches and draws on the results of the joint Discernment Event held on 17 January 2026; engagement with the wider congregations through the church Surveys – for which a report is available; and contributions from a wide range of groups and activities. We are grateful to all those involved.

Annex 1

WORSHIP

TAUNTON MINSTER REGULAR SERVICES

Sunday Morning Services:

8.00am Holy Communion (St Andrew's Chapel): BCP said service with sermon.

10.00am Holy Communion – Common Worship: The principal Minster service.

10.00am Family Worship with Communion or Holy Baptism (1st Sunday only): A light informal service for families and children, with Communion/Baptisms.

5pm Services

(1st Sunday) Choral Evensong (BCP) (Evening Prayer in January & August)

A service with selected choral items and choir.

(2nd Sunday) Refresh! (with worship band)

A 45 minute informal service, with a more relaxed style of worship.

(3rd Sunday) Evening Prayer (BCP or CW)

A spoken service with organ, hymns and a sermon.

(4th Sunday) Prayers for Peace (once a quarter a Healing Service)

A said service focussed on praying for world peace.

(5th Sunday) Compline or Contemplative

A reflective service at the end of the day (Contemporary language).

Weekday Service:

11.00am – Holy Communion (Common Worship): said Communion service.

ST JOHN'S REGULAR SERVICES

Sunday morning Eucharist at 10:00am.

The Angelus is said or sung at noon on Wednesdays, followed by a said Eucharist.

On the second and fourth Saturdays each month, St John's hosts the Mar Thoma church for their services.

Annex 2

GROUPS AND ACTIVITIES

Further details of each of these groups are available on request.

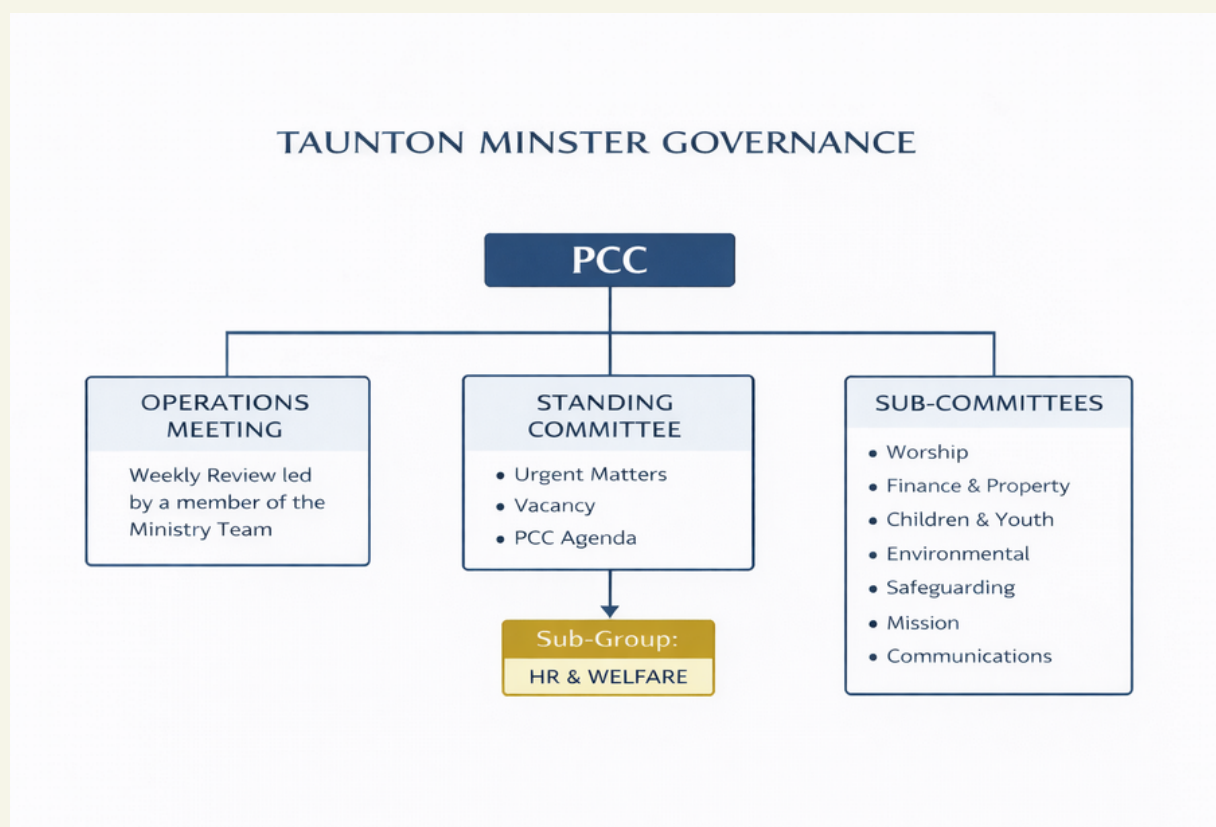
TAUNTON MINSTER: FAITH AND PEOPLE

The Parochial Church Council and subgroups

The PCC is responsible for the Governance of the Minster and promoting the whole mission of the church (pastoral, evangelistic, and ecumenical), vision and direction.

The group generally meets monthly and its work is supported by seven sub-committees which consist of a mixture of PCC members and representatives from the congregation. Except for the Standing Committee, which also meets monthly, the other sub committees tend to meet quarterly. Details of these committees are shown in the Appendix.

Membership of the PCC currently consists of eighteen elected members from our electoral roll (two of which represent us on our Deanery Synod), two seconded members and the three members of our current clergy team. Elected members stand for three years to enable continuity. Attendance is high with an average of 80% plus per meeting.



Annex 2

MINSTER-LED GROUPS

Music

Taunton Minster has a strong musical tradition. We have an excellent Director of Music in Miles Quick, and both an adult and a children's choir which sing separately and together, together numbering over 50 members. A monthly choral evensong is sung in addition to the weekly Sunday morning services. We have a 3-manual Father Willis organ which underwent a full renovation in 2018-19, uniting the wonderful romantic C19 sounds with C21st technology. There is also a fine Blüthner grand piano and a new Yamaha Clavinova (2026).

A more informal worship group leads the Refresh! services, and there is growing involvement of instrumentalists, both orchestral and band-orientated. Our most recent Come and Sing Palm Sunday event attracted 140 singers. Music styles are eclectic, from Tallis via Taizé to Townend. We are looking for a vicar who would support and encourage our musicians in their Christian journey.

Friday evenings for children and young people

On Friday evenings, Taunton Minster is a-buzz with activity.

We start the evening at 6.30pm with the Young Readers' Group and this has a membership of 15 but such is its popularity, we now have a waiting list of youngsters to join. The readers group exists to teach children to read the Bible and deliver prayers clearly and with meaning. At 7.15pm, the remaining children arrive and Chorister rehearsals begin.

The evening ends with 'Noise' from 7.45pm to 8.30pm, which is our youth club. Roughly 12- 19 children attend each week. We have 7 adults who lead activities and a team of 3 administrators who take turns to sit by the door and check the children in and out of the building. Noise is a social group for Choristers aged from 7 to 17.

Our current membership over all three activities is 33, with an approximate average attending weekly of 25.

Tekna

Tekna (a New Testament Greek word, which is used to refer to children in different ways and can be found on the wall in the St Andrews Chapel in Church) is a group for children, 0-11years (usually). It meets during the 10am Service on a Sunday morning in the Coffee Shop.

There is currently only one child who attends weekly. On Family Services there are sometimes more, from the families of the Choristers.

Annex 2

MINSTER-LED GROUPS

Pastoral care

The pastoral Care steering group meets every 2 months to discuss those in need of support, how we can help, and who should do this. We have a small team of Lay pastoral Assistants, and with Clergy, we visit on average between 8 - 15 people each month, many of whom receive home communion. We also hold a monthly Communion service in Calway House care home.

Prayer Vine

As part of the ministry of Taunton Minster there is a small, dedicated team who undertake the mission to pray for those in great need who ask for prayer. The small team meets about every three months to pray and share updates on the list of those asking for prayer.

Prayer Ministry

Prayer vicars are available each Sunday during the 10am service to pray with folk, for themselves, for someone they know, or for a situation on their heart.

Home Groups

There are 3 groups. Most meet every few weeks, or just for a social occasion.

One of the home groups reported that:

"Our home group is one of the best things about our church. 11 of us meet once a month in the quietness of St. Andrew's chapel. We are led by two retired clergy, one an Anglican and the other a Baptist minister, and we study the lectionary readings for the following week. It's a great time of learning and support and everyone contributes as we all have very different views."

Mothers' Union

This is a group of Diocesan members of the Mothers' Union. Non-MU members are very welcome to attend. We hold an annual Wave of Prayer Service in February, a social get together in July and an Advent Service in December. We have speakers at the other seven meetings. The group meets on the first Wednesday of the month at 2.30pm, except January and August.

Attendance has grown over recent years, and we regularly get 25 plus people, with over 40 for our Advent Service.

Annex 2

MINSTER-LED GROUPS

Breakaway Craft and Social Group

Breakaway is a sub-group of Mothers' Union and is open to all to attend for craft, chat, cake and a cuppa. Donations are collected and after expenses, the remainder goes to Mothers' Union.

The Group meets monthly on the third Wednesday at 10.30am in the Children's Corner. Between 10 – 16 people attend.

Needles and Natter

This is a social group for anyone who wishes to come along to work on their needlecraft project and to enjoy a chat, a cuppa and a biscuit. Donations are made which go to Minster funds. The Group meets monthly on the second Wednesday at 2pm in the coffee shop. Between 8 – 14 people attend.

Flower team

The purpose of the flower team is to enhance the beauty of The Minster. On a weekly basis the team arranges flowers under the pulpit, under the Mary Magdalene statue, in St Andrew's Chapel and The Soldiers' Corner.

All the group meet twice a year to agree the rota and what additional arrangements we will do for special occasions such as Easter, Harvest. We are a team of 9 with a range of ability.

Chatty Café

This group was set up to provide a place for people to meet others socially. Tea, coffee and biscuits are provided free of charge by the coffee shop, but most attending are happy to make a financial contribution to coffee shop funds.

The group meets on the first and third Friday of the month (except Bank Holidays) in the coffee shop at 10am. Between 8 – 12 people attend.

Saturday Breakfast Club

Meets on the first Saturday of the month, for a breakfast and a talk from a speaker. We have a variety of topics, and on average between 20 and 30 attend.

Annex 2

There are a number of other Minster-led groups or initiatives, including:

- Bell Ringers
- The Ministry Team
- Pastoral Visiting & Home Communion
- Servers
- Prayer Ministry
- Intercessors & Readers
- Welcomers
- Coffee Shop
- Book Shop
- Warm Clothes Hub
- Period Poverty

COMMUNITY, OUTREACH AND EXTERNAL GROUPS

Taunton Minster and St John's have links to several external groups and outreach programmes, including:

- Interfaith Group
- CHARIS refugees
- Alcoholics Anonymous
- Breastfeeding Group
- Sing & Sign
- Village Agents
- Internet Cafe
- The Peregrine Project
- Minster Council
- Art & Cultural Displays
- Street Pastors
- Mar Thoma Church
- 3 Churches Group – URC, Methodists, St John's
- Taunton Town Chaplaincy
- Taunton Foodbank
- Open Door
- Roy Parkhouse's Genealogy Site (Monumental Inscriptions)
- Somerset Organists & Choir Association
- Guild of Vergers
- Somerset & Town Councils
- Trustees of Richard Huish 6th Form College

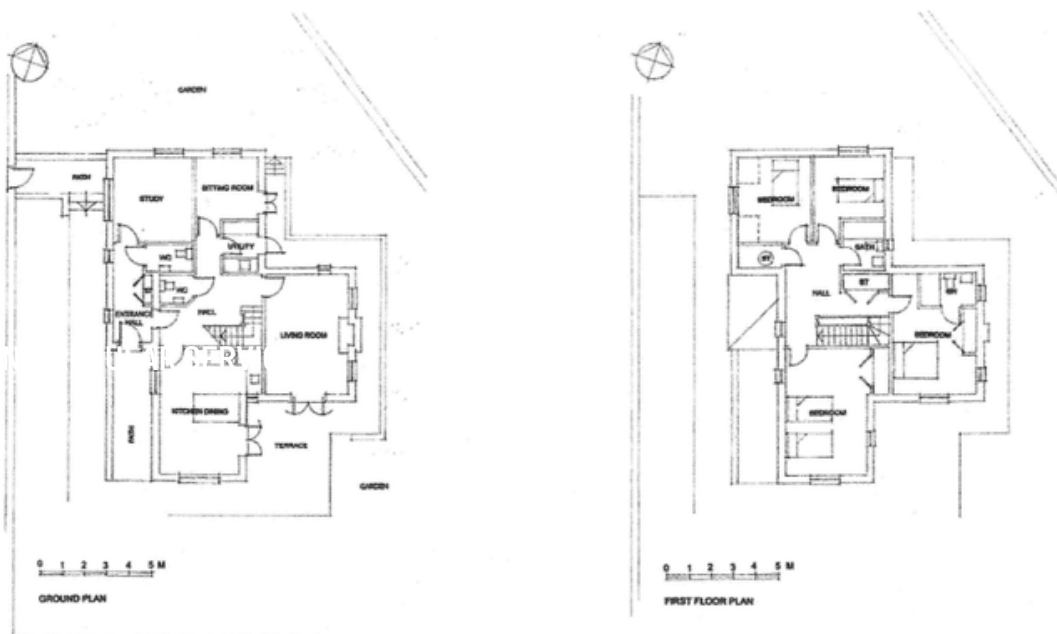
Annex 3

THE VICARAGE

The 4-bed detached modern Vicarage is located about 100 metres from the Minster. The garage and Benefice Office are separate but adjacent to the Vicarage.



SOUTH ELEVATION



GROUND PLAN

FIRST FLOOR PLAN



The Vicarage



The garage and Minster office

Annex 4

TAUNTON MINSTER ENVIRONMENTAL TASKFORCE

Taunton Minster has an active environmental taskforce, which has been driving our plans to reach 'net zero' carbon.

Following a successful application process, Taunton Minster has been awarded £18,000 as part of a Demonstrator Grant to help it move towards becoming a net zero carbon church. The funding is part of the Church of England's national programme to help churches cut their energy use and move away from fossil fuels.

Being a demonstrator church also provides the opportunity to share what is learned so that other churches in Bath and Wells and neighbouring dioceses can be encouraged and supported on their own path to net zero and take important steps towards reducing our overall carbon impact.

Taunton Minster has been identified as being in the top 20% of Church of England carbon emitters in the country and the highest of the 564 church buildings in the Bath and Wells Diocese.

Our work to date on developing net zero plans has included:

- Protecting nature in the churchyard, planting two new trees and working with Somerset Council on mowing schedules, resulting in new bird and plant life
- Engaging the wider congregation through an environmental survey; prayers and Sunday services on caring for God's creation; and regular messages on lifestyle changes
- Obtaining planning permission for installing bike stands
- The preparation of a learning and dissemination plan as a Church Demonstrator
- Visits to other churches with net zero energy and heating systems
- Commissioning an option appraisal and feasibility study on energy and heating systems from the Engineering Services Design Partnership
- Publicity and radio interviews about our work
- Work on preparing a fundraising plan, with support from the fundraising consultants provided as part of the Church Demonstrator programme.

The option appraisal recommends a combination of air source heat pumps, solar panels, batteries and some supplementary infra-red heating. The potential costs are expected to be around £300,000. We are in the process of securing technical support to prepare detailed designs and costings for the recommended forms of heating.

Annex 5

MINSTER HOUSE

The Minster House Project is an ambitious two-phase initiative aimed at revitalizing a historic grade-listed annex of the former vicarage. This project has provided both eco-friendly accommodation and a dedicated hub for young people to serve the community of Taunton. With a strong focus on sustainability and community engagement, the Minster House Project reflects Taunton Minster's mission to create spaces that bring people together and inspire future generations.



PHASE 1: SUSTAINABLE ACCOMMODATION

The first phase of the project involved the transformation of the upper level of Minster House into a modern, eco-friendly living space. Designed with open-plan layouts, energy-efficient systems, and high-quality materials, this accommodation will provide a comfortable, contemporary home while preserving the heritage of the building.

The first-floor flat has now been let out. As an independently funded initiative, this phase ensures that the building remains a vibrant and purposeful part of the Minster's future.

Annex 5

PHASE 2: A HUB FOR EMERGING GENERATIONS

In alignment with Taunton Minster's core mission to serve the community, Phase 2 saw the development of a state-of-the-art hub for emerging generations. This space has been designed to inspire, support, and empower young people and emerging leaders across Taunton by providing:

- A safe and welcoming environment
- Modern facilities for learning, creativity, and social interaction
- Workshops, mentorship programs, and personal development initiatives
- Opportunities for collaboration, innovation, and community engagement

This hub will serve as a central gathering place where people can connect, learn, and grow, offering a much-needed resource in the heart of Taunton.

Currently the Hub is being used by the Minster young people on Friday nights and by Young Somerset mid-week.

BUILDING A BRIGHTER FUTURE TOGETHER

The Minster House Project is more than just a building—it's a commitment to fostering sustainable living and empowering future generations. With thoughtful development, innovative design, and a strong community focus, it will become an essential part of Taunton Minster's ongoing efforts to support and uplift those it serves.

The Minster House project has provided Taunton Minster with a wonderfully versatile ground floor space and an income to support our ministry amongst young people.

Annex 6

FROM THE DEANERY

Taunton Deanery includes a wide range of communities, from the growing town centre and several substantial new housing developments to deeply rooted rural villages.

Across our 21 parishes and 13 benefices, we are seeking to respond positively and creatively to significant opportunities for mission, changing demographics, and the evolving shape of ministry within the Church. The changing shape and size of our town means we are looking to focus resources more closely on where people are. Also, many congregations are aging, and some find it increasingly hard to match the requested levels of Benefice Share contributions. All of these will require us to look closely at our current structures.

Through our Deanery Mission and Pastoral Group, clergy and lay leaders are working together to explore how churches can collaborate more closely, strengthen shared local ministry of lay and ordained, support one another well, and encourage new worshipping communities where growth is taking place. Alongside this, we are blessed with a supportive and engaged Chapter community that meets regularly for prayer, fellowship, and mutual encouragement.

We recognise that, as a modern Minster, St Mary Magdalene has an important role to play in the spiritual, missional, and collaborative life of the deanery in the years ahead, and we look forward to working with a new incumbent in taking forward the place of the Minster within the deanery.

Rev'd Lee Mullen and Richard Carpenter
Area and Lay Dean

Welcome to the Diocese of Bath and Wells



Introduction

We are delighted that you are considering whether this post of Vicar of the Benefice of Taunton St Mary Magdalene and St John the Evangelist in the Diocese of Bath and Wells might be right for you. To help your prayerful discernment we want to share with you our diocesan vision for growth and transformation, within which we hope your own ministry might flourish.

A vision for growth and transformation

In light of the challenges and opportunities we face, our aim across all our parishes is 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, we invite churches across our diocese to focus on five particular areas of our ministry together. We ask all incumbents in our diocese to make these their priorities, understanding that what they look like in practice will vary in each place.

To value, cherish and develop the people and resources we already have

We love and affirm our churches and congregations, aiming to ensure each person is well supported and equipped as a follower of Jesus Christ and for any ministries they are called to undertake.

To develop new Christian worshipping communities

Whether through new forms of worship, church revitalisations or church plants, we seek to offer people in our communities opportunities to connect with the good news of Jesus

To share in ministry and leadership

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

We long to see children, young people and young adults, having more opportunities to discover, explore and grow in faith and for people of all ages to deepen and grow in faith

To transform communities

We seek to work in partnership with our communities to serve the common good and to pursue the transformation of society, by God's grace, to reflect the Kingdom.

Our challenge to you

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 our challenge to each benefice is to see what it would take to growth by one adult and one child net during the coming year?

Our support for you

We aim to be a diocese that offers high support to help you meet these challenges and opportunities. We have an outstanding diocesan team who are focussed on parish support, offering specialist advice in both practical and missional areas. Clergy wellbeing is a priority for us and our confidential Counselling and Wellbeing Service is available at no cost to you and your family. We model collegiate working in every area of the diocese, including deaneries, where working together is encouraged and supported. The Bishops and Archdeacons carry out a regular programme of benefice visits to learn about the life of local churches, and your MDR is conducted within the context of these visits.

Your ministry in this Diocese

In summary, we are looking and praying for clergy 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 offers high challenge and 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 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. Might this be you?



Bishop Michael



Bishop Fiona



Archdeacon of Taunton