



Rector of the Parish of the Itchen Valley

Alresford Deanery

Parish Profile



Our Parish at a Glance



**Part Time
Role**



**Parish
Administrator**



**4 Churches
1 PCC**



**Supportive
Team**



**Variety of
Ministry**



**Strong
Community**



**Good
Schools**



**Spacious
Rectory**



**South Downs
National Park**



**Direct Trainline
to London**

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Welcome to the Winchester Diocese



The Rt Revd Philip Mounstephen
The Bishop of Winchester

Thank you for your interest in coming to minister here in this Diocese.

We serve a whole range of diverse communities, from the historic city of Winchester with our glorious Cathedral, to the great port city of Southampton, the burgeoning boroughs of Basingstoke, Bournemouth, and Christchurch, thriving market towns such as Andover, Alton, Alresford and Romsey, and innumerable picture-perfect Hampshire villages. In all that there is much wealth – but there is also significant deprivation too, especially in our large urban conurbations where our churches are supporting some of the diocese's poorest communities.

In every context, we are committed to the making the love and life of Jesus Christ known, through our churches, schools, and chaplaincies in a way that makes a tangible difference to those communities and their people. We do that through our common commitment to 'Walking the Wessex Way': in Winchester's past we find a rich heritage of serving, learning, growing and loving which inspires us for the future.

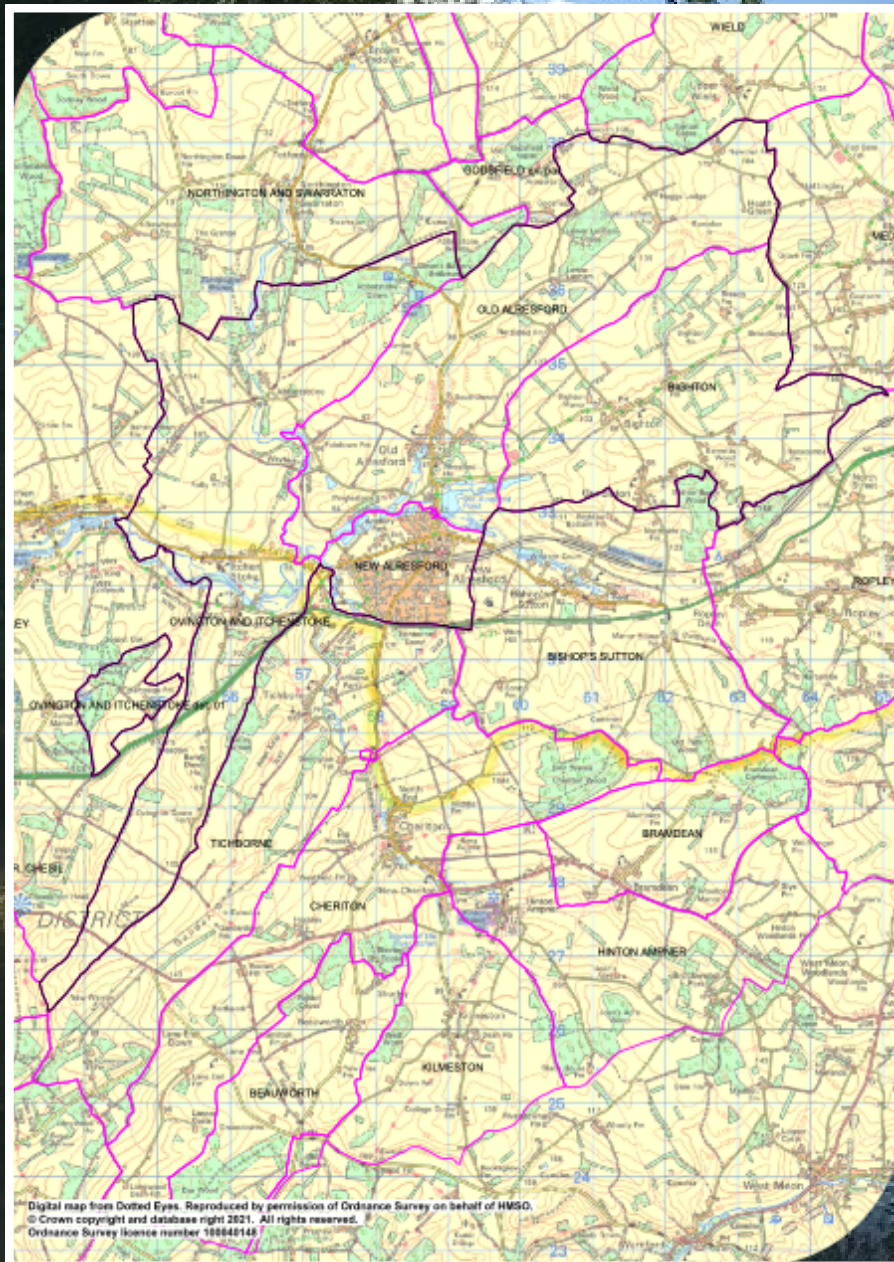
In many ways the Diocese of Winchester is in transition, as is the world around us. In parish ministry we seek people who are aware of the challenges that we face, but who are motivated above all by faith, hope and love in addressing them. We welcome those who are committed to help God's church to be the very best it can be, in the power of the Spirit, releasing all God's people into the mission and ministry to which they are called. And we recognise, too, our need to develop in diversity.

We are excited by the opportunities before us, and warmly invite applications from those who want to join us in addressing them.

With the assurance of my prayers as you seek God's best next step for you,

+Philip

The Alresford Deanery



Close to the historic Cathedral city of Winchester we are a very rural deanery of five benefices and twenty-six churches with a rich diversity of tradition set in a large area of beautiful Hampshire countryside bordering Basingstoke to its North East and Winchester to the West.

We have a mix of stipendiary clergy, SSMs, LLMs and those who hold the Bishop's Commission for Mission.

Recently Alresford Deanery has agreed to be in partnership with its neighbouring Alton Deanery, being held in plurality. We are now holding joint chapter meetings and Deanery Synods working towards common vision and strategy.

Arle Valley currently has three Focal Ministers who are commissioned to serve in their local communities.

There are currently warm conversations between representatives of Arle Valley Benefice and Parish of the Itchen Valley exploring ways of working more closely together that facilitate stronger ministry to schools and families as well as thinking about shared services. Discussions are wide ranging with the desired outcome that priests and all lay people involved in ministry might, through greater collaboration, better serve their respective communities and churches.

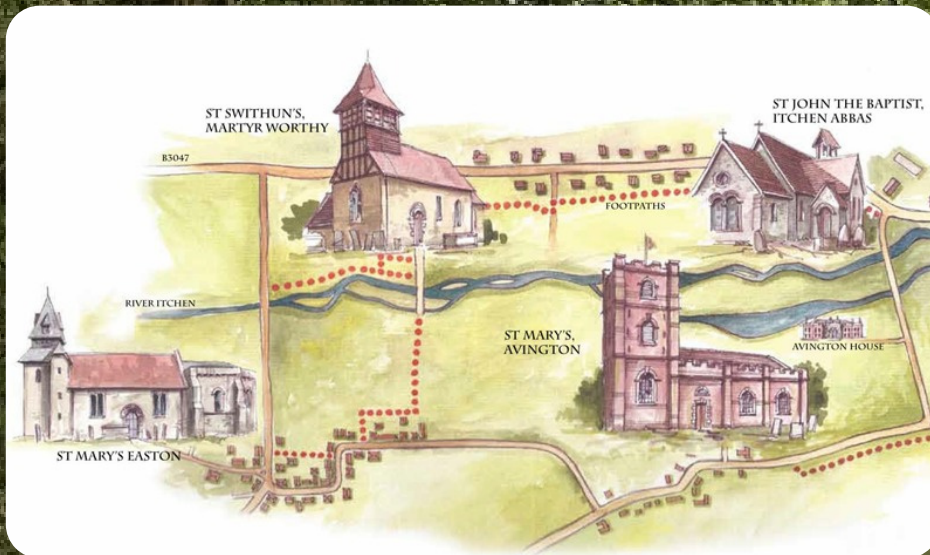
I believe this is an exciting time to be joining us in a strong focussed team.

The Reverend David Chattell

Area Dean of Alresford
Area Dean of Alton



The Parish of the Itchen Valley



Who we are

The Parish of the Itchen Valley is situated in rural Hampshire between Winchester and the market town of Alresford. Within the South Downs National Park but close to the amenities, facilities and transport links of Winchester, we are a single parish with four churches, serving a close-knit community of four villages, with the River Itchen a central feature of its topography. The Pilgrims' Way passes through the Parish as it follows the River Itchen.

Formally constituted as a single parish in 2009, the Parish has a population of approximately 1,500 and is an exemplar of active village life with a tradition of broadly-based worship and wide community participation. This is not an area of second homes nor commuter-belt isolation. The population covered ranges from young families to retired people as well as those who work locally, in London or from home, with a high proportion of professionals.

Previous incumbents have pioneered the introduction of a wider range of services and the Parish now has a multi-faceted programme of worship that includes more traditional services like Parish Communion, Evensong and ones based on the Book of Common Prayer, alongside more informal ones including Café Church, All-Age Worship and Valley Worship.

The Parish of the Itchen Valley

We seek a Rector and leader who will guide our parish into the future, working with us to build on what we have while developing and realising our mission priorities. We hope our new Rector will:

- lead and nurture us in our worship and spiritual life, while setting fresh vision for how we can grow and deepen in our faith as individuals and a community;
- have a keen, loving interest in people and be able to engage with members of the community (whether church-goers or not) of all ages and at varying stages of faith, seeking to bring the Gospel's good news to everyone;
- continue our established approach to services that includes both traditional and informal forms of worship and honours the strengths of both, while evolving and improving them based on his or her own experience and expertise;
- value musical contributions to services (we have a pool of paid organists who play at our traditional services as well as key volunteers who lead worship at informal services and an occasional informal choir);
- encourage a team effort in all we do, being prepared to work closely with our LLM, BCMs and volunteers and - while remaining accountable along with the PCC for the spiritual life the Parish and its forms of worship - giving permission to them to share responsibility for all the ways in which it is expressed;
- identify and train further lay people to take on roles in our church and community life, recognising and nurturing their talents in the process while deepening their spirituality; and
- work together with other clergy and laity in the Deanery to formulate new strategies for the future, potentially involving closer collaboration with Arle Valley benefices and other parts of our Deanery .

In return, we offer:

- a rich and rewarding half-time role, with varied ministry responsibilities across a manageably-sized population and with the benefit of the support from the Parish Administrator, and committed lay people, and without the demands of overly complex governance;
- a well-established organisational structure with a single Parish sharing four church buildings, which allows for rural ministry at its best, freeing time and energy for mission;
- a Parish in a reasonable financial position that pays its Common Mission Fund contribution in full; and
- a lively and welcoming community in which to live, with the Rectory embedded in its midst.

Our Vision Statement



Our Vision Statement

The Parish of the Itchen Valley is a welcoming, open, vibrant community of all-age followers of Jesus Christ. We are on a journey with God, empowered by the Holy Spirit, to strengthen the faith of the existing worshipping community and to encourage and equip others to join us in the discovery of faith and love. We seek to reach our community with the good news of the Gospel and to see people first coming to faith and then deepening it in becoming mature followers of Jesus Christ.

Our Priorities

Our new Rector will help us to refresh our vision appropriately and take forward the work of realising it, with the following identified as our current priorities:

- welcome everyone to a range of Sunday services, spanning both traditional and informal / modern styles;
- lead us in our mission to proclaim the Gospel in our community and to offer loving, practical help and support to those in need;
- strengthen the 'fabric' of our Parish life beyond Sunday services, potentially through re-establishing home and prayer groups and courses, as these features of life in the Parish have not fully recovered since the Covid pandemic curtailed them;
- help us to remain a thriving and sustainable Parish;
- be willing to provide sensitive and practical pastoral care and visits where needed and to encourage the work of Valley Visitors; and
- be committed to exploring stronger and closer collaboration with neighbouring parishes to establish structures that better serve all the parishes and their clergy.

Our Services and Worship



While individual types of service and forms of worship are generally tailored for specific audiences and congregations, there has long been an emphasis on the overall congregation worshipping together regardless of the type of service on an individual Sunday. As such, many people whose natural preference might be for more traditional services attend and support the informal ones, and vice-versa.

Importantly, the delivery of this active and varied programme is not the sole responsibility of the Rector - a key consideration given that this post is half-time. A long-serving and much respected Licensed Lay Minister leads and preaches regularly, and committed members of the Ministry Team undertake the orchestration and leading of Evensong and the informal services. Therefore, the successful candidate for this role must not only be prepared to work closely with lay people and volunteers, but to enjoy doing so, as their contributions complete the pattern in a way that would simply not be possible otherwise given the limitations of a part-time role.

This emphasis on unity as a community is reflected in the Parish's governance. There is one PCC with representation from all four villages' churches, with an approach that emphasises acting as one body and working hard to function as one team, to solve problems together and to avoid territoriality (other than when dealing with fabric matters in the individual churches). We are blessed to have an extremely able and committed Parish Administrator, who has a broad remit to ensure the efficient day-to-day running of the Parish as well as the organisation of important life events such as baptisms, funerals and weddings.

The worshipping community as a proportion of the overall population of the Itchen Valley is one of the highest in the Diocese. In practice, the community touched by the Parish and its activities extends well beyond this core, with people not formally part of the worshipping community regularly coming to services like Café Church as well as gatherings such as weekly Little Rainbows' parents' and toddlers' club, our fortnightly youth club (Under the Cross or 'UTX'), weekly bell ringing at Easton and our monthly lunches for the elderly (Come And Meet Each Other or 'CAMEO') run by a team of volunteers, the annual Way of the Cross event and Crib Service.



Ministry Team



LLM Gerry
Stacey



John Barber



Nicky Barber



Tim Clapp



James Greig



Simon Ffennell



Lavinia Owen



Beccy Clark

Ministry Team

Our Ministry Team currently comprises one LLM and six BCMs.

Licensed Lay Minister

Gerry Stacey who became a reader/LLM nearly 15 years ago. He has brought up two children as a single parent after his wife's sudden and untimely death many years ago. Previously employed by the Bible Society, Gerry is an active member of the ministry team, leading services, preaching regularly, conducting funerals and providing pastoral care.

Six BCMs

Nicky Barber – Worship Minister

John Barber – Prayer Minister

Tim Clapp- Worship Minister

Simon Ffennell- Worship Minister – Evensong

James Greig – Worship Minister

Lavinia Owen – Pastoral Minister

In addition, Sarah Noble, James Greig, Nicky Barber and John Barber have been occasional preachers, selected by the Rector and operating under the Rector's authority. Sarah Noble and the Barbers have specific responsibility for All-Age Worship and Valley Worship services, respectively, and a strong team of volunteers orchestrate Café Church gatherings.

Parish Administrator

Our paid Parish Administrator, Beccy Clark, who reports to the Rector, works five mornings a week, mostly in the Parish Office (which was established in St John's Church, Itchen Abbas in 2018) and occasionally from home. Contractually she has the opportunity to work flexible hours from home during school holidays.

Governance



Governance

Each of our four villages is entitled to put forward two candidates to be Churchwarden plus a PCC representative.

The Churchwardens together with the Rector, our LLM and Treasurer form the Standing Committee, which reports to the PCC, currently comprising 9 members, (including our LLM, Treasurer and Deanery Synod Representatives).

Each village elects its own lay-run District Church Council, whose main role is to look after the fabric of its church, the churchyard and the general running of the church. A minority of DCC members are not regular churchgoers but are passionate about their local church building and/or have particular skills and expertise to offer. We embrace their involvement.

Our paid Parish Administrator (who also serves as PCC Secretary) works five mornings a week, usually from the parish office in St John's Church, Itchen Abbas, but also sometimes from home. The Treasurer is ably supported by a part-time paid bookkeeper.

In addition, to meet regulatory needs, the PCC has appointed a Health & Safety Officer, Safeguarding Officer and a Data Protection Officer.

Our Four Churches

Our four churches, which were all originally Parish churches in their own right, are very different in style, character and facilities, allowing considerable flexibility in the provision of worship and events across the Parish. All the churches are well cared for, with work identified in quinquennial inspections up to date. While the situation is not of critical concern immediately, major repairs to the roof of St Mary's, Easton need to be completed at some point and fundraising in the village has started. In addition, broadband has been installed in all four churches.

Please see Appendix A for detailed descriptions.

The Rectory



The Rectory

Itchen Valley Rectory, Chillandham Lane, Martyr Worthy SO21 1AS

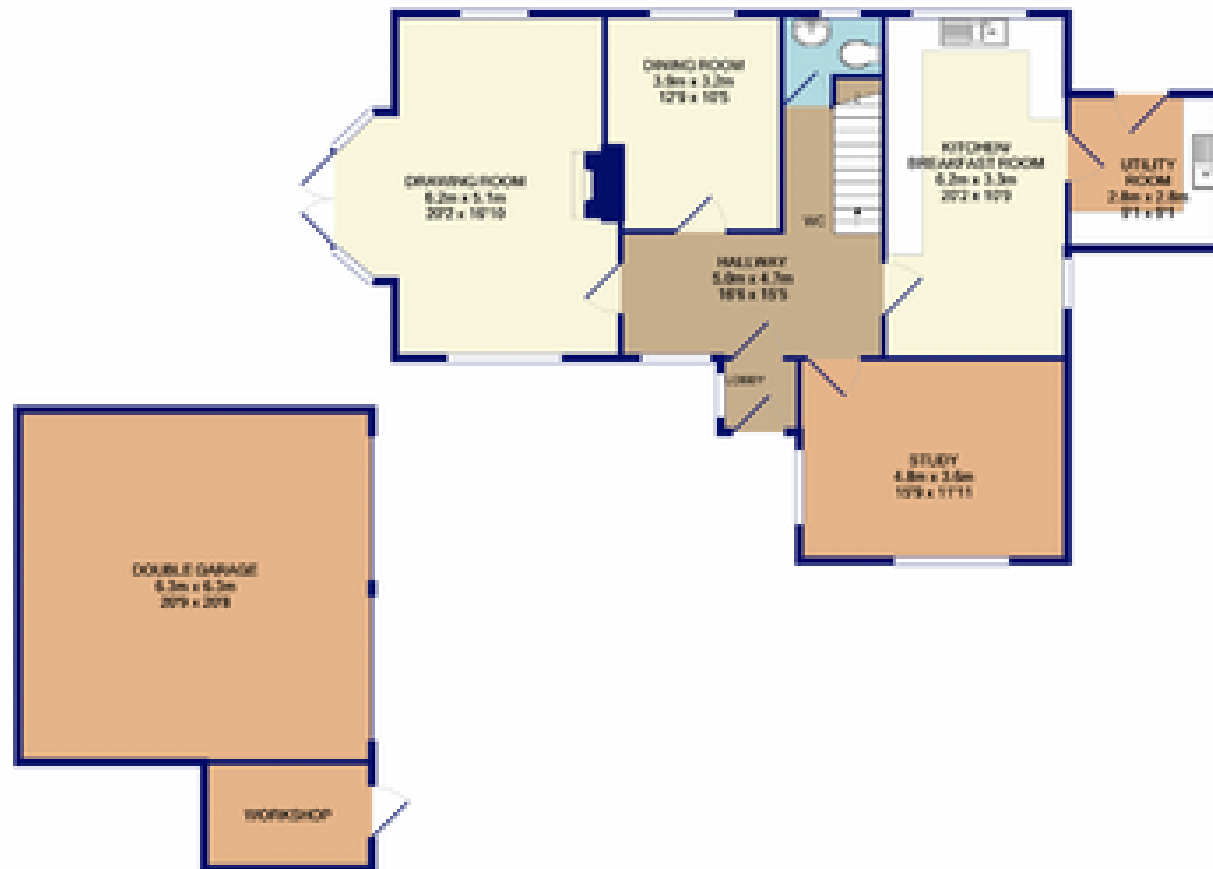
The Rectory was built in the 1980s. It stands in a substantial garden, mainly laid to grass. It is located in a quiet cul-de-sac off Chillandham Lane, to the north of the B3047 Winchester to Alresford road on the boundary between Itchen Abbas and Martyr Worthy. A regular (though infrequent) bus service stops at this junction and there is a footpath at the bottom of Chilland Lane leading to the Easton Road between Easton and Avington. To the rear the Rectory looks out onto the local playing field.

The Rectory is a spacious house with four double bedrooms, all of which have built-in wardrobes, and two bathrooms. There is a good sized living room, with an open fire and patio doors facing south, a substantial modernised kitchen/breakfast room, and a utility room and cloakroom. The ample parish office has its own entrance giving visitors on church business direct access.

There is a double garage and separate store as well as off-road parking.

Mains gas, electricity, water and broadband are all connected.

The Rectory



GROUND FLOOR
APPROXIMATE TOTAL
AREA: 175 SQ.M.
(3841 SQ.FT.)

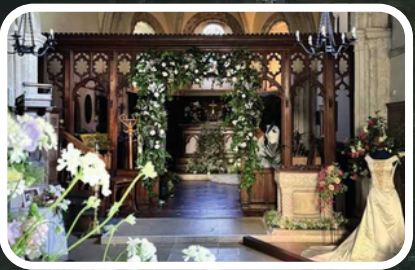


FIRST FLOOR
APPROXIMATE TOTAL
AREA: 50.1 SQ.M.
(1084 SQ.FT.)

TOTAL APPROX. FLOOR AREA: 225.1 SQ.M. (4925 SQ.FT.)

While every attempt has been made to ensure the accuracy of the floor plan, variations may arise between the actual and the planned dimensions. Measurements of rooms, corridors, stairs and other areas are approximate and no responsibility is taken for any errors. Dimensions are approximate and should be used only as a guide. They should not be used as a basis for any construction or other work. The dimensions and specifications shown herein are subject to change without notice and the purchaser is to their responsibility to verify the same. Please visit www.mhpl.co.uk

Local Information



Information about the local area

The Parish is situated between Winchester and Alresford. Winchester, some three miles away, offers comprehensive retail, schooling and transport facilities as well of course the spiritual inspiration of Winchester Cathedral. Alresford is about four miles to the east, offering a range of shops, a primary and secondary school, a doctors' surgery and two dental practices. The Parish has three pubs. Recreational and sporting events and facilities within the Parish and nearby are excellent, including Easton & Martyr Worthy Cricket Club, inter-village boules competitions and a network of footpaths which at intervals cross the river and also traverse the Downs.

Schools

Within the Parish, our relationship with Itchen Abbas Primary School (60 to 70 pupils) is important. The school is not Church of England affiliated but we have developed close links with it over the years, including termly school services and whole school assemblies taking place at St John the Baptist Church in Itchen Abbas. The school regularly visit CAMEO to sing and spend time with the older folk – a very special time enjoyed by both young and old. Most of its pupils go on to secondary school in Winchester or Alresford. The independent Princes' Mead preparatory school is also a welcome source of positive community and spiritual relationships.

Ecumenism

There is a strong Roman Catholic community within the Valley, who worship at St Peter's in Winchester or St Gregory's in Alresford. A number of Catholics attend our Anglican services quite frequently and we hold a service each year jointly led by the senior Priest at St Peter's and our Rector. Many worshippers in the Valley are regular attendees at the Cathedral, in particular to enjoy its fine musical tradition.

Community Activities

Many events take place across the valley, some primarily focused on a particular village and others more broadly based, but all exhibiting an open and welcoming spirit that is the hallmark of our community. Such events are always about having fun and developing friendships and may also involve raising money in some cases. The gamut of events includes lecture series, pancake and light parties, safari suppers, summer fetes and winter fairs, fireworks parties, summer plays and winter pantomimes, duck races, walks, plant sales, concerts, barn dances, and quiz nights. There are regular pop-up cafes held in the Easton and Martyr Worthy Village Halls that are enthusiastically supported by the local community.

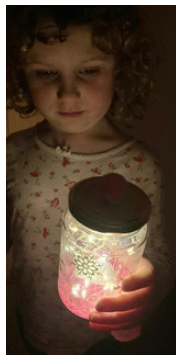
Services and Regular Activities

	Sunday	Midweek
Week 1	10am Parish Communion 4pm Café Church	Little Rainbows Toddler Group Wednesday Night Worship
Week 2	8.30am BCP Holy Communion 10am Valley Worship & Ark (Sunday School)	Little Rainbows Toddler Group UTX Youth Group (10 – 15 year olds)
Week 3	10am Parish Communion	Little Rainbows Toddler Group CAMEO lunch for the over 65s
Week 4	8.30am BCP Holy Communion 10am All Age Worship 6pm Evensong	Little Rainbows Toddler Group UTX Youth Group

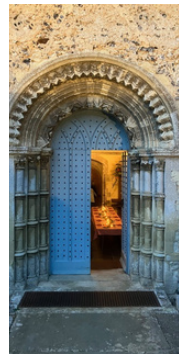
Other important services in our annual calendar include:

- Easter and Holy Week services and a special outdoors Good Friday “Way of the Cross” re-enactment in Martyr Worthy, which attracts participants and spectators from within the community and beyond
- Advent and Christmas Services including Crib Service and carol services
- Mothering Sunday, Ascension Day, Harvest, All Souls and Christingle
- Remembrance Sunday parade at our war memorials followed by a service
- Patronal Services
- Ecumenical service alternately led by Anglican and Catholic ministers, as noted above

Our Church Life



Our Church Life



Finance and Communications

The financial affairs of the Parish are managed on behalf of the PCC by the Treasurer supported by a part-time paid bookkeeper. Data Developments software is used to provide regular management information. Regular donors are encouraged where appropriate to use the Parish Giving scheme. Each church has an on-line giving device available and a QR code for on-line giving is on worship sheets. The Common Mission Fund contribution for 2024, 2025 and 2026 is shown below.

Common Mission Fund

2024 - £70,550 **2025** - £76,600 **2026** - £72,000

The total annual running costs of the Parish are around £140,000.

The majority of the Parish's funding is provided by regular giving with contributions also from weekly collections, some fund-raising events such as lectures and fees from weddings and funerals.

In 2023 we achieved a modest surplus in our unrestricted funds (receipts less payments) and in 2024 our receipts matched payments.

Our Unrestricted General Fund stands at £115,000 and we have a target to retain that Fund at a level to cover 9 months of expenditure.

Each of the four churches has its own restricted or designated Fabric Fund and some significant fund-raising is also achieved for these funds when work is required on the churches. We have a Finance Committee chaired by the Treasurer which meets at least twice a year to review the Annual Financial Statements and to review the budget.

Full details of the financial affairs of the Parish are shown in the Financial Statements which are available on the website.

Communications

We have a very good and well-run monthly magazine, the Itchen Valley News, which is delivered free to every household in the four villages plus the next door village of Abbots Worthy, achieving a wide readership. Space is made available within the magazine for details of forthcoming church services, information about the church and a "Letter from the Rector" (as it is currently known). A weekly news-sheet, Church Matters, is distributed via e-mail and is available online. We have over 200 website followers who receive our emails that go out through our website and, as a result our website, www.itchenvalleychurches.org.uk, has become an important part of our communications strategy.

Appendix - Our Four Churches



St Mary's Church, Avington

The smallest of the churches in the parish, St Mary's is a Georgian gem, built on the site of an earlier church, largely unaltered since its construction in the 1770s and is Grade 1 listed. Plain glass windows and a barrel-vaulted ceiling fill the church with light. A two-tier pulpit dominates the nave with its original high box pews and wall pegs for hanging wigs. A set of five bells was recently hung following a substantial bequest.

Appendix - Our Four Churches



St Mary's Church, Easton

Dating from the twelfth century, St Mary's is the largest church in the Parish and is Grade 1 listed. Major works were carried out in 2007, including reopening the north door, installation of underfloor heating, provision of a hearing loop and original sound system and replacement of the Victorian pews with moveable pew benches, which gives flexibility. The six bells in the thirteenth century bell tower are regularly rung by an enthusiastic group of ringers. Lighting has been installed on the path from the lych gate to the south door of the church in 2018 and in the same year a new audio-visual system to support modern worship was installed. While the situation is not of critical concern immediately, major repairs to the roof need to be completed at some point; encouragingly members of the Easton community who are not church-goers have set up a fundraising website and are planning various events to ensure long-term preservation of this great asset to the village.

Appendix - Our Four Churches



St John the Baptist Church, Itchen Abbas

Although the church has been a centre of worship since at least Norman times, the present building dates from 1862. It has a cruciform plan and incorporates the twelfth century chancel arch. The church was reordered in 2009 providing a new vestry with kitchen and lavatory facilities, replacing all pews and choir stalls with chairs on carpet, installing an electric organ, enlarging the gallery and improving access for disabled people. In 2018, a new parish office was created in the gallery. A synthetic matting has also been laid in the car park and lighting been installed on the path from the lych gate to the door of the church. The absence of pews and choir stalls makes the space very adaptable for example by our weekly toddler group and for monthly CAMEO lunches as well as Wednesday Night Worship gatherings.

Appendix - Our Four Churches

St Swithun's Church, Martyr Worthy

A church on this site is mentioned in the Domesday Book. The present nave dates from c1140-50 with an apsidal chancel and a timber-framed bell turret added in the 1860s. The church building was comprehensively re-ordered in 2014, including removal of the rear pews, repositioning of the font, new heating, lighting and hearing loop, and a kitchenette. Major repairs were carried out to the roof, bell tower louvres, rainwater goods and boiler chimney in 2020. In addition, major repairs have been made to the churchyard wall over the last 10 years. St Swithun's is thus prepared for modern demands whilst retaining the calm and spiritual atmosphere of a traditional village church with its Victorian pews and pipe organ. Work is underway to replace the large West Window in the church, currently a Victorian design of limited architectural merit, with a specially commissioned window engraved with an innovative design full of local references as well as Biblical allusions. This work will be done by the highly regarded artist and engraver Tracey Sheppard and should be installed by the end of 2025 and become a feature of the church to be enjoyed not just by parishioners but also by the many walkers who come in to the church as they pass by on the Pilgrims' Way. After considerable work and time spent on conceiving this project and specifying the work and its costs, a campaign to raise the approximately £50,000 needed to complete it was very successful, raising this sum in a matter of weeks and from a broad cross-section of donors. There is an active "Friends of St Swithun's" charity which raises money for capital projects. A new boiler is on the horizon.



Vacancy Prayer

**Lord, we ask for the presence of Your Holy Spirit
to guide our parish into the future.**

**Teach us to be patient and tolerant with one another as we
prayerfully seek Your will in the search for a new Rector
and as we strive to continue the work of Your church in our valley.**

**Lord, we know You have already chosen our new Rector
and that fills us with joy and confidence. May we know your
presence as you guide our new shepherd and Rector to our valley.**

**Keep us steadfast and united in love, that together we may walk
the ways of Your kingdom.**

AMEN