

Benefice (Family Group) of Waterfall



St James and St Bartholomew, Waterfall



St Mary & St Lawrence, Cauldon





Who might God bring?

We are looking for a Rector who:-

- Is excited by the ministry and mission possible in the family group
- Would value, enjoy and find supportive the team based collegiate approach in the new Rural Mission Area.
- Will help our parishes work closely together with parishes across the deanery
- Support our local primary school and take regular assemblies and nurture our young people
- Is committed to our young families and will encourage them to begin coming to faith
- Understands the challenges and opportunities in rural ministry
- Will help us develop new styles of worship
- Will work with the wider community of the Methodist church halls and community organisations and be a visible face of ministry in the community
- Will support our ageing community
- Has a great sense of humour, energy & enthusiasm for this position
- Will stay put, commit to the group and offer us a sense of stability

In return we can offer:-

- Faith, friendship, fun and communion
- Support and encouragement
- An openness to new ideas and a willingness to try them
- Supportive and well-run PCC's with reasonable assets
- Experienced and friendly parishioners and congregations
- Communities that support their church
- A good house in a great area
- Full expenses and a proper respect for the part-time nature of the role
- A strong and supportive clergy team in the deanery and a carefully managed and manageable workload

Introducing our Family Group of Churches

Welcome to our Benefice, or Family Group as we call them! We are so pleased that you may be interested in this role and warmly invite you to have a good read and reflect on whether you may be being called to consider joining us and the Deanery Team on our journey of cherishing and nurturing faith in our little villages.

Nestled on the southern edge of the Peak District National Park in the North Staffordshire moorlands, Waterfall Family Group is made up of 4 parishes; Calton, Waterfall, Cauldon and Grindon. (Blore Ray is in the benefice but is looked after in the Alstonefield family group). The total population is less than 1,000 people. These are small rural, close-knit communities with a strong agricultural tradition and a deeply shared Christian connection between them, but are individually different in terms of their geography, size and unique setting. All are within easy reach of the market towns of Leek and Ashbourne, and the larger cities of Stoke and Derby, and surrounded by breathtaking upland limestone scenery on all sides. We have a reasonable bus service linking the towns. Rail services are good with main line connections in Stoke, Macclesfield, Buxton and Derby, all within 20 miles and East Midlands Airport within easy reach. Health services are also good with an excellent GP Surgery in Waterhouses. The local school is part of an academy trust and the nearest secondary school is in Ashbourne.

With our Family Group being in a tourist hotspot we are lucky to have many local attractions on our doorstep. The downside of rural living is that currently our church numbers are dwindling; young families with busy lives, elderly people becoming house-bound and isolated.

Currently the Family Group tends towards the traditional in its approach to worship, with the Book of Common Prayer still very much in use. We are looking to be able to provide a more “mixed diet” of worship, where congregations can be offered a wider choice of styles and forms of worship within the family group and Deanery and opportunities to develop new approaches, without losing our treasured access to BCP worship.



The Roaches, Staffordshire,
Staffordshire Wildlife Trust



The Alstonfield Deanery Rural Mission Area

This House for Duty post is one of 4 (2 full time and 2 House for Duty) in the Alstonefield Deanery Mission Area Team. The collaborative team approach in the Deanery ensures that a House for Duty Rector is supported in making the most effective use of the time available to them to be able to provide an effective, creative, locally focused and responsive ministry and does not become overloaded with unreasonable expectations. The vision for the future is of one team working together but ensuring there is a local visible face of ministry living in each Family Group, as their “lead priest”. Occasional Offices are an essential part of local ministry but these may be shared across the deanery team for equity of workload.

Our vacancy represents a new and exciting opportunity to join:
a fledgling Mission Area Team - an attractive proposition to work

- collaboratively and collegiately across Alstonefield Deanery - an area of the geographical size of Liverpool, and a total population of under 6,000 people and 18 churches in the beautiful countryside of the Staffordshire Moorlands;
- and at depth with independence and autonomy to lead and develop faith in the rural parishes of the Waterfall Family.

Our church teams in the Waterfall Family offer dedication, a culture of service dependability, creativity and enthusiasm, warm friendship and laughter You’ll find we are down-to-earth, practical and pragmatic, as well as kind, compassionate and consistently supportive. We want you to love your life here, bringing your positivity and energy as you become woven into our rural communities, forming genuine connections with the wonderful people who live here and offering a joyful, relatable presence in our villages, shops, schools, farms, and places of worship.

At a Glance - Waterfall Family Group

- 4 churches
- 1 Church of England primary school
- 1 house for duty priest
- 1 Reader

At a Glance - Alstonefield Deanery

- 4 Family Groups
- 18 churches
- 6 Church of England primary schools (all in the same Multi-Academy Trust)
- 4 licensed clergy
- 2 PTO priests, 3 Readers, 4 locally commissioned lay ministers

The Vicarage

Situated in the heart of Waterhouses, the vicarage is within easy walking distance of all the public amenities, including Waterhouses Primary School, and the Doctor's surgery. It is a 1970s detached house set in a large private garden with a detached garage.

Downstairs there is a spacious kitchen, laundry, dining room, lounge, toilet as well as a large office. Upstairs there are 4 bedrooms, bathroom and separate toilet and loads of storage space. The house has recently been fully updated.



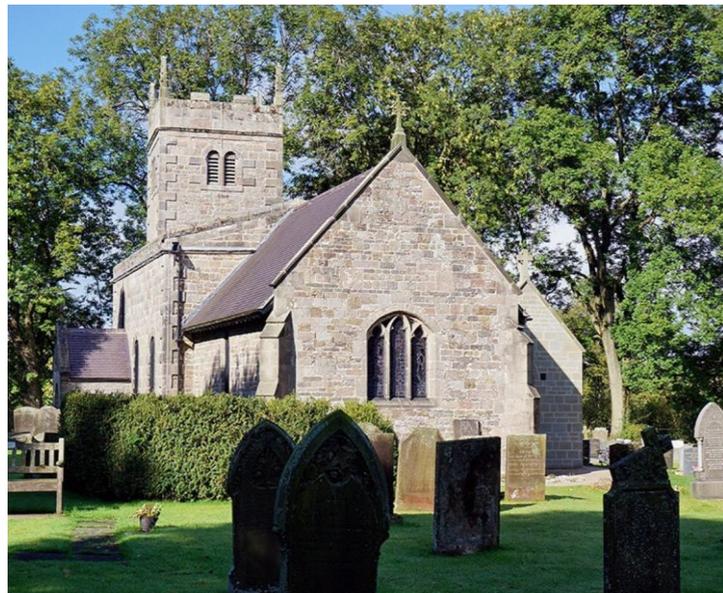
Waterfall

Waterfall is the largest of the parishes with a population of a hundred residents. It encompasses several settlements, principally the villages of Waterhouses, Winkhill and Waterfall, the latter the location for the church of St James and St Bartholomew.

Waterhouses is an expanding, more modern village with a diverse community of people reliant on local, light industry, farming as well as commuting further afield. It has a good primary school that feeds into Queen Elizabeth's Grammar School in Ashbourne, or the Middle and High school system in Leek. The primary school is CofE and the headteacher has a strong Christian ethos which is evident in the day to day running of the school. Schoolchildren attend services at Waterfall, as well as Waterhouses Chapel, on a regular basis. One of the full-time priests in the deanery has the lead role for mission and ministry to children, families and schools, but will work alongside and through the local priest's engagement with their school and community.

The school itself has many facilities including a large hall and swimming pool. The Memorial Hall at Waterfall also hosts many different village and church activities and social get togethers. Waterfall has the only Mother's Union in the Benefice.

Worship tends to be Book of Common Prayer in tradition but the parish will also hold Common Worship services occasionally. The PCC is very robust, finances are healthy, and congregations average 15 to 15



Grindon

Grindon Parish church, All Saints, known as the “Cathedral of the Moorlands” was rebuilt in the Gothic style on the site of a previous 11th century chapel and reconsecrated in 1848. In the last two years extensive restoration of the church path in the Grade II listed graveyard has been carried out along with roof repairs. The church includes a kitchen and disabled toilet which facilitates social celebrations. The church is fortunate to be relatively self-sufficient in funding due to previous financial bequests and smart investing.

Residents pull together to maintain a social life and community feel; most recently seen with the revival of the Church’s annual Harvest Festival Service, pie supper and harvest auction, with all proceeds donated to local charities. The villagers arrange a number of well-attended events in the Old School Village Hall including musical evenings and regular fun social activities.

However the most prestigious and well-supported event in the Church calendar is the RAF Association Memorial Service in February each year marking the anniversary of the lost lives of the crew of the Halifax bomber 47 squadron that crashed on Grindon/Butterton Moor in 1945 while bringing supplies to the snow-bound villages. The service attracts dignitaries from the RAF, local Parish Council representatives and the Leek Mayor/Mayoress. As with other churches in the Benefice, Grindon has financially supported local families identified via the school, who need a little extra at Christmas.

The church experienced the shocking theft of the church path in 2022, which featured in a rural crime documentary, but through hard work and commitment of the PCC and friends, it has now been tastefully restored in a Gothic style, and the PCC now plan to embark on further security and safety measures such as path lighting and CCTV.



Calton

Calton sits just inside the Peak District National Park and next to the Manifold Valley trail. It is a smaller community but with an active village hall and strong focus around the church immediately opposite. There has been a church on the present site since the 16th Century, dedicated to St. Mary the Virgin.

With a progressive PCC, the church has introduced some innovative ideas such as 'messy church' and 'play days' to encourage younger families and children in the village itself and the neighbourhood.

The church was lucky to have a significant bequest which has secured its future. The annual wakes, harvest supper and church nativity get good attendance. The hall also organises regular events in the village such as craft club, teas, cake and chat events, indoor bowls, as well as quizzes and entertainment evenings. A recent initiative has been to introduce an emergency 'crisis fund' for parishioners who find themselves in sudden emergency.

With the rise in poor mental health, loneliness and isolation the PCC are offering more support in a pastoral capacity and have started a 'warm hub' twice monthly meet up which has proved very successful.

Services at Calton are sometimes from the Book of Common Worship and occasionally with the use of incense. Currently the PCC are in negotiation to provide a toilet and kitchen facility to make the building more user friendly.

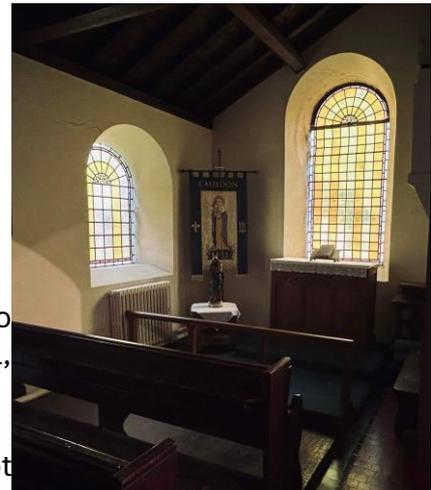


Cauldon

Cauldon is another small parish community, the oldest part of which is centered around its church of Saint Mary and Saint Lawrence, and it also dates back to the Domesday book.

The local community is mainly a mixture of farmers and people employed in the nearby quarry industry as well as in jobs elsewhere, and it has a variety of houses from traditional stone cottages to Victorian terraces and at Cauldon Lowe, groups of small, modern estate properties clustered near to the village hall.

The church has a happy relaxed atmosphere and is kept unlocked during the day. Services here are conducted according to the Book of Common Prayer. Despite small congregations the church has been well supported by the local community but is currently experiencing financial and capacity problems. A locally led public consultation about the future is underway.



Blore

Please note – under the Deanery Mission Plan the incumbent of Alstonefield, Ilam and Wetton has primary pastoral oversight of Blore Ray.

The smallest parish in the Benefice, Blore is an ancient parish with a much more dispersed population. It is mentioned in the Domesday Book and is centred mainly around Blore Hall and its neighbouring church of Blore Ray. Built around the year 1100, on the site of an earlier building, the Grade 1 listed St. Bartholomew's Blore Ray sits high on a hill-side above Ilam and the confluence of the Dove and Manifold rivers in the Peak National Park.

The church serves a community of eight residents in the hamlet of Blore within a parish of 120 people, most of whom are drawn from the neighbouring village of Swinscoe. It has been closed to worship and visitors for a year as it currently has no PCC

The process for closure of this church is under way.

