*Clergy Role Description*

**Diocese of Durham**

*Role description signed off by:* Archdeacon of Auckland Date: July 2024

To be reviewed 6 months after commencement of the appointment, and at Ministerial Development

Review, alongside the setting of objectives.

• **Details of Post**

*Role Title:* Vicar

*Name of benefice:* St Herbert and St John Darlington

*Deanery:* Darlington

*Archdeaconry:* Auckland

*Initial point of contact on terms of service:* Diocesan Secretary

1. **Role Purpose**

**The vision of the Diocese is 'Blessing our communities in Jesus' name for the transformation of us all'. Within this the four core priorities are to:**

* **Energise Growth**
* **Engage with Children, Youth and Young People,**
* **Challenge Poverty and**
* **Care for God’s Creation.**

**These are outlined and expressed in the Diocesan Mission Strategy, 'Renewing Pilgrimage'.**

**General**

* To share with the Bishop in the cure of souls in this parish, in line with the Diocesan Vision, Priorities and Plan described above.
* To be Priest-in-Charge of this parish, having regard to the calling and responsibilities of the clergy of the Church of England as described in the Ordinal, the Canons, national safeguarding policies, and all other relevant legislation, and in accordance with the *Guidelines for the Professional Conduct of the Clergy 2015.* Specifically, the Priest-in-Charge must give due regard to safeguarding policy and practice.
* To work with the PCC towards the development of the church (both the people and their building) so that the church is sustainable and effective in mission.
* To ensure that a high standard of worship, preaching and pastoral care is provided so that people are enabled to live as disciples of Christ.
* To nurture discipleship and develop the ministry of all God's people, through training, cooperation, delegation, support and example, so that they take more responsibility for the mission and ministry of the parishes; to seek to identify potential future leaders and ministers.
* To encourage all church members to participate in generous giving for the mutual support of one another across the diocese, and the wider Church of England.
* To collaborate within the deanery in mission and ministry and, through the Deanery Plan, participate in the shaping of ministry as resources and opportunities may require. (See further under “Role Context” below.)
* To be proactive and persistent in seeking the fullest degree of ecumenical cooperation wherever possible.

**Specific**

* To provide real leadership in the parish, enabling the PCC and congregation to develop the mission and ministry of the church as a body.
* To help the PCC and the congregation to develop their vision and their approaches to mission and ministry, showing leadership in this area while working collaboratively.
* To develop opportunities for the congregation to grow in faith and discipleship.
* To encourage and enable lay ministry, recognising the vocation of all God’s people, identifying and developing the gifts that God has given his people. To offer or identify sources of training opportunities within this as appropriate.
* To engage with the community, and help the congregation to develop their missional engagement with the community.
* To explore clearly, with the PCC and congregation, ways to grow the church.
* To work with the congregation on the development of both outreach and pastoral care.
* Take help the church pursue good practice in stewardship, fundraising and financial sustainability.
* To seek to develop relationships with the schools within the parish, especially St John’s Church of England Academy.
* To try particularly to develop the church’s mission and ministry among children, young people and families.
* To actively seek partnerships and collaboration with local people, organisations and other local churches in developing the mission of the church.

**3. Key Contacts**

* The Churchwardens and members of the PCC
* Clergy of the deanery (especially local clergy who have supported St Herbert’s in the vacancy), the Area Dean of Darlington and the Archdeacon of Auckland.
* Ecumenical colleagues.
* Local elected members and community leaders.
* Regular users of the Church Hall.
* Local businesses.
* Primary schools (Rydal Academy, Heathfield, Firth Moor, and St. John’s Church of England Academy).

**4. Role Context**

The people of St Herbert’s and St John’s are looking for the leadership of a vicar who will help them sustain and develop the mission and ministry which they offer in the parish. The committed congregation have maintained the worship, fabric and governance of the church with huge faithfulness during a very long (eight years) vacancy period. There has then been significant change: in 2022 the neighbouring parish of St John’s – very sadly – closed, and the parish has been united with that of St Herbert. Many of the former congregation of St John’s have joined St Herbert’s, and now are looking forward to developing the church’s ministry together, under the leadership of a new incumbent.

During this long vacancy, the lay leaders of the church have managed the maintenance of regular worship services very well indeed, with the support of local clergy. While the new Vicar will obviously take a leading role here, simply providing liturgical leadership is *not* the key added-value that is needed and that we are praying for. We are looking instead for leadership in mission. The church needs an ordained minister to engage with people and institutions in the parish – the residential and business communities and the schools – and to enable members of the congregation to do the same. The priest needs to help the faithful church develop effective forms of missional engagement with the community, open to new avenues of mission and forms of worship, prayerfully seeking the growth of the church – the current Sunday congregation and possibly other forms of church.

The parish is an area of clearly identified social need: in the Index of Multiple Deprivation rating of CofE parishes, it ranks 924 out 12239, placing in within the top 8%. A strategy for the church’s mission in this context will involve loving service on the part of the church in response to human need, and connect these ministries enacting the love of Christ with the proclamation of Christ, enabling local people to find how the gospel is good news for them, in this community. Part of this mission strategy needs to be the creation of realistic pathways for local people to hear about Christian faith in accessible ways, come to faith and grow as disciples. The leadership of the new minster will be key in discerning such a strategy and enabling holistic mission to develop.

*Collaboration with St Cuthbert’s (Resource Church):*

It should also be noted that missional opportunities have opened up for the clergy team of St Cuthbert’s, the Resource Church in Darlington, within the parish of St Herbert. This has not been sought, but has happened – although it is the case that the Pioneer Minister post at St Cuthbert’s was created specifically to try to foster new worshipping communities in the town, and it has always been clear that that this could happen anywhere in Darlington.

St Cuthbert’s clergy have been welcomed to share in ministry at St John’s Academy, and exciting and unexpected opportunities have opened up working with Firthmoor Community Centre. There is a real possibility that new worshipping communities might be established within the parish through the ministry of the Cuthbert’s team.

St Cuthbert’s team will of course respect parish boundaries and the rights of any future incumbent of St Herbert and St John. However, it is the strong hope of the Archdeacon, the leadership of Darlington Deanery and of both the lay leaders of St Herbert’s and clergy team of St Cuthbert’s that the missional opportunities currently evolving will continue and that there will be positive collaboration between the Vicar and PCC of St Herbert and St Cuthbert’s. This is – after all – what Resource Churches are meant to be for! – to share resources, energy, vision and skills with other local churches to enable mission.

Applicants for this post should be aware of the work that is emerging and – we hope – want to welcome, embrace, bless and develop this support and companionship in mission. The St Cuthbert’s team are clear that it is only reasonable to expect this if they themselves are open, collaborative and transparent in the ways that they work.

*SH Darlington PioC RD*

*2024.07.01 v01*