



East Mendip Hills

PARISHES OF BEACON TRINITY & CHEWTON MENDIP WITH EMBOROUGH, LITTON & STON EASTON

**“LET ONE THING ALONE BE YOUR CONCERN: SEEKING
GOD’S KINGDOM BY LIVING ACCORDING TO THE GOSPEL
IN THE COMMUNITY TO WHICH YOU HAVE BEEN CALLED.”**

The Rule of the Monastic Community of Bose.



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Dear Vicar,

Welcome to the East Mendip Hills Benefice. We're so glad you found your way here. Our country lanes can be windy and full of surprises, but the journeys are enjoyable and the views are beautiful. Come on in, Vicar. Tea? Coffee? Homemade cake? Make yourself at home. We'd love to have you stay.

Yours, with blessings and joy,

The EMH Benefice Family



Our Benefice

Welcome to our little corner of the Mendips! Let's get to know each other...

Our Benefice Story

We are currently made up of two benefices, but in 2024, we began the process of becoming one: 'The East Mendip Hills Benefice'. Currently, we are made up of 'Beacon Trinity' and 'Chewton Mendip with Emborough, Ston Easton and Litton'. 'Beacon Trinity' Benefice was formed before 2015 but become one parish back in 2018/19. It is made up of the parish churches of All Saints in Oakhill, Holy Trinity in Binegar and St James in Ashwick. The churches of Chewton Mendip, Ston Easton and Litton are within the other half of this new benefice. There is also Emborough church, which is used for the occasional special event. *(Please visit our websites to find out more about our churches.)*

The Area

We are positioned within and towards the edge of the beautiful Mendip hills, an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. It is predominantly dairy, beef and sheep farming country, but there is some arable land. It is a stunning place to live, but if you enjoy town life, you can enjoy the best of both worlds: Bath and Bristol are around half an hour's drive away and Wells (the original location of 'Hot Fuzz' if you're a film buff!) is only around the corner. Other useful/enjoyable locations nearby include: Bristol International Airport, The Newt in Somerset, Cheddar Gorge, Clarks Shopping Outlet, The Bath and West Showground, The Roman Baths, and last but not least, Glastonbury Festival Site. Of course, there are also plenty of beautiful walks, farm shops that sell local produce and regular markets. Each year, nearby towns also have carnivals made up of floats; a fantastic event for all the family.

Services

Litton and Ashwick each have two services a month, timed so that one priest is able cover both. Every other church in our benefice has one a month. We have two services each Sunday; all except one are Eucharist. Our Oakhill service is 'Morning Worship'. Fifth Sundays are a little different... we take turns to host and try to put something else on to mix things up! Bacon Rolls anyone?!



Our Benefice Churches:

- All Saints' - Oakhill
- St James - Ashwick
- Holy Trinity - Binegar
- St Mary Magdalene - Chewton Mendip
- St Mary the Virgin - Ston Easton
- St Mary the Virgin - Litton
- [The Blessed Virgin Mary - Emborough]



Other Benefice Spaces:

- Ashwick - The Church Rooms are located a short walk from the church.
- Oakhill - The Stanton Room is attached to the church.
- Binegar - 'Fair Field'.

(Please see our websites for more information.)



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Our Communities

Our Children

We have links to two local primary schools:

- Oakhill Church School:
www.oakhillchurchschool.co.uk
- Chewton Mendip CofE Primary School:
www.chewtonmendipschool.org.uk

Both schools have wonderful links with the church and are extremely excited to meet their new vicar!



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"Start children off on the way they should go, and even when they are old they will not turn from it."

Proverbs 22:6

"We are looking forward to welcoming the new vicar into our school community. It will be wonderful to work with them to enrich our children's experiences and strengthen links with the Church, supporting our Christian ethos."

Chewton Mendip - Ms Duggan.



East Mendip Hills

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Our Care Homes

Pondsmead Nursing Home in Oakhill:
www.pondsmeadnursinghome.com

Clare Hall Nursing Home in Ston Easton:
www.clarehallnursinghome.co.uk



Our Calling

Could we be who you are looking for?

We may be a shepherd-less flock, but we're still a flock. We haven't gone awol yet! Well... ok, maybe just one or two of us.
(*Sheepish Expressions*)

We hope you are looking for a community that is...

Lively & Fun

- We organise and participate in events to celebrate religious, national and local occasions.
- We are a friendly group and share an active social life together as well as being committed members of our church family.
- We are a fun, mixed group of open-minded people who believe our churches should be friendly places accessible to all.
- We would love to see more children/young families in our church family!
- We love a community event or a good party!

Spiritual & Hard-Working

- We are committed to deepening our relationship with God and exploring our vocations.
- We are a devoted and faithful church family, who are also active members of all our different village groups and communities.
- We are continuing to enjoy our services during this vacancy which includes informal worship, communion, prayer and reflection, all of which is bringing us closer together.
- We are thankful for the many local retired priests and readers who currently lead our services.
- Our benefice administrator and church organists do an amazing job in supporting us at all times.
- Our churchwardens continue to care for our churches and ensure they are open when/where possible to allow access to all.



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Welcoming & Caring

- We are passionate members of the EMHB and are willing to share our beliefs and resources with anyone in need.
- We maintain contact with the oldest members of our community who are unable, for whatever reason, to attend our services.
- We welcome all newcomers of any age or background and provide free refreshments after all our services. Yippee!
- We can't wait to welcome you!

We trust that God will call who we need to join us in our mission of living the Gospel in our communities. As said in Jeremiah 3:15, *"Then I will give you shepherds after my own heart, who will lead you with knowledge and understanding."*



Your Calling

East Mendip Hills

PARISHES OF BEACON TRINITY & CHEWTON MENDIP WITH LITTON & STON EASTON



Could you be who we are looking for?

We are such a new benefice (still forming, in fact) that whoever joins us will find themselves with the incredible opportunity to design and run a brand new benefice the way they feel called to do so.

We are already so excited to meet and support our new vicar.

We hope to find someone who...

...can be a spiritual leader for our times who will help and encourage us to evolve and grow in order to meet the spiritual longings of our community.

...has a sense of humour and is excited to become an integral part of our friendly, loving and close-knit church family as tutor, adviser and friend.

...can cherish the traditions of our rural parishes, whilst leading us towards change and into a new era within our new benefice.

...has both skill and imagination enough in order to make regular worship both familiar and fresh and that also resonates with any visitors.

...is caring, hospitable and committed to the pastoral element of rural ministry.
(With our support.)

...relishes the idea of continuing a close relationship with our church primary schools.

Could this
be you?



"Where flowers bloom, so does hope." Lady Bird Johnson

Are you...?

fun

innovative

compassionate

positive

engaging

caring

inclusive

cheerful

enthusiastic

"[...] finally the priest is someone who has been dazzled by the beauty of God and longs to reveal that beauty in the world.

"The Life and Work of a Priest" John Pritchard.

We'd love to:

Continue to celebrate and enjoy this beautiful area of natural beauty that we all love so dearly.

Endeavour to make our benefice churches versatile/accessible/convenient to all. For example, providing toilet facilities where possible, updating

current amenities when financially viable and providing opportunities for children and families to engage with us as a church community.

Engage more regularly, meaningfully and faithfully with our community.

Organise and participate in social and fund-raising activities across our new benefice.



Exploring ways to better support our communities, including in the pastoral sense. (We have already begun conversations with the training team and we are moving forward with this.)



Finding ways to get to know and support our children more and recognising that our schools are part of our worshipping community. (We already have strong links and we are maintaining this in vacancy.)

Our Priorities

Deepen the unification of our benefice, develop a vision and celebrate the growth of our new church family. (We are already getting to know each other through this process!)



Our children have requested:

"sports, art, stories or singing" clubs in the church.

Fluffier cushions in the pews.

See the vicar up the park.

A litter picking event.

A welcome party for the new vicar!



Your Home

We will leave you alone; we promise!

"Peace to this House." Luke 10.5

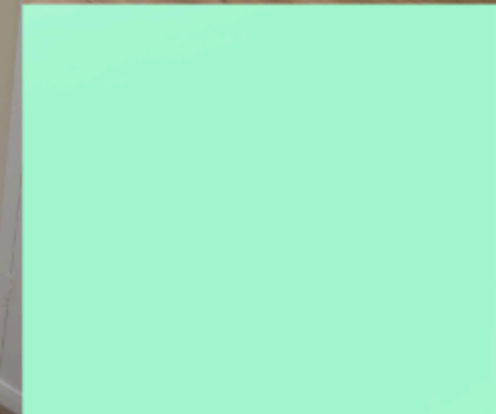


The Rectory

The Rectory is near the centre of Chewton Mendip village and was modified in summer 1995. It is a comfortable and modern family house with four bedrooms, a kitchen/dining room, sitting room, separate study, garden, garage and further off-road parking for two cars. It is a few minutes' walk from the church.

Chewton Mendip Village and surrounding areas:

- Waldgrave Arms Pub: www.waldegravearms.co.uk
- Chewton Mendip CofE Primary School: www.chewtonmendipschool.org.uk
- Red Rooms Pre-School: www.redroompreschoolannex.org
- Chewton Mendip Village Hall: www.chewtonmendip.org/village-hall-booking/
- Mendip Pantry Shop/Cafe: www.facebook.com/MendipPantry/?locale=en_GB
- Litton Cricket Club: www.pitchero.com/clubs/littoncricketclub/
- The Litton Pub: www.thelitton.co.uk
- Wookey Hole: www.wookey.co.uk
- Cheddar Gorge: www.cheddargorge.co.uk
- Wells Blue School: www.theblueschoolwells.co.uk (Feeder school for Chewton Mendip.)



Facts & Figures

Hang on, we're just getting all our ducks in a row... or should we say sheep in a row?

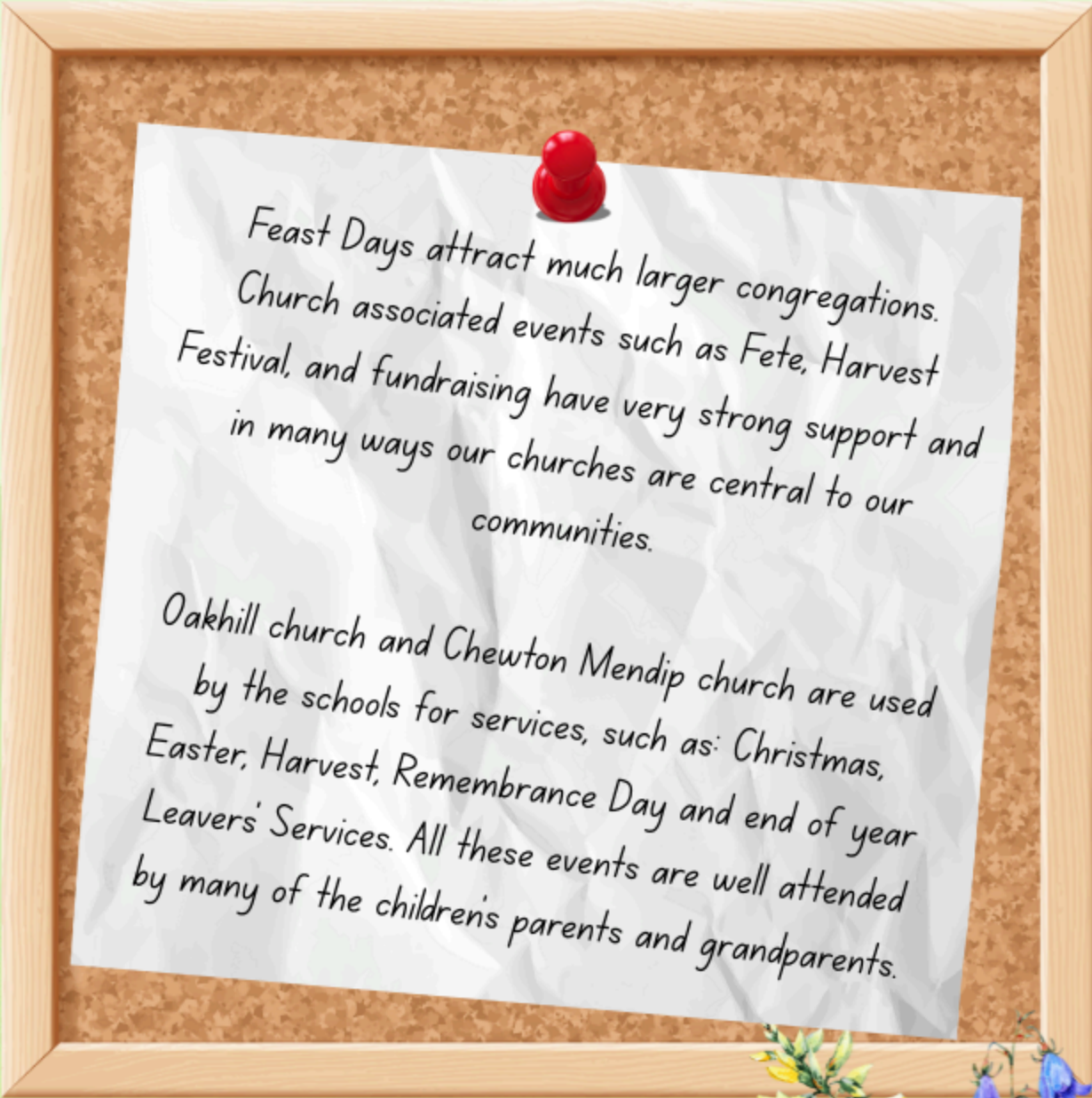


East Mendip Hills

PARISHES OF BEACON TRINITY & CHEWTON MENDIP WITH LITTON & STON EASTON

Parish	2024 Total Income	2024 Total Expenditure	Parish Share Paid in 2024	Parish Share for 2025*	Approx Population	Electoral Roll
Beacon Trinity	£38,200	£44,700	£26,617	£29,467	1889	39
Chewton Mendip	£26,596	£26,391	£11,482	£12,537	581	11 <small>(With Emborough)</small>
Ston Easton	£5,000	£10,380	£5,588	£6,245	336	48
Litton	£23,983	£29,161	£12,008	£12,008	255	27

*We are working towards paying the agreed ask of £65,864 for the Benefice. We are currently under discussions with the Diocese as to how this will be achieved.



Feast Days attract much larger congregations. Church associated events such as Fete, Harvest Festival, and fundraising have very strong support and in many ways our churches are central to our communities.

Oakhill church and Chewton Mendip church are used by the schools for services, such as: Christmas, Easter, Harvest, Remembrance Day and end of year Leavers' Services. All these events are well attended by many of the children's parents and grandparents.

Attendances and other services

	Chewton Mendip	Litton	Ston Easton	Beacon Trinity
Sunday services (min – max)	15 - 20	15 - 31	6 - 20	15 - 20
Number of other services <i>Based on numbers from 2024</i>				
Baptisms	2	1	1	2
Confirmations	Occasional	-	-	-
Weddings	3	-	1	4
Funerals	2	1	1	7

Don't forget, "If we love one another, God lives in us, and his love is perfected in us." 1 John 4:12



DIOCESAN STATEMENT

OUR VISION FOR GROWTH AND TRANSFORMATION

Introduction

We are delighted that you are considering whether this post of 'Priest in Charge' of the EMH Benefice in the Diocese of Bath and Wells might be right for you. In order to help your prayerful discernment, we want to share a bit about our diocesan vision, within which we hope your own ministry might flourish.

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

The flourishing and growth of churches always needs attention, but especially now as we come out of the shock created by the COVID pandemic. The impact of the pandemic created a sharp acceleration in the pattern of decline in church attendance that has been seen in our diocese over many years. Thankfully there are some signs that we are recovering from the COVID decline. For example, data showed that average adult weekly church attendance in our diocese rose between 2021 and 2022. Statistics only ever tell a partial story. It is even more encouraging to see churches around our diocese developing approaches that respond to the opportunities and challenges in their local context and enable growth to happen.

A vision for growth and transformation

Our diocesan context, described above, has convinced us that for our next season at least, our aim across all our parishes needs to be growing our churches, within and beyond our church buildings, in both numbers and depth of faith, so that we can better work for the transforming of our communities and the life of God's Kingdom amongst us.

Shared priorities

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



To value and cherish the people and resources we already have

We aim to ensure each person is well supported and equipped as a follower of Jesus Christ and for any ministries they may feel called to undertake, within the local church and wider community. We are committed to supporting the well-being of all our leaders and church officers, both lay and ordained. We have a fully funded clergy well-being service, the offer of peer support groups, and an excellent team of Diocesan support staff fully focused on supporting our parishes, chaplaincies and schools.

To develop new Christian worshipping communities

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

To share in ministry and leadership

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

To deepen and grow faith

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

DIOCESAN STATEMENT CONTINUED OVERLEAF...

DIOCESAN STATEMENT CONTINUED...

The outcome we are looking for

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

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

Local shaping and diocesan support

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

What implications does this have for the appointment of clergy?

It is important for us all to appoint clergy to benefices who are ready, willing and able to pray for and share in the vision we have for the flourishing and growth of churches and Christian life in our diocese. We want to create an environment that could be described as high challenge, high support. This means appointing clergy who will not only value all that already exists but

will be eager to work with others to build on and develop it. It means appointing clergy who are committed to learning, being creative, and to starting with the gifts God has given to them, their benefice and the wider community. We are therefore looking to appoint candidates who will:

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

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

+ Michael.

Bishop Michael

Anna

Archdeacon of Wells

DEANERY STATEMENT

The Deanery of Shepton Mallet is a fairly small group of parishes and benefices centred on Wells and Shepton Mallet, and so is close to the cathedral, bishop's office and diocesan offices in Wells. This means that journeys to diocesan services, meetings and training days are often short, and we can use the diocesan offices at Flourish House for our Deanery Synods. Clergy in this area are able to feel well connected to senior leadership and the wider life of the diocese.

As a result of recent changes at diocesan level the current deanery plan has restructured the parishes of the deanery into six groups which will become benefices in due course, each with a stipendiary minister. The proposed East Mendip Hills Benefice brings together one parish with three churches and a benefice of three parishes to form a new group in the hills north of Wells. These parishes previously had part time and house-for-duty ministry provision. They have experienced some change already, and are now ready to develop and create new ways of being church under new, full-time leadership.

Your clergy colleagues in both town and rural contexts will be keen to work with you to share wisdom, work together where useful, and provide support to your future ministry in this place.

With best wishes

Sam

Websites & Appendix

We also have monthly parish magazines, a valuable resource in communicating our church services and other events!

Please click each link to visit our websites...

We presented the findings from our community survey. The results can be found on our main EMH Benefice website page. This is what we identified as our strengths, weaknesses, challenges and opportunities.

[Main EMH Benefice Page](#)
[EMH Benefice Facebook Page](#)
[A Church Near You – Beacon Trinity](#)
[A Church Near You – Chewton M, Ston E & Litton](#)
[Oakhill Church Primary School](#)
[Chewton Mendip Church Primary School](#)
[Pondsmead Nursing Home](#)
[Clare Hall Nursing Home](#)
[Ashwick Parish](#)
[Chewton Mendip Parish C](#)
[Ston Easton Parish C](#)
[Gurney Slade & Binegar Memorial Hall](#)
[Oakhill Village Life Facebook Page](#)
[Binegar, Gurney Slade... Facebook Page](#)
[Ston Easton & Emborough Facebook Page](#)
[Chewton Mendip & Green Ore Facebook Page](#)

Strengths - well located geography condition of buildings ✓ strong communities in villages headteachers schools	Challenges - Threats grief sell the church chapel of ease not being known because so many of us hard to engage with village moving to glory timescale apathy
Weaknesses Ageing toilets we don't know each other not a benefice yet logistics finance geography sense of being put together	Opportunities personage in choir Schools pastoral care discussion group meeting across benefice meetings with purpose youth clubs blank page

Thank you for taking the time to get to know our beautiful benefice. We pray that, wherever you feel called to be, you will feel God's presence and love.