

THE PARISH OF ST JAMES, LEYLAND

**IN THE DIOCESE OF BLACKBURN
THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND IN LANCASHIRE**

**PARISH PROFILE
JULY 2025**





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1. Letter from the Bishop

Thank you for showing an interest in a post in the Diocese of Blackburn.

Our Diocese is passionate about the renewal of Parish life. Vision 2026 sets before the churches of Lancashire a profound belief in the power of the Gospel to transform lives and communities and expresses a firm commitment to maintaining clergy numbers and investing in the mission of the local church. We therefore seek clergy with a personal faith fiery enough to make new disciples for Christ, with a sincere commitment to the Parish as the heart of the church's mission and with the resilience and courage to bring growth and renewal to local churches. We don't want superheroes. Rather we are seeking authentic, prayerful priests of all traditions who share our passion for confident proclamation and generous service.

What's more, you would be coming to the Diocese at a fascinating time as we look towards our centenary in 2026. We are in the midst of a major process of listening to God and listening to our County as we discern where God is calling us next, a process that will result in a new strategic vision that will last until 2033, the 2000th anniversary of the Resurrection.

We have also recently been successful in obtaining a grant of £25.5m from the Diocesan Investment Programme run by the national church. This will enable us to:

- Offer a transformed pattern of ongoing training and support to clergy, including sabbatical leave as an expectation for all rather than a treat for the few
- Deploy 30 'Ignite' youth and children's workers to parishes around the Diocese
- Invest in urban areas through expanding the M:Power course for urban leaders, employing 18 Urban Pioneers and re-imagining Christian life in areas of particular challenge.
- Expand our Diocesan Renewal Programme which has led to an average of 6% growth in RWA in participating parishes.

We are a Diocese that is united in defying the declinist mindset that has taken hold of so much of Western European Christianity. Through a firm belief in the power of Jesus Christ to change lives combined with strong pastoral ministry and imaginative developments such as new local congregations, we are seeing growth in churches of all traditions. Strong relationships with our amazing family of 191 schools (95% of whom benefit from practising Christian Headteachers) provide another springboard for mission.

As a Diocese we do all we can to love and treasure our clergy. Our programme of Annual Conversations means that every licensed priest has a 90 minute conversation with a Bishop or an Archdeacon every year about their vocation, wellbeing and spiritual life.



*The Bishop of Blackburn
The Rt Revd Philip North*



*The Bishop of Lancaster
The Rt Revd Dr Jill Duff*



*The Bishop of Burnley
The Rt Revd Dr Joe Kennedy*

We have appointed an Assistant Archdeacon to advise on clergy wellbeing and we work hard to create networks that enable clergy to belong and find mutual support.

Those in their first incumbency are offered especially focused support. This includes participation in a two year Start of Ministry course, advice and care from a mentor and the oversight of our two outstanding Start of Ministry officers.

Lancashire has been described as 'England in miniature' and we can offer a vast diversity of parishes. We serve the most deprived communities in the United Kingdom on the Fylde coast and in East Lancashire as well as remote countryside. We are not immune from the particular challenges to ministry provided by an increasingly secular culture and a divided Church. But what brings us together is a profound and shared love of Jesus Christ and a passionate desire that all should know him, and in knowing him find life.

We really hope you enjoy reading this profile and that it provides all the information you need. If this particular post does not feel quite right, please do get in touch about other parishes in the Diocese that are vacant.

Most importantly of all, please be assured of our prayers as you discern the will of God for the next stage in your ministry.

2. What is the PCC's vision for the future?

We are a welcoming, inclusive church in the liberal catholic tradition looking for new expressions of worship. We are at the heart of an expanding community with strong links to both our church primary school and other local schools. We are a semirural parish on the outskirts of a thriving and growing market town

Our Vision for the Church of St. James'

The PCC, led by our previous vicar, attended an away day focused on identifying our present situation, and where we, as a PCC, need further development to deepen our own Christian faith to improve our presence within our community and grow our congregation.

A small group was formed to concentrate on areas identified for improvement. The following were chosen as the key priorities:

1. Communication, both within our church, and in the wider community.
2. Church involvement in the community by, for example, house visits, visits to care homes and visits to the sick and lonely within the parish.
3. Connections with youth and young families.

Our Vision - evolving continuously - is to recognise and act upon opportunities for growth within our community: being more welcoming to the people of Moss-Side. Whilst we acknowledge this will require increased human resources, we are looking for leadership in a new incumbent who will have the necessary energy, communication skills, determination, patience, prayerfulness, ability to engage with young people and a sense of humour!

The PCC, along with lay members of our church, will offer enthusiastic support to introduce positive change. We have an active group of lay people (although this needs to increase in numbers) willing to support and assist a new leader.

The PCC has recently discussed ideas for improved use of the church interior space. This could involve creating a more open and flexible area for new or changed activities, bringing into church activities that at present take place in the school hall. The concept of a community hub for appropriate activities could help our ambition for growth of the congregation.

We recognise that such a development would need prayerful consideration, careful and considerate planning, and significant funding.

3. **What is our Spiritual Life?**

St. James' is a church in the Liberal Catholic Tradition of the Church of England and focused on the Holy Eucharist and open to ideas for new expressions of worship.

Services and Bible Studies

Sunday

9:00 a.m. This is a said Eucharist attended by about twenty adults, over a wide age range, and sometimes one or two children.

10:30 a.m. Our main service is a sung Eucharist, with Sunday School, held in the Meeting Room, and joining the Congregation for the Eucharist and Blessing. The usual attendance is around forty five adults and six children.

The second Sunday of the month is a Parade Service with an all age Eucharist, attended by the Uniformed Organisations

Tuesday

1:30 – 2:30 p.m. Bible Study – The four members of this group are currently all women and have enjoyed using Paula Gooder's "Women of the...." books over the past year, as well as other texts.

Wednesday

10:00 a.m. The midweek said Eucharist attracts around eight adults each week.

Thursday

7:00 – 8:00 p.m. Bible Study – This is a mixed group of four who have recently delved into the book of Revelation and are now learning about Samuel.

Friday (term time)

8:00 a.m. This is a short, said Eucharist giving thanks for the week usually attended by about four teaching staff from our own school and a local High School. This has been replaced during the interregnum with morning prayer which is shared by three or four.

Quarterly: The Wholeness and Healing Service is a relatively new addition and is an intimate service with six to ten people present and much appreciated by those who attend.

Messy Church - see p. 7, 'Our Church in the Community'.

Annually: The Pet Blessing service, held in the vicarage garden, attracts about twenty to thirty animals, ranging from goldfish to a pony with most things in between.

Monthly: Mothers' Union

Online, Streamed on Facebook: 5:00 p.m. Monday- Friday, Evening Prayer

9:00 a.m. Saturday, Morning Prayer

The online morning and evening prayer began during Covid. There are about six people that regularly post in the comments and several others who listen on a regular basis.

Note: All Holy Eucharist Services are from Common Worship .

Confirmation 2025

On Sunday, 13th. July five candidates were confirmed by the Bishop of Burnley





The Church in the Community

The church is cherished by the community it serves and is very active.

The church has changed and developed within the community, examples of this are:

Our toddler group uses the meeting room weekly during term time. Other groups using the Church regularly are Mothers' Union, choir, bell ringers, and uniformed organisations.

Our Warm Space coffee and soup mornings, within the colder months, are an important recent development.

For some time, we have accommodated the AA group once a week for their meetings

Messy Church is held within the community and is attended by approximately 30 children, with parents.

Some of our social events are held in the church, although the majority are held in the Primary School hall.

Possible re-configuration of the church interior to accommodate more events forms part of our development and outreach plans.

Start courses are offered, especially following major festivals.

We have an active musical tradition, supported by well attended choral and other musical concerts throughout the year.

Services for Christmas and Easter are widely advertised on social media and by distribution of flyers.

The Church and St James' Church of England Aided Primary School

The school was founded in 1770 and was rebuilt on its current site adjacent to the vicarage in 1977.

It caters for about 210 children aged 4-11, is mixed, and has a nursery and wrap-around care.

In recent years it has had successful OFSTED inspections.

We have close links with our Church School. The School's Christian values – peace, joy, love, respect, trust and resilience are deeply rooted through Paul's letter to the Philippians. We all, "Shine like stars as children of God."

The vicar customarily visits to lead part of Tuesday worship. One class each week visits church for a service on Thursday morning. Parents are invited to all whole school services which fill the church's capacity of 300.

Whole school services are held for major festivals and for our leavers at the end of the year.

We are taking advantage of the Diocesan Choir Church initiative to create a new worshipping community. The school choir are taught Christian songs, and a service will be held each half term inviting parents, carers and parishioners to give them an audience. These services will start in September and will be held as appropriate in school or in church.

A good number of children are involved with church organisations such as Sunday School, Guides and Scouts

4. What resources do we have?

Lay Leaders

We have priests with permission to officiate

One Licensed Lay Minister

Verger

Two Church Wardens

We have a strong team of volunteers including servers, sides people, readers and intercessors to support our services.

Church Buildings

The Church of St. James' is a parish church in the Moss Side area of Leyland, a town in the South Ribble District of the County of Lancashire. The Parish began in the Parish School in 1770. The church was consecrated in 1855 and is Grade II listed, with a bell tower surmounted by a spire visible from surrounding areas, topped by a golden cockerel. It has an impressive lychgate (also listed, refurbished in 2024). A flat roof extension houses a meeting room, a small kitchen, and accessible toilet with baby changing facilities. External access to this room is via a ramp, giving wheelchair access to the church.

Numerous stained-glass windows include a fine war memorial window depicting St George and St Michael, another shows St Hilda of Whitby and St Frideswide of Oxford. Others are traditional Victorian religious images.

Church Finances

The church is facing similar challenges to many others, with an ageing and declining congregation. However, the strong connection with the local primary school offers a valuable opportunity to engage with students and their parents. Additionally, new housing developments and the expanding catchment area provide a solid foundation for growing both the church and the community, increasing attendance and financial support.

The church has a dedicated social committee that organises regular fundraising events to supplement the monthly committed giving. Currently, 25 individuals contribute through monthly standing orders, and we have been part of the Parish Giving Scheme for several years, with an additional 28 committed givers through this portal. In 2023 we installed a contactless machine to provide more options for making donations.

We have struggled with Parish Share payments over the past few years, but with help from and discussions with the Diocese we have been granted financial support and have been able to maintain payments in full for the agreed reduced amounts. We are currently on track to match the same level of Parish Share payment this year as last year.

The Parish currently holds designated reserves and restricted reserves. We have been fortunate in recent years in receiving some generous legacies; from a legacy received last year there are also general funds available. The PCC has approved a reserves policy to ensure the Church maintains cash to contribute to funding for the future vision of the Church and ongoing running costs.

Music

Music is very important to life at St James'. We have sung worship every Sunday which is usually led from the organ by our regular organist. We have a very committed choir who, in addition to leading the singing on Sundays, perform special music at the main festivals. Much of our worship uses traditional hymns and we try to include more modern songs as much as possible, especially at our family services.

We are very proud of our organ which is maintained in good condition. We recently replaced the console with a very impressive, 1930's reconditioned unit, having installed a new electronic control system which has greatly improved the reliability of the instrument.

Whilst we have stable and good quality music provision, we are not complacent and constantly want to improve. We would love to see more people involved. The choir is open to all, irrespective of previous experience, and we would welcome anyone who wants to either commit to regular singing or who just wants to sing for the special services. We used to have a small worship band that played at family services, and we would like to be able to start something similar again. There are discussions with the primary school, and we are trying to develop initiatives that will allow its pupils to participate in leading worship music in church.

Church Bells

There is a ring of 6 bells at St James', installed in 1913.

Our own band of ringers has depleted over the years, resulting in our not being able to ring for the main Sunday service every week as we would like. We cooperate with other churches, notably Croston, to our mutual advantage. We are a welcoming group and are always looking to recruit new members.

However, our practice night on Wednesdays has become very popular, with ringers attending from several local towers, giving opportunities for them to ring methods they would not encounter in their home towers.

Youth Groups

We have a small number of children and young people who attend church regularly, and we have begun working towards growing their numbers. We provide Sunday School activities for children at our Sunday 10.30am. service and once a month we have a family parade service for the uniformed organisations (Scouts and Guides). We are making these services more child-friendly and interactive so that the young people participate in readings, prayers, collection, etc.

We host an after-school weekly "Little Fishes" small but dedicated group of children of St James' School, taking part in bible teaching, prayer, crafts, games, etc.

There has been a youth group running successfully for the last year so, with up to 40 Years 5 and 6 age children attending regularly. As we are currently in an interregnum status and with this corresponding with the summer break for the youth group, we hope to resume youth group activities as soon as resources allow.

Working with both Blackburn Diocese and St James' primary school we will be starting Choir Church from September 2025. This is designed to build a new worshipping community as part of the St James' family.

Choir church and interactive parade services are all part of the vision to increase our involvement with young families, children and youth which we hope will develop further with the introduction of faith-based groups such as youth alpha and bible focused youth discipleship programmes.

We are passionate about seeing young lives transformed, and we are eager for fresh energy, creativity and leadership to help us realise the potential we know is here. We believe the right person will see this as an exciting opportunity to create something meaningful and lasting, supported by a congregation that is ready and willing to grow.

Parent and Toddler Group.

The group meets on Tuesday mornings during term time in the church meeting room. There are three helpers with D.B.S. clearance. Sessions start at 10.30 a.m. and consist of an informal framework of welcome and registration, and group play with toys provided, encouraging interaction. Parents and children have an enjoyable time together before having a short craft colouring session, followed by toast and a drink. The final session is for free expression, musical instruments and nursery rhymes, ending by 12.00 noon. Our objective for the future is to increase our numbers and to continue having good fun and fellowship with everyone who attends.

Mothers' Union.

The group meets in the school hall on the second Wednesday in each month, from 7.30 - 9.00 p.m. Sessions open with prayer and a short bible reading, usually in line with the Lectionary.

To promote interest throughout the year a varied programme of events is organised, such as talks on Air Ambulance or local Hospices, flower arranging, and meals out. Numbers over the years have sadly reduced. At present we can expect numbers of 12 -15. We are continually trying to encourage more members throughout the year.

Social Committee

St James' has a dedicated Social Committee that works hard to provide a variety of events for all ages throughout the year. We are grateful to all that help and attend, and our events are enjoyed by all, help to raise much needed funds for our Church, and provide an opportunity for outreach to the local community.

Recently we have joined with another local church to run 'Messy Church' and all local schools are invited. We support other charities via regular coffee mornings and have offered warm space sessions.

We host a good mix of familiar events and some new, such as the Fashion Show due to take place in September.

The Social Committee is always welcoming to new members and open to suggestions from the congregation for trying out new events.

All events are advertised on social media.



Pet Blessing Service

Popular home
made pet treat
stall

Musical Concert Evening

5 July 2025



**Christmas
Tree Festival
2024.**

More than 20 trees were exhibited.

Summer Fair 2025



We have many events planned for the rest of this year, as listed below:

Events	Day/Date	Time
Musical concert evening	Saturday 5 th July	7.00pm-9.00pm
Summer Fair	Saturday 12 th July	1.00pm-3.30pm
170th Anniversary of St James' Church - Afternoon Tea	Sunday 27 th July	2.00pm-4.00pm
Bingo	Saturday 20 th September	7.00pm-9.00pm
Fashion Show	Thursday 25 th September	7.00pm-9.00pm
Animal Blessing Service	Sunday 5 th October	1.00pm
Harvest Quiz	Saturday 11 th October	7.00pm-9.00pm
Big Cake Sale after parade service	Sunday 12 th October	After 10.30am service
Charity Coffee morning in aid of CRUK	Saturday 25 th October	10am-12noon
Messy Church - Brights Lights	Saturday 1 st November	11.00am-1.00pm
Christmas Tree Festival	Saturday 15 th & Sunday 16 th November	11.00am - 4.00pm Saturday, 1.00pm - 4.00pm Sunday
Christmas Fair	Saturday 22 nd November	1.00-3.30pm

5. **What is the community we serve?**

Our Challenges

We mention elsewhere in this Profile the difficulty of low congregation numbers and the related problems in meeting our Parish Share. The continuing and planned home building developments offer opportunities we must not miss to grow our congregation, and we still need to reach out more effectively to the established community. We are an active, open, welcoming and inclusive community. There is willingness to act, and we have new ideas for change which we feel confident will attract and stimulate those who might respond to our intended mission. The PCC's vision for the future states our need for vision and leadership in a new incumbent, and we pray that we might attract such a colleague to our church.

The Parish Present and Future

Much of the parish is residential, with significant light industry areas. There is a mix of social and private developments, with generous green areas. New developments continue to be built. It is estimated approximately 2500 dwellings will swell our parish population to approximately 12500 in the years to come.

Map of the Parish of St James'

The area marked as test track is the one currently being developed.

<https://acrobat.adobe.com/id/urn:aaid:sc:EU:b505c392-d23b-4567-a2fd-a8312b151fa4>

Parent and Toddler Group



6. Vicarage and Education Options

The Vicarage.



The vicarage is a spacious detached home occupying a large plot with ample hard standing for vehicles, attached garage to the front, and enclosed gardens to the sides and rear. The dwelling fronts Slater Lane and lies between the church and the church primary school. The interior of the vicarage offers generously sized rooms. On the ground floor there is a through lounge, dining room, office/study and impressive entrance hall and stairway, a fitted kitchen, utility and pantry along with toilet and built in cupboard units. Upstairs there are four good sized bedrooms and a family bathroom/shower with a separate toilet. Decorations are in good order. The house has Gas Central heating. Gas and electric services will be inspected and updated as required prior to the new incumbent arriving.

Amenities in the Parish

Across a small park from the church and vicarage there is a small parade of shops, with a selection of shops including a pharmacy. There is a Medical Centre nearby. A short drive away is a Farm Shop with a butcher and fishmonger. There are three care homes and some sheltered accommodation, and three primary schools, including St. James' Church School.

Leyland

In Leyland, about a mile away, there are five large supermarkets, including one on a retail precinct, as well as a selection of independent shops. There is a Market Hall, which is at present under major refurbishment until late 2026; the market is in temporary premises until then, and opens on Tuesday, Friday and Saturday. The market refurbishment is part of the multi-million-pound Leyland Town Deal project which will see the transformation of the town centre along with highways and public realm improvements.

The town has restaurants and pubs offering a wide range of cuisines, a Leisure Centre with a pool and gym, an NHS Clinic, and two medical centres.

Worden Park has been awarded green flag status and boasts formal gardens, an adventure playground, woodland walks, model train rides, crazy golf, a café and craft centre. The town's annual festival is held here.

Leyland is home to the British Commercial Vehicle Museum.

Education Options

Web links for local schools:

Primary

<https://www.leyland-st-james.lancs.sch.uk/>

<https://mossside.lancs.sch.uk/>

<https://www.st-annes-lancs.co.uk/>

<https://www.seven-stars.lancsngfl.ac.uk/>

Secondary

<https://balshaws.org.uk/>

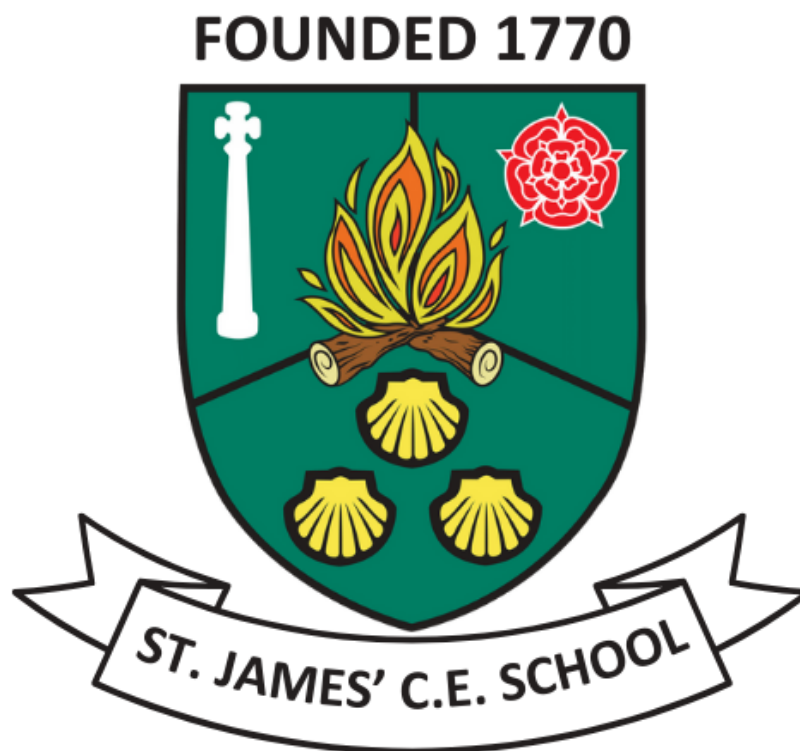
<https://bishopr.co.uk/>

<https://www.academyatworden.co.uk/>

<https://wellfieldacademy.org/>

<https://ismchs.com/>

<https://www.runshaw.ac.uk/>



7. Who is God calling?

The person we are looking for should

- Be confident in their spirituality and be able to lead a variety of worship and prayer, with a willingness to be innovative, to be able to interact, and be open to change for the benefit of all.
- Provide spiritual advice and counsel, along with pastoral care.
- Be a strong and assertive leader who can lead our Church forward, bringing fresh ideas to help our Church to grow with a positive and uplifting outlook.
- Be inspirational and engaging with our congregation and wider community to allow us to achieve our aims together.
- Build on the links we already have within the local community.

Personal attributes include:

- kind,
- caring,
- approachable,
- good listener,
- understanding,
- empathetic,
- inclusive
- the ability to manage the Church and its team so we can all be the best version of ourselves for the good of St James' and the Moss Side community.

We have an experienced and energetic management team and volunteers who are all willing to support the new incumbent in all their endeavours at St James'.

The children at St James' Primary School were also asked for their thoughts on what our new incumbent should be. Below are a few of the ideas they had:

Above all kind
Funny (sense of humour)
Show Christian Values
Love music
Joyful worships
Smile
Good listener
In Year 5 many wanted someone who will go on school trips.

8. Vision 2026 and Beyond

Vision 2026 is an agenda for growth agreed by the Blackburn Diocesan Synod in 2015. It challenges our parishes to be healthy churches that transform their communities as we look ahead to our diocesan centenary in 2026. It also lays out four ways in which this over-arching goal can be achieved: Making Disciples, Being Witnesses, Growing Leaders and Prioritising Children and Young People.

All that we do as diocese is focussed on the delivery of Vision 2026. For example:

- To make disciples we have 'Fruitful', our Diocesan Discipleship app and distribute 10,000 devotionals at Lent and Advent which enable people to study the scriptures. We also encourage greater generosity in the giving of time, talents and treasures.
- To be witnesses, many parishes are setting up new local congregations at different times and in different places to reach out to new groups of people as well as showing God's love in action through projects that meet human need.
- New leaders are emerging as we seek to enable and equip those God is raising up for lay and ordained ministry. Our M:Power course is a nationally innovative resource for forming leaders from working class backgrounds.
- Our focus on children and young people is enabling creative thinking to raise up a new generation for Jesus Christ. This is supported by our family of church schools, teams to support children and youth work and our Youth Forum.

In the Diocese of Blackburn we are inspired by confidence in the Gospel and are ambitious in our desire to make new disciples for Jesus Christ. We are committed to mutual flourishing, to maintaining clergy numbers and to investing in training for new curates.

As we look to 2026 and the completion of the current Vision, the Diocese has embarked on a major programme of listening to God and our communities as we discern when he is leading us next. This is being supported in prayer as we observe a Year of Prayer for Growth and Renewal in 2025.

Our Diocesan Vision Prayer is:

***"Heavenly Father, we embrace Your call for us to make disciples, to be witnesses,
to grow leaders and to inspire children and young people.
Give us eyes to see Your vision, ears to hear the prompting of Your Spirit
and courage to follow in the footsteps of your Son, our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen"***

You can find out more by visiting the Vision 2026 pages on our website: www.blackburn.anglican.org

9. Clergy Care and Wellbeing

- Clergy are invited to participate in an 8 year annual programme to keep ministry fresh and vital. This includes periods of sabbatical and regular retreats.
- We offer an Annual Conversation in which every licensed priest spends 90 mins with a Bishop or Archdeacon discussing ministry and wellbeing.
- Ongoing theological training and teaching is offered through our partnership with Emmanuel Theological College. Clergy receive free access to a theological library of 22,000 books and regular seminars.
- Annual Diocesan Clergy Study Days and an occasional clergy conference seek to provide opportunities both to keep ministry fresh and to build relationships with colleagues.
- We offer first incumbents a mentor and participation in our Start of Ministry Programme.
- All clergy are entitled to an uninterrupted rest period of 24 hours in each period of seven days and one additional rest period of 24 hours in each month, and in the remaining weeks of the month to take a rest day and a light day.
- We offer a Clergy Assistance Programme. More information about this can be found on our [website](#)
- We have a great property department, who will do their best to ensure your house works for you and your family and is well maintained.
- We have a beautiful diocesan retreat house in the grounds of a ruined Cistercian abbey, where clergy are welcome to have personal reading days for a modest charge (you can book in for lunch or bring your own).
- We encourage all parishes in vacancy to consider how they will 'pastor' and support their new priest. The diocese has an anti-bullying and anti-harassment policy.
- If you are looking for a spiritual director or a mentor we have an excellent Warden of Spiritual Direction and networks of people with whom we can put you in touch.
- We are always looking for ways for clergy to mix apart from work – including reading weeks, regular hospitality, a cricket team and a clergy walking group. Further suggestions are welcome.
- We offer free counselling to clergy and their families through the [Inter Diocesan Counselling Service](#) and our own Diocesan counsellor.
- Clergy Wellbeing is overseen by the Assistant Archdeacon for Clergy Wellbeing, Canon Neil Kelley. In addition our Dean of Women's Ministry, the Revd Lucie Lunn, offers support and care to female clergy in the Diocese.



Whalley Abbey Centre for Christian Discipleship and Prayer