THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND
Diocese of Leeds

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Vacancy: Vicar of St Robert of Knaresborough, Pannal and St Michael and All Angels, Beckwithshaw

Bishop of Ripon's Letter – November 2026

Thank you for your interest in the above post. This is an opportune and hopeful time in the life of this newly formed single parish of two churches, on the outskirts of the historic spa town of Harrogate. The people of the parish are in good heart, enthusiastic to work and grow together and praying for someone who will love them and journey with them in this new chapter.

St Roberts has a strong and inclusive choral tradition, good engagement with the local community and long established schools work and families ministry and St Michael's is more rural in its setting, but is also strong on schools work and welcoming local people for a variety of events. Pannal is well connected and on the York to Harrogate train line. There will be no end of leisure, cultural and heritage interests to engage with as well as beautiful countryside (including the Yorkshire Dales and Moors), visitor attractions and appealing cities (including Ripon, York and Leeds) all within very easy reach.

The Diocese of Leeds is the newest diocese in the Church of England, formally created in 2014. There is a growing appreciation of the ways in which the breadth of vision and depth of resources of a large diocese can support the ministry of parishes in our various contexts. The Barnabas programme, supported by central funding encourages and enables clergy and lay together be confident Christians, growing churches and transforming communities. For more information visit Barnabas.

In the Diocese of Leeds you'll find a warm welcome, supportive colleagues and an enabling culture. There is a sense of 'youthfulness' in the structures which encourages creativity and innovation and is not hampered by deep seated tradition which can limit openness to change. In the Ripon Episcopal Area and in the Deanery of Harrogate, clergy and ministers are deeply committed to mission and ministry and

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appreciate the collegiality they enjoy with one another, working together to overcome challenges, develop vision and implement plans. This culture is currently being strengthened by our recently developed Resourcing Deanery approach. In my opinion, and based on my experience, this is a very positive and hopeful time for someone to consider joining the Diocese of Leeds (or moving within it).

I encourage you to take time to read the beautifully produced and attractive brochure and explore in detail the facts and figures in the profile because there you will see not only the obvious strengths, but also notice the signs of God's Spirit at work, and spot the overwhelming potential for growth and development in mission and ministry, not least by working with and supporting near neighbours in the deanery and the wider Resourcing Deanery approach.

Members of the congregation are committed, energised and hopeful about the future. They have worked hard in the vacancy and look forward to welcoming a new Vicar who will care for them, pray with them and lead them to share and preach the good news of Jesus Christ; nurture new and long-standing disciples; bring the compassion of Christ to those in need; and grow ministry amongst families, children and young people.

As you explore the parish publicity I hope and pray you might discover opportunities for growth in your own discipleship and ministry and that you will be able to sense if the Spirit is stirring in you and calling you to take further this process. If you wish to have an informal conversation with the Archdeacon or myself, we would be glad to hear from you. With all good wishes in your discernment.

Please pray for us in ours too.

With grace and peace,



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