

Parish Profile

The United Benefice of WARTON St Oswald and BORWICK St Mary
with YEALAND CONYERS St John

JUNE 2026



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A CHURCH NEAR YOU (ACNY)

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Contents

1	Summary	3
2.	Letter from the Bishop	5
3	Our Vision	7
4	The Vicar We Seek	8
5	Our Benefice	9
6	Worship and Ministry	12
7	Leadership, Governance and Safeguarding	15
8	Children, Youth & Families	17
9	Outreach to the communities and beyond	19
10	Finance and Stewardship	23
11	Parish News & Social Media	24
12	Vicarage and Education Options	25
13	Further information from the Diocese of Blackburn	26

1 Summary

The United Benefice occupies a delightful rural corner of North Lancashire, close to the coast of Morecambe Bay with views of the Lake District hills. Surrounded by farmland, the smaller villages at the heart of the Benefice include the Yealands, Borwick and Priest Hutton, with the larger rural village of Warton near Carnforth within an area of outstanding natural beauty. Each village has its own strong community spirit and characteristics, with frequent local events and activities, more than compensating for the lack of facilities that might be found in larger conurbations.

The historic Parish Church of St Oswald's, Warton and its District Church, St Mary's, Borwick, comprise the Ecclesiastical Parish of Warton, with St John the Evangelist, Yealand Conyers being the Parish Church of the Yealands. The Eucharist is celebrated at all three churches. A strong musical influence enhances the joy of celebrating all the main Christian festivals.



Tidying the path at St Mary's

With a busy church hall (in Warton), two primary schools (in Yealand and Warton) and an ageing population, there are potentially many demands on the vicar of the Benefice. However, the teams of volunteers at each church are used to working hard to enable the smooth running of the Benefice, giving support to, and freeing up, the incumbent to organise and prioritise their time for God's work.

Together, our PCCs share a clear vision of a welcoming, rural Benefice, rooted in strong community and school partnerships, committed to inclusive worship, pastoral care and creation care. We aim to deepen discipleship for all ages, continue to develop and nurture new leaders, further strengthen intergenerational worship and, not least, expand our pastoral and community engagement.

There are challenges facing the Benefice, including a fall in congregation sizes, which are yet to fully recover from the impact of the Covid pandemic. However, there are significant opportunities to reverse this trend, not least from the outstanding work that is being done with children, young people and families, including the 'Bubble Church' initiative. Other outreach activities such as the successful 'Winter Warmer' lunches run by St Mary's, the St John's coffee mornings and lunches, and Breaking Bread and Coffee Stop at St Oswald's are bringing an increasing, and not insignificant, number of locals into contact with the church, creating further opportunities to build the congregations.



The two parishes have reasonable financial reserves but the cost of maintaining and heating three churches is not insignificant. The respective treasurers work hard to secure grants wherever possible. Running costs are controlled and, (excluding Parish Share), are generally covered by fees and voluntary income. Agreement has been reached with the DBF in recent years to reduce the cost of Warton Parish Share to a more realistic and affordable level, and the treasurers are seeking assurance that this arrangement can be made permanent. There are currently no arrears due to the Diocese, both Parishes having met their respective agreed Parish Share.



A special Friday Coffee @ St John's

The principal unresolved challenge is currently having no Churchwardens in post at Warton. Although all the practical and administrative functions of a churchwarden (and indeed more) are being successfully fulfilled by volunteers and PCC/DCC members, no-one has come forward to undertake the role since the previous incumbent was inducted in January 2024. We hope and pray that a new vicar will be able to offer sufficient mutual support to would-be wardens to give them the confidence to step up to the role.

We are seeking an experienced vicar, who understands rural ministry and community life. A compassionate and pastoral focus is so important to many parishioners, especially at times of need or loss. Our hard-working and committed volunteers are used to providing exceptional practical support, on their own initiative, to maintain and support all aspects of church life. They would be delighted to enable a new incumbent to commit more time to following in the steps of Jesus amidst our communities, communicating with and spreading His good news to people of all ages across the Benefice.

We hope you enjoy reading this profile. Further information can be found on our web site via "A Church Near You", within our church buildings, and of course from our Parish Reps, lay leadership and PCC members.



Junior Church Planting an Easter Garden

2. 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. We have 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 of our Centenary in 2026 themed "All for Jesus". 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 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.

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.



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*

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 “The World in One Diocese” 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 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 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.

The United Benefice of WARTON St Oswald and BORWICK St Mary with YEALAND CONYERS St John

3 Our Vision

Rooted in strong community relationships, faithful service, and a deep commitment to welcome, we seek to grow younger, deeper, wider, and stronger in Christ.

We envision a Benefice where every person—of every age and background—can belong, flourish, and encounter the transforming love of God.

A Community-Centred, Cohesive Benefice

We will continue to build on our excellent partnerships with schools, local groups, and village communities, ensuring our churches remain places where people feel known, valued, and supported. By strengthening collaboration across the Benefice, we aim to grow as one united family of churches, sharing resources, gifts, and vision.

Growing Disciples of All Ages

We will deepen discipleship by offering accessible, meaningful opportunities for learning, prayer and spiritual growth. Building on the success of Bubble Church, Junior Church, intergenerational worship, bible study groups and prayer meetings, we will nurture faith in children, young people, families and adults at every stage of life.

Welcoming, Inclusive, and Compassionate

Our churches will continue to be places of warmth, hospitality, and belonging. We will expand our pastoral care, ensuring that those who are isolated, grieving or vulnerable receive compassionate support. We will also strengthen our commitment to creation care, embedding Eco Church principles into our worship, buildings, and community life.

Sustainable, Resilient, and Future-Focused

We recognise the challenges of ageing congregations, financial demands, and the workload placed on volunteers and clergy. We will continue to develop and nurture leaders, broaden our volunteer base, and build on our culture of shared responsibility. By addressing building needs, stewardship, and long-term sustainability, we aim to secure a thriving future for all three churches.

Bringing People Together in Christ

Above all, we seek to be a Benefice where unity is nurtured, differences are handled with grace, and every person is encouraged to play their part in God's mission. Through prayer, fellowship, and a shared commitment to the gospel, we will continue to grow as a community that reflects the love, hope, and joy of Christ.

4 The Vicar We Seek

We are praying for a humble follower of Jesus, rooted in Scripture and growing in grace. Someone who delights in working alongside volunteers, helping us draw on the Holy Spirit for energy, deepen our faith, widen our welcome, and strengthen our life together as a Benefice. We hope for a priest who will cherish our communities, recognise their distinctiveness, and lead us forward with wisdom, warmth and hope. We see preaching as an important part of ministry. We have an LLM and an ALM who will assist you in worship and in parochial care. We have a congregation that will pray regularly for you, both corporately and in their private prayers we will support one another on this journey.

Personal Qualities and Ministry Approach

- **Experienced and knowledgeable** able to balance worship, pastoral care, administration, and community engagement with confidence and compassion.
- **Compassionate and pastorally focused on all**, especially to those in need
- **Understands rural ministry and community life**, including its opportunities and challenges
- **Approachable and relatable**, with an ability to put people at ease
- **A person-centred approach**, valuing individuals of all ages, backgrounds, and denominations
- **Supportive of working with volunteers**, encouraging and enabling growth and development in others
- **Skilled in time management and balancing priorities** ensuring the demands of worship, pastoral care, and administration are met with calm efficiency.

5 Our Benefice

The Benefice is made up of two parishes: Warton, which includes Borwick & Priest Hutton, and Yealand, which includes Conyers, Redmayne and Storrs. Each area has its own distinct character and strong community spirit. All have faithful, long-established congregations with an older age profile, offering depth, stability and strong commitment. St John's has a predominantly older congregation, while St Mary's is sustained by a worshipping faithful few. St Oswald's, by contrast, is blessed with a growing number of children and young families, bringing energy and life to our worship.

A new vicar will find both joy and challenge in this mix: nurturing and sustaining ageing congregations, supporting pastoral needs, and at the same time encouraging and shaping the growing ministry among children and families. Together, these communities offer a rich and hopeful foundation for future ministry.

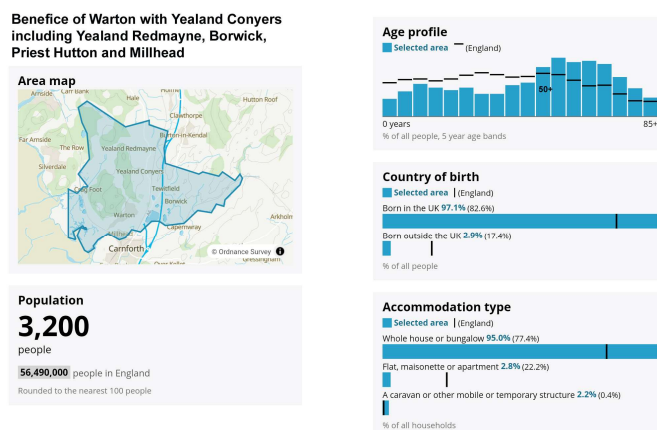
Warton and Yealand each have Church-linked primary schools: Archbishop Hutton's VC Primary School and Yealand CE Primary School. There are also local public houses. Nearby Carnforth provides a full range of amenities, including shops, medical and dental practices, and convenient bus and rail connections to Lancaster and the wider region.

Located in the heart of Warton, the Church Hall and Wellbeing Centre is a community focused facility run by a voluntary committee under the auspices of Warton PCC. The main hall is bright, spacious and versatile, regularly hosting Yoga, Pilates, LDS Dance School, St Oswald's Junior Church, Bubble Church and a wide range of private bookings including parties, charity events, meetings and occasional elections. The Centre also includes a well-equipped gym with weights and cardio machines, and a treatment room used by a variety of therapists. Income from these facilities enables the employment of two part-time contractors who help manage and support the smooth running of the facility.

Warton PCC provides a representative on the Hospital of Jesus Charity committee. This charity, set up by the same foundation as Archbishop Hutton School, maintains four Alms houses in Warton village.

The Benefice population includes the communities in Warton Village and Mill Head, the villages of Borwick and Priest Hutton, the Yealands villages, scattered hamlets (and several chalet and caravan parks). The community's age distribution is weighted toward older adults compared with the national profile for England.

Information From the Latest Census



The Churches within our Benefice

St Oswald's

St Oswald's is the largest of the three churches. Its size and central location reflect the historic, strategic and economic importance of the village of Warton. There has been a church here for over 1,000 years. St Oswald's was substantially rebuilt in the 15th century.



We are fortunate to have a fully-working 3 manual Makin organ in excellent condition. There have been many subsequent changes, most recently in 2004 when the back of church was re-ordered to provide a new choir vestry and kitchen and the entrance was changed for disabled access; subsequently a toilet was installed. More recently, broadband has been installed and Wi-Fi is available. The interior is spacious and well proportioned

The church has received the Eco Church Bronze Award and is working towards meeting the criteria for Silver.

In common with many church buildings, the provision of adequate, affordable heating is a challenge, and potential solutions are currently being actively investigated. The inhospitable winter temperature in St Oswald's is known to have resulted in a decline in attendance.

St Mary's

First opened 130 years ago, St Mary's was designed as a Chapel of Ease by renowned architects, Paley and Austin of Lancaster. Situated where Borwick and Priest Hutton meet, it provided residents with an alternative to walking to Warton for worship at the Parish Church of St Oswald. St Mary's continued to provide worship as a Chapel of Ease for 122 years and the building has been Grade II Listed since 2002. Then, in 2018, it was designated as a District Church to recognise the independent and positive contribution it makes within the Parish of Warton. A lay-led reordering project, completed in early 2020, achieved full accessibility via a new entrance and lobby area, the addition of an accessible toilet and kitchenette, and an efficient new heating system, powered by a modern electric boiler.



The project was fully funded by grants and donations of more than £130k. Energy efficient lighting was installed in 2023, funded by voluntary donations and sponsorship.

The church benefits from being situated opposite the Borwick and Priest Hutton War Memorial Hall which offers generous free parking as well as the facility to provide catering, etc., for weddings, funerals and other church events.

St Mary's church has a particularly peaceful and spiritual ambience due to its quiet location, its compact, single-aisle layout, and its beautiful interior. As such it is an ideal place for personal prayer and reflection. Informal, early Sunday evening services, incorporating Taizé chanting have been very uplifting. The excellent acoustics in the Chancel also make it ideal for choral events and concerts.

St John's

St John's, Yealand Conyers, has been a gathering place for the village since 1838. Enlarged in 1862 and 1882 and becoming a parish in its own right in 1870, it has grown alongside the community it serves. Inside, the Thorold and Smith organ, the handcrafted altar frontal, and the wall hangings made by members of the congregation all speak of a church shaped by local creativity and care.

Over the past fifteen years, St John's has been gently and thoughtfully reordered to serve the needs of a quiet rural community. The addition of an area for Sunday school and meeting rooms has provided inviting spaces for families and for the wider community to gather. Solar panels, an air-source heating system, and B4RN community broadband reflect the congregation's commitment to sustainability and connection, enabling services to be broadcast live for those joining from home.



St John's was the first church in the diocese to receive the Eco Church Silver Award and is affectionately known as *"the greenest church in the diocese."* Much of its character comes from the dedication of volunteers, their quiet and faithful work ensures St John's remains a warm, welcoming, and prayerful space at the heart of village life.

Ecumenical connections

In Warton, the Methodist Chapel is an active partner, and together we share a Christingle service, and a Good Friday walk up Warton Crag, followed by refreshments for all. In the Yealand's, St Mary's RC Church and the Friends Meeting House offer a warm and prayerful ecumenical presence, nurturing fellowship through an annual shared gathering—hosted in turn by each church—and a cherished joint carol service that brings the village together in worship and friendship.

We also value our close connection with Hynning Monastery, home to the Roman Catholic Bernardine Cistercian sisters. The monastery has hosted Benefice Quiet Days for many years, welcomed the Yealands' ecumenical carol service in 2025, and offers an annual visit for our Junior Church.

6 Worship and Ministry

In our parishes we welcome people from many Christian traditions and seek to be inclusive, open and prayerful. Our worship is centred on the Eucharist, usually using Common Worship, enriched at times by resources from other traditions. BCP is used at the 8am service at St Oswald's.

We value liturgy that is reverent, well-ordered, and friendly, supported by strong musical leadership. Most Sunday services include organ music and choir singing, and St Oswald's has a particularly rich musical tradition.

The Blessed Sacrament is reserved at Warton and Yealand. Candles, frontals, banners, seasonal imagery and vestments are used to mark the church year. At Warton and Yealand trained lay assistants serve in this ministry. Holy Days such as Ash Wednesday, Holy Week and Easter are faithfully observed.

Across the Benefice we maintain a regular pattern of Sunday and midweek worship, grounding our life together in prayer and sacrament. Home communions for the housebound are offered by the vicar and Licensed Lay Minister.

We appreciate the rhythms and seasons of the Christian Year. We observe the festivals and holy days that mark the principal events of Jesus' s earthly ministry: His incarnation, birth, and baptism; His death and resurrection; and His ascension and promised return in glory. We observe the penitential seasons of Lent and Advent; encouraging our congregation to make use of the special resources developed and provided by the Diocese.

Both St Oswald's and St John's have representatives on the Deanery Synod.

Current service pattern

Sunday Services

	St Oswald's	St Oswald's	St John's	St Mary's
Sunday in month	08:00	09:30	11:00	09:30
1st	BCP Eucharist	Parish Eucharist	Parish Eucharist	Parish Eucharist
2nd	Holy Matins	All together Eucharist	Parish Eucharist	
3rd	BCP Eucharist	Service of the Word *	Service of the Word *	Parish Eucharist
4th	Holy Matins	Parish Eucharist	Parish Eucharist	
Attendance	10	45	25	12

** At times Communion by extension is offered*

Weekday Services

St John's	St Oswald's	St Oswald's
Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
9.30	11.00	9.00
Eucharist	Eucharist	Morning Prayer

Baptisms, Weddings and Funerals are conducted by the clergy across the Benefice.

As a Benefice we are open to discussing the pattern of services to better serve the needs of our churches and the new incumbent.

St Oswald's Choir

The Choir at St Oswald's - a super bunch of people, up to 17 strong at festival time - play a leading role in the Church's ministry. It is a traditional robed choir, with four part music. Led by Emma Brantley Tziros, an experienced chorister and former school choir director, the Choir combines high musical standards with a keen sense of community to support the worship and a lot of fun and laughs!

Choristers rehearse twice weekly, supported by our main organist, Keith Worsman, and occasionally Trevor Blease, both highly experienced musicians. The choir sings at the Sunday Parish Eucharist, festival evensongs, weddings, funerals, the annual Carol Service, and the popular Community Carols, which regularly draw over 150 people.

They also support Benefice services, take part in concerts, collaborate with other choirs and contribute to village events. As an RSCM-affiliated choir, they plan music using *Sunday by Sunday* and nurture both young and adult singers working towards RSCM awards. The Choir has a wide range of repertoire from Tallis to Townend and all are welcome!



St John's Choir

Steph Burford is an experienced and knowledgeable choir master, guiding our small but enthusiastic choir with skill, patience and a real love of church music. Our small choir continues to grow in faith and music. The choir enjoys singing together, bringing warmth and depth to our worship once a month. Midweek rehearsals are relaxed and good-humored, with plenty of laughter alongside the learning as we explore new hymns and much-loved favorites. Singing in the choir offers a lovely way to share fellowship, build confidence and contribute to the life of our Benefice. Under Steph's leadership, the choir remains a valued and joyful part of our worshipping community.



Shared Prayer and Spiritual Growth

A lay-led Prayer group is held at St Oswald's every Friday Morning and at St John's on the fourth Wednesday of each month, with several participants offering their own prayers during the gathering.

Bible Study Group

A monthly Bible Study group, led by our Lay Minister, meets for relaxed discussion, reflection and prayer, offering a welcoming space to explore Scripture together and grow in faith as a community.

7 Leadership, Governance and Safeguarding

We are fortunate to enjoy the support and ministry of retired priests and an excellent licensed lay minister (LLM). We are used to the clergy, LLM and wardens working closely together. There are two PCCs, one for St Oswald's with St Mary's and one for St John's, both of which have representatives on the deanery synod. St Mary's is a District Church and is managed by its District Church Council under the auspices of the Warton PCC.

The work of the Benefice is carried out entirely by volunteers. There are no paid roles. Key roles are listed here but a full list of 'Who's Who' is available on request.

- We have an LLM Annette MacKenzie
- We have an ALM Jenny Chapman, with a focus on pastoral care and later life ministry
- St Oswald's has a pastoral assistant; Val Ellams
- St Oswald's has a PCC secretary, Christine Wellock and Treasurer, Trevor Blease.
- St John's has two church wardens; Clare Hunter and Jenny Chapman. Clare also serves as Treasurer. The PCC secretary is Linda Gardner. St John's eco warden is Paul Daunter.
- St Mary's has two Deputy Churchwardens (known locally as church wardens), Sally Fletcher and Joyce Tombs. Joyce also serves as the DCC treasurer and de facto secretary.

Governance: Planning and Coordination Groups

Each parish holds a planning meeting to review, coordinate, and schedule events across the full church calendar. This ensures alignment of key activities, avoid clashes, and supports shared ministry and community engagement as well as organising services and events. St Oswald's has a *Looking Forward in Faith Group* and St John's a *Mission and Ministry Group*. Each group meets around three times a year to support planning and parish life.

Benefice Co-ordinating Team

The Benefice Co-ordinating Team (BCT), formerly the Benefice Advisory Group, was re-formed in 2025 to support the Vicar and to enable the three churches of the Benefice to work together in the best interests of the whole Benefice.

The BCT is composed of representatives from St Oswald's PCC, St John's PCC and St Mary's DCC. It serves in an advisory capacity to the individual PCCs, which retain responsibility for all final decisions. The team provides a forum for shared planning, communication, and collaboration across the Benefice, helping to strengthen unity and ensure a coordinated approach to mission and ministry.

Safeguarding

Safeguarding is overseen by our two Benefice Safeguarding Officers, Tracey Lawther and Jenny Chapman, who meet regularly, share information across the churches, and are always ready to listen and act, reporting concerns to the appropriate authorities when needed.

Our Benefice creates a culture where everyone feels safe, valued, and respected. It means being vigilant to the needs of all vulnerable people, responding well to concerns, and ensuring that policies and training are not just paperwork but part of everyday parish life. At its heart, safeguarding is an expression of Christian care: a shared commitment to protecting the vulnerable, supporting those who come forward, and fostering a community where trust and wellbeing can flourish.

8 Children, Youth & Families

Junior Church meets during the 9.30am service in term time and currently welcomes around 14 children from birth to 12+ (with under-3s accompanied by a parent). Through Bible stories, games, crafts, role play and service projects, we explore what it means to be followers of Jesus. Most weeks the children join the congregation for communion and share what they have been learning. Once a month, at the All Together service, they take active roles throughout welcoming, reading, leading intercessions, and helping with the offertory and collection. Many children have been prepared for and receive communion, and several serve on the reading and welcoming rotas or as part of the Bubble Church team.

Each Lent, Junior Church leads a Benefice-wide challenge supporting a local charity, learning about its work, visiting the organisation and sharing their insights in worship. Recent charities include food banks, homeless services and support for asylum seekers and refugees. In the Season of Creation they take on ecological projects and, in the Summer, they visit Hynning monastery – followed by a family picnic in their lovely gardens.



Young Generations takes place on the first Sunday of the month from 6-8pm. We open each session with a prayer that the children write and take turns to read, followed by a short period of Bible study, which the children love reading as a group. In December we explored the meaning of Christmas and the significance of the birth of Jesus. Recently we have been looking at how Christianity developed in the northern England, culminating with a pilgrimage to St Patrick's Chapel in Heysham. We currently have a committed group of six children (aged 9 years and above) that join us every month.

Bubble Church is delivered by a team of 15 ranging in age from 10 to in their 70's. They cover a wide range of roles from puppeteering to audiovisuals and are hugely enthusiastic and committed. We are the only church in the diocese offering Bubble Church and were one of the first churches to join the pilot project. The feedback from the families has been entirely positive; they particularly appreciate the warmth of the welcome, the inclusivity and the joyful atmosphere.



Our Schools

Archbishop Hutton's Primary School in Warton is a Voluntary Controlled Primary School with 97 pupils. The school serves the local community and many of the pupils are from within the village. The make-up of the school is largely white British, of secular and non-secular families.



Yealand C of E Primary School is a smaller than average voluntary-aided village school. We currently have 32 children on roll and have 3 classes for our Nursery to Year 6 children.

We have a full-governing body, many of which are foundation governors and members of our local community. Our vicar will join as an ex-officio member.

In school, we see St. John's Church as an extension of our classroom, where we can learn and worship together. We celebrate the start and end of the year, as well as Christmas and Easter alongside our school family and community.

The previous incumbent built strong links with the two schools in the Benefice, visiting regularly to read Bible stories and talk with the children; We would encourage our new vicar to continue this important connection, nurturing the strong and valued relationship between the parish and our two church schools.

9 Outreach to the communities and beyond

We have several well-established activities that are wholly lay-led, reflecting the strength, commitment, and creativity of our congregations. These groups run reliably and independently, offering fellowship, pastoral support, and opportunities for outreach, and they demonstrate the depth of lay ministry already flourishing across the Benefice.

St Oswald's has volunteer teams who lead children's holiday events, organise charity coffee mornings and help to celebrate and share the church's rich heritage. St Mary's is supported by a committed team who provide Winter Warmer Lunches for the community. St John's is enriched by volunteers who organise regular wellbeing craft sessions, music events and shared meals. Together, these groups demonstrate the generosity, imagination and dedication that shape the life of our Benefice.

St Oswald's

Coffee Stop

This friendly weekly session runs all year round in church on Tuesday mornings. A team of volunteers provides refreshments, including delicious home baking, quality tea and Fairtrade coffee. People of all ages are warmly welcomed regulars and visitors alike.

Breaking Bread

Breaking Bread is a shared soup and sandwich meal preceded by an optional Eucharist on a Thursday lunchtime. It is provided by a team of volunteers and children from Archbishop Hutton School help serve the food and drinks.

Monthly Charity Coffee Morning

The monthly coffee morning is held on the first Saturday of the month as a means of providing social opportunities for our local community and supporting charities at a time when fundraising is difficult. We offer the use of the church for a nominal fee of £20, provide a team to make and serve refreshments and help with running stalls where necessary. 9 of the coffee mornings per year are in aid of charities and 3 are used to raise money for the church itself.

Community Book Swap

The community book swap was created in response to the closing of the village library. Books are provided for adults and for children in our children's corner. Both are used frequently by the wider community and are greatly appreciated.

Family Activity Cafes

A family activity cafe takes place every half term and more regularly during other holidays. The aim is to provide fun, free, local family activities in a safe and welcoming environment giving opportunities for social engagement with other families. The cafes include Lego and Duplo, crafting and family games.



Links with Methodist Church in Warton

The volunteers from St Oswald's who are involved in children's ministry work closely with the Methodist church in the planning and delivery of their Messy Church which runs about 6 times per year. The Bubble Church team are invited quite regularly to provide the story (through the puppets) and songs.

The team also provide joint children's craft activities when there are village events on the school field feeling that it is important to demonstrate that the two churches are not in competition but are working together for all the young people in the village.

St Mary's

Since 2022 the St Mary's churchwardens have led a growing team of volunteers in providing fortnightly Winter Warmer lunches in the village hall. Homemade soup, sandwiches, cakes and hot drinks are served to gatherings of between 25 and 40 people from within and outside the church community. This warmth and companionship, together with the chance to win a raffle prize (!), is very much enjoyed by all who take part.

The proximity of St Mary's to Borwick Hall, an outdoor education facility, brings young people into contact with the church. The Bishop of Blackburn runs a 4-day Annual Youth Holiday there each Spring which culminates in a truly joyous celebration of the Eucharist at St Mary's. With the pews filled by over 120 people singing, praying and laughing, mainly schoolchildren from across Lancashire, led by Bishop Philip, St Mary's is enjoyed at its very best.

Faith-based discussion groups (known as "Inspire" and "Faith Matters"), relating the Gospels to modern day issues and events, were held in St Mary's until 2024. These provided meaningful opportunities for lay members and for those who do not regularly attend church to discuss matters of the day with the Vicar.



St John's

Friday Coffee offers a warm weekly welcome, with refreshments and friendly conversation in a relaxed, inclusive setting. It provides valued companionship—especially for those who may feel isolated—and has helped many friendships grow. We warmly welcome carers attending alongside those they look after.

Friday Coffee donates to local charities, strengthening our commitment to serving the wider community. On the second Friday, coffee is followed by a shared lunch, and on the fourth Friday a Fairtrade stall is hosted. The jigsaw and book swap remain popular features, adding to the sense of welcome and connection.

Special Birthdays celebrated by Friday Coffee



Jacob's 21st Birthday



Eva's 95th Birthday

Craft Evenings for Wellbeing

Our monthly Craft Evenings offer simple, enjoyable activities for all ages and abilities, from sea glass art to pompoms and seasonal makes. These sessions are as much about wellbeing, companionship and community as they are about crafting. People come to relax, chat and enjoy time together in a warm, informal atmosphere.

Crafternoon

Crafternoon meets on the second Wednesday of each month, offering a cheerful, welcoming space for people to chat, relax and enjoy simple crafts such as knitting, colouring, jigsaws and crochet. While the activities are varied, the heart of the afternoon is connection and companionship. The atmosphere is informal and supportive, helping to ease loneliness and foster new friendships.



In recent years, St John's has contributed generously to a wide range of charities, supporting the Children's Society, Practical Action, St John's Hospice, Christian Aid, the Bishop's Harvest Appeal, St Oswald's Junior Church, the Yealand Outdoor Games Area, and the RNLI through events such as Friday Coffee and a Summer Music Evening. In total, £3,375 has been donated, including Gift Aid - an encouraging reflection of the compassion and commitment of our congregation.

Mosamaria

The Diocese of Blackburn has had a link with the Diocese of the Free State, South Africa for 50 years. The Benefice is linked with the parish of St Mark & St George Senekal. Our churches fundraise regularly and contribute generously to Mosamaria trust which supports an orphanage in Bloemfontein. This provides shelter and care for children impacted directly or indirectly by HIV.

Fundraising for charities reflect our commitment to serving both our local communities and those in need further afield.

10 Finance and Stewardship

Finances

The two Parishes manage, account for, and report on their finances independently of each other. All three churches supplement voluntary income by means of fund-raising activities and events, fees, investment and sundry income. Each can readily cover their normal operating costs and indeed raise money for other charitable causes. However, each PCC is assessed for Parish Share by the Diocese of Blackburn, with the cost of the Benefice ministry/stipend element being divided between Warton and Yealand currently 80% being assessed on Warton. This division was agreed between the parishes several years ago.

A decline in attendance during and since the Covid pandemic means that RWA numbers, used by the Diocese for the balance of the Parish Share contribution, do not reflect current reality. The net result is that whilst the calculated Parish Share for Yealand of around £18k remains affordable by Yealand PCC, the PCC of Warton has in recent years had to negotiate a Parish Share rebate with the DBF around £20k lower than the £60k+ calculated using the standard DBF formula. The Warton PCC treasurer has sought assurances from the Diocese, not yet provided, that this unaffordable situation will not continue in the short to medium term.

The other principal demand on the PCCs' finances is, of course, the cost of repairs and maintenance of the buildings. All three churches are Grade II listed. In recent years numerous grants have been diligently and successfully applied for to cover the cost of reordering, improvements and essential repairs and investigations. In the coming months expenditure is required at all three churches, and, at the time of writing, grant funding has not yet been secured for all the necessary works.

The PCC of the Ecclesiastical Parish of Warton, with receipts more than £100k per annum, is a registered charity and its latest Annual Report and Financial Statements can be accessed on request and are available on the Charity Commission website. The Warton PCC benefits from reserves totalling over £110k, albeit that nearly £50k of this is restricted for fabric costs. St Oswald's and St Mary's church each have unrestricted reserves of around £30k but these funds are likely to be needed to supplement the restricted fabric funds for future property-related expenditure. Hence of necessity budgets remain tightly controlled by the treasurers.

11 Parish News & Social Media

The Parish News (Benefice Magazine) is published six times a year, with a special Christmas edition highlighting Advent and Christmas worship, events and celebrations across the Benefice. Each issue shares key church and community news, from all the churches in our area, upcoming activities, eco updates, and reflections that nurture faith and fellowship. It also includes reports from local groups, notices about village life, and adverts from local businesses, helping to keep the whole area informed, connected, and rooted in the life of the church. Jan-Feb Edition had a colouring competition that the local primary schools' children took part in; winning picture was on the front cover of the March-April Edition. Facebook is used to promote church services and publicise events across the Benefice, helping us reach the wider community effectively.



[United Benefice Warton, Borwick and Yealand](#)

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/1357309119334792/>

12 Vicarage and Education Options



The Vicarage is a well-presented four-bedroom family home situated in Warton, provided for the new incumbent. On the ground floor, the accommodation includes a spacious lounge, a second reception room with patio doors opening onto the rear garden, and a fitted kitchen arranged in an open-plan layout with the dining room.

A staircase leads to the first floor, where there are four well-proportioned bedrooms, one of which benefits from an en-suite shower room, together with a family bathroom.

Externally, the property offers a garage, driveway, and a generously sized front garden with distinct areas. The rear garden enjoys attractive views across the surrounding area. The vicarage is in a quiet cul-de-sac, set well back from the road, with impressive views of Warton Crag, and is approximately an eight-minute walk from St Oswald's Church.

Council Tax Band: C

Local Schools and Colleges

Warton, Yealand and Carnforth are well served by a range of primary and secondary schools, with further education opportunities easily accessible in nearby Lancaster and Morecambe.

Primary Schools

Archbishop Hutton's VC Primary School, Warton <https://www.archbishophuttons.lancs.sch.uk>

Yealand CE Primary School, Yealand Redmayne <https://yealand.lancs.sch.uk/>

Secondary Schools

Children from the Benefice attend a range of secondary schools, in Carnforth, Milnthorpe, Lancaster and Kirby Lonsdale.

Carnforth High School is the nearest secondary school for Warton, Yealand and surrounding villages, offering a broad curriculum and pastoral support. Website: <https://carnforthhigh.co.uk/>

Ripley St Thomas CE Academy, Ashton Road, Lancaster, Lancashire, LA1 4RS, operated by The Bay Learning Trust, is the nearest CE secondary school. Website: <https://ripleystthomas.com>

13 Further information from the Diocese of Blackburn

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

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.

In the last year, the Diocese has embarked on a major programme of listening to God and our communities as we discern where he is leading us next.

Our Centenary Prayer is:

**Heavenly Father, in our Centenary year
we rededicate ourselves and our Diocese to you.
Send the Holy Spirit to give us confidence in our witness,
generosity in our service, and love for our neighbours,
that your Church may be renewed and many come home to you,
through your Son our Saviour Jesus Christ.
Amen.**

You can find out more about our Centenary year by visiting our website:

[All for Jesus: Centenary of Blackburn Diocese in 2026 | The Diocese of Blackburn](#)

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