

Benefice of

EADBURY
with
EASTNOR

STATEMENT OF NEEDS

RECTOR OF LEDBURY and EASTNOR, DIOCESE OF HEREFORD

BENEFICE OF LEDBURY

STATEMENT OF NEEDS

The parishes of this benefice will present a range of opportunities for the right candidate. We look for a candidate who will respond to these opportunities. What you see below is an outline of areas in which we would welcome leadership and guidance.

We value the ministry of both men and women in our congregations and this post would not be suitable for someone who holds theologically conservative evangelical, conservative catholic or complementarian views. We would welcome applications from both male and female clergy for this role.

As parishes we have not discussed whether we might use the *Prayers of Living in Love and Faith* and we have not properly considered the issues around same sex relationships. We therefore do not have a clear view on these issues, having those in our congregations who hold diverse views. Any priest coming here must be willing to hold this diversity in tension and help us to come to a common mind. Someone with strong views on either side of the argument who is not prepared to be flexible in their own views or is campaigning on these issues would struggle in this benefice.

Responsibilities

1. Leading worship

We value:

- an approach that reminds us that we are in God's presence and open to the Holy Spirit;
- confident and reflective bible-based teaching, challenging as appropriate, and leavened with humour and illustration;
- teaching which leaves us with a clear sense of how we might better live our lives;
- the use of straightforward and accessible language;
- respect for more traditional services with which older members of our congregations in particular are familiar. We also recognise the need to make our churches attractive and accessible to people who have never, or seldom, been to church before. This may require new ideas and creativity in the style of worship. Achieving this balance is a challenge but one we would welcome help in meeting.

2. Team leadership and ministry development

- We welcome a consultative and collegiate approach to leadership which embraces the PCCs, retired clergy, Lay Readers and others in different ways at different times. A church is not a democracy, but the ability of a leader to harness the God-given ministries, skills and ideas of volunteers as part of decision-making is important to us;

- We will welcome support in helping to develop the body of volunteers and people with particular gifts in our churches. In Ledbury church, for instance, we are short of a parochial safeguarding officer, a data controller, a few lay members of the PCC, welcomers, people to lead intercessions and communion assistants. We hope that a combination of training and encouragement will help us to fill these gaps.

3. Leadership in mission

- We recognise the need for a more outward-facing focus for mission. There has not been an update of a strategic plan for mission in either of the churches since 2023, but we stand ready to play our part in formulating new strategies with the PCCs;
- A group, including church leaders, meets for prayer each week. We hope that our new rector will embrace this and other opportunities to work and pray with Christians across the denominations in the town;
- Ledbury Church has a good relationship with the Town Council. The rector can play a part in this. Other valuable existing or potential relationships are or might be with local schools, sports clubs and other clubs and societies in the benefice. Our relationship with other churches in the community is strong at grassroots level but needs to be fostered more effectively and energetically at leadership level if our joint impact in mission is to be truly effective;
- The rector is *ex officio* a member of various charitable bodies within the town.

4. Encouraging discipleship

- Our congregations are made up of mature Christians, those newer to the faith, those whose faith is under strain and those who are still yet to commit themselves. We recognise the need to help everyone develop their understanding of the gospel and of how they can grow as disciples of Jesus. This includes encouraging more people to take opportunities for further study and fellowship outside services;
- Those who teach and preach in different roles will need support to develop their ministry;
- We need further encouragement to be generous with our time, our talents and our money so that the needs of the church locally and further afield can be met. If this can be done joyfully and with gratitude, that is better still.

5. Pastoral care

- Each church has a strong pastoral care team which needs leadership and encouragement in supporting members of the churches and the wider community. We recognise that we need more people to be trained in this way to meet the needs we see around us.

6. Administration and parish organisation

- The rector is ultimately responsible for ensuring that all events within the churches are well planned and adequately staffed. In doing so we recognise that the rector will need to delegate much of this work to others. Effective delegation will be an important skill;
- Efficient sharing of information within the churches, and from them to the wider community, needs improving, and we look to the rector to work with the churches to achieve this.

7. Ministering in a wider context

- We expect the new rector to play a full part in the life of the Diocese and Deanery, attending meetings as required, and to establish mutually beneficial relationships with other clergy.

8. Self-discipline, spiritual discipline and own development

- We are looking for a leader who makes time for, and gives priority to, their own devotional life and to their relationship with God;
- The new rector should be ready to seek spiritual support from within our churches and from the structures offered by the Diocese. This will include recognition of the importance of the Ministerial Development Review, of meeting regularly with a mentor/spiritual advisor, of times of retreat and refreshment, and of continuing professional development in other ways.

9. Support we will offer

- We will welcome you warmly and help you to settle in as you adjust to the new role;
- We are committed to supporting and encouraging you and sharing the responsibilities of your ministry;
- We look forward to you sharing your vision with us as we share our vision with you;
- We respect that you need personal and family time, and will ensure that you have a regular day off. We see a realistic and healthy work/life balance as important;
- We will encourage and support you in your professional development;
- We will cover your prior agreed professional expenses;
- We view ministry as a collaborative venture with you as our leader, and assure you of the help and support of the PCC, churchwardens and congregation;
- We will pray regularly for you and with you.

STATEMENT OF NEEDS

FOR VICARS, RECTORS AND PRIESTS-IN-CHARGE

Personal qualities and skills	
Essential	Desirable
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ A person of prayer whose ministry arises from and is characterised by his/her relationship with God through Jesus. ■ A warm and outgoing personality and the ability to communicate easily with individuals and groups within the church and beyond. ■ A person who sees the church as serving the whole community and becomes known and respected throughout our parishes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ A person of vision, open to the Holy Spirit, who will lead us together in enabling people within the benefice to hear the gospel and to experience God's love. ■ An able preacher and teacher who will lead us into a deeper understanding of scripture and its applications. ■ A person with an ecumenical heart who will prioritise the nurture of relationships with other local Christian leaders of the churches and of LEAF.
Proven experience and competencies	
Essential	Desirable
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Experience of working in and managing teams and able to bring together people of differing views. ■ A consultative leader who delegates effectively. ■ A person who has experience of, and is comfortable with a variety of styles of service/ worship, and understands both urban and rural ministry. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ A person who is interested in making the very most of our church buildings and who will have ideas about their better use. ■ A person who is happy to engage with local schools, organisations and activity groups. ■ A person who is interested in training others.

As UKME /GMH individuals are currently under-represented within our Diocese – we would particularly welcome applications from these candidates.

