

Benefice of

EDBURY ASTNOR

with

THE PARISHES OF LEDBURY AND EASTNOR
are seeking a Rector



Parish Profile and Role Descriptor
Summer 2026



RECTOR OF LEDBURY and EASTNOR, DIOCESE OF HEREFORD

BENEFICE OF LEDBURY

The Right Reverend Richard Jackson, Bishop of Hereford writes:

Welcome to the Diocese of Hereford! We may be the smallest mainland diocese in the Church of England, but we think small is beautiful. It means you can know your colleagues and be known, and we hope supported to exercise your best ministry. We believe the local is the best place to discern God's call. Our parishes and benefices are the centre of the diocese not the Diocesan office. Our diocesan strategy seeks to unite us around a common purpose of 'Proclaiming Christ and Growing disciples' lived out in three values of Prayerfulness, Christlikeness and Engagement. We recognise our parishes and clergy are diverse and we encourage people to live out these things in line with their own giftings, individual and communal.

We have a rolling programme to help embed the values in our churches. 2023 was a year of prayer, with events around the diocese, including communion services on the hills covering every deanery, exploring prayer workshops and more intense times of prayer for our common life. 2024 was a year of faith, seeking to grow our discipleship, and 2025 was a year of outward looking engagement with our communities. In 2026 we are celebrating our 1350th anniversary!

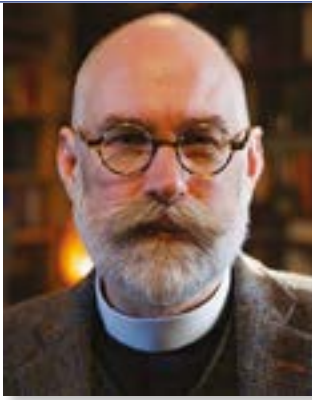
The senior staff seek to model these values and join with parishes in activities to deepen our spiritual life.

Ledbury is a parish with huge potential and an eager and willing congregation, ready for the next phase of their life together, both in the church community and in the wider town. We pray the next incumbent will be able to inspire, raise up and affirm the ministry of the whole people of God.

I hope you will feel led to join us in this beautiful corner of God's creation. May you know God's wisdom as you prayerfully consider this opportunity.

THE RT. REVD RICHARD JACKSON
BISHOP OF HEREFORD





LEDBURY DEANERY

The Rural Dean, The Revd Prebendary Dr Chris Moore writes:

Ledbury Deanery is a grouping of seven benefices, which, in the main, look to Ledbury as their market town. We are rural, but our location means that we do have good access to mainline railway stations and the M50.

The chapter is friendly and supportive, and given the small number of stipendiary clergy in our diocese, should you join us you'd find yourself as part of tight-knit group. Should you wish, there are plenty of opportunities to get involved in the wider diocesan life.

Chris

LEDBURY and EASTNOR

LEDBURY

Ledbury is among the top 10 towns to live in in England. Don't just take our word for it. The *Daily Telegraph* has us in their list, and we have appeared in others too.

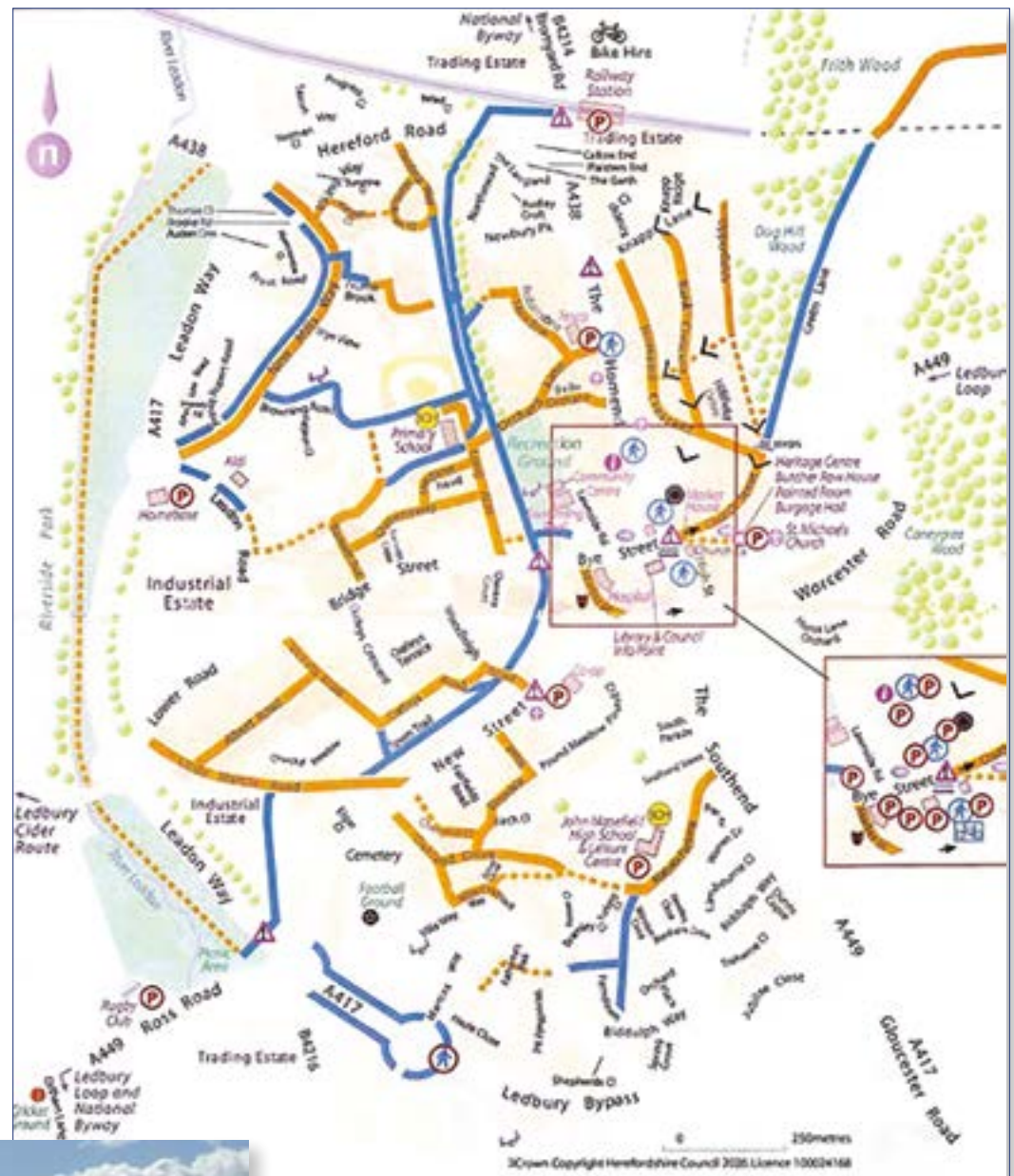
Ledbury is an historic and attractive market town of some 10,000 people, in Hereford Diocese, surrounded by beautiful, rolling, richly productive countryside. The village of Eastnor (population 300) lies 'over the hill' two miles due east of Ledbury. Both parishes lie within the beautiful county of Herefordshire, and are tucked into the south-eastern corner of the county, adjacent to both Gloucestershire and Worcestershire. The ancient Malvern Hills are only four miles from town, and provide some spectacular views. Herefordshire Council is a unitary authority, responsible for schools, roads and local administration. Ledbury Town Council is a parish council, and is responsible, among other things, for maintaining the churchyard and local footpaths.

Ledbury is connected to the wider world by a number of major roads. The M50 motorway lies four miles south, with onward motorway links to the Midlands, South-West and South Wales. Connections to the South-East lie via Gloucester and Swindon. Completion of the dualling of this road is due in Spring 2027.

Ledbury has a regular hourly train service to Birmingham, Worcester and Hereford, and four through trains daily to London via Oxford. There are regular bus links to Hereford, Ross-on-Wye, Malvern and Worcester, and infrequent buses serve local villages. The village of Eastnor has no public transport.

Birmingham and Bristol are our two nearest major airports; both are less than 90 minutes away.

MAP OF LEDBURY



The High Street.

Ledbury has a thriving community and is noted for the friendliness of its inhabitants, good locally produced food, and amenities including a theatre, swimming pool and recreation ground. There is a multitude of clubs, societies, choirs, bands and other activities such as the Civic Society, U3A, and sports clubs including rugby, soccer, cricket, bowls and tennis. Many of the sports involve children and their parents on Sunday mornings, leading to a conflict of interest for church families.

The area is well known for the number of artists and craftspeople, and Herefordshire Art Week (known as h.Art) takes place each September. The town hosts an annual poetry festival at the end of June/early July, which attracts A-list speakers. There are several delightful half-timbered buildings in the town, notably the 17th century Market House, the Old Grammar School and the Butcher Row Museum in the original core of the town, as well as the Feathers Hotel in the High Street and Talbot



ABOVE: *The Feathers Hotel.*

BELOW: *Aerial view of the town with St Michael's in the foreground.*

Hotel in New Street, which are 16th century coaching inns. This being Ledbury, New Street pre-dates 1288. The restored medieval Master's House houses the public library.

Ledbury is a popular town with tourists, and St Michael's attracts many of them. Last year the church welcomed around 12,000 visitors, providing a great opportunity for ministry. There is a wide variety of independent shops and cafes offering good food, good service and fascinating stock. There are three supermarkets, but these have not threatened the survival of local independent shops and services, which remain popular and well-used. The rural countryside and villages around tend to use Ledbury as a market centre and for services such as healthcare. There is good car parking in the town centre.

The area attracts many ramblers and cyclists. Ledbury lies on the Herefordshire Trail, a 150-mile signposted circular walk around the county, and on the Geopark Way, a 110 mile walk from Bridgnorth in Shropshire to Gloucester, and is close to the spectacular Malvern Hills. Within the town there is a network of attractive paths and cycle-ways enabling safe, traffic free movement all around town. Ledbury is close to Hereford, Gloucester and Worcester, our three local cathedral cities, which in turn host the annual Three Choirs Festival. In years when it is Hereford's turn to host the Festival, events have been held in St Michael's.





ABOVE AND LEFT:
*The Market House and
Charter Market.*



Farming and growing are major industries in the area. The largest business sectors within the town itself are light engineering, food and drink production, support for the agriculture industry and tourism. There are three light industrial estates in the town. Unemployment in the town is generally low, although there is some seasonal unemployment in agriculture. Despite pockets of poverty, Ledbury features among the least deprived 25% of output areas (as defined by the Office for National Statistics) across England. The crime rate in Ledbury, at 44 per 1,000 people, is well below the English average of 70 per 1,000 people.

The population has expanded in recent years, and continues to do so, with the construction of several new housing developments on the south-western and northern edges of the town. The absence of concomitant development of schools and health facilities has put pressure on those existing facilities within the town. This is a familiar tale across the country.

The nearest major hospital is in Hereford, 30 minutes drive away, but Ledbury has a Community Health Centre that provides cottage hospital services such as a minor injuries unit, physiotherapy and nursing home beds and Ledbury's one and only GP surgery.

Ledbury has two schools, Ledbury Primary School and John Masefield High School. There is a strong partnership between the church and both of them. Although LPS is not a church school, the Head and staff recognise the contribution of Christian volunteers and salaried staff in a range of activities that support both pupils and parents. This work is growing at JMHS too, where the Head is also very supportive of church involvement. An Open the Book team visits the primary school each week during term. We look to the new rector to play an active role in the encouragement and development of these relationships, both directly and through LEAF (see page 14).



The Malvern Hills

EASTNOR

Eastnor is a scattered settlement with a population of about 300. It is owned for the most part by the Hervey-Bathurst family. The village lies at the foot of the southern end of the Malvern Hills, within the Malvern Hills National Landscape.

Formerly sustained only by traditional agricultural and forestry activity, the village now has several businesses that employ local people.

RIGHT: *Eastnor village and church.*

BELOW: *Eastnor Bowling Club.*



The village has a thriving and top-rated parochial primary school and a cricket club with a modern pavilion, sponsored by the Sports Council. The club hosts matches for the Herefordshire County Cricket Club. The PCC has raised money with quiz evenings either at the pavilion or in the Great Hall at the Castle.

Eastnor Castle, a Grade I-listed regency mansion in the style of a Norman fortress, is open to the public in the spring and summer, with about 50,000 visitors a year. It hosts weddings, with some couples marrying in the Church, private parties and charity functions with occasional use as a film set. In 2025, an opera evening was held for the Herefordshire Historic Churches Trust, raising £3000 for the church. PCC meetings are also held there. The Hervey-Bathurst family live in part of the castle and run the estate with a management team.



The Deer Park, a Site of Special Scientific Interest which leads up into the Malvern Hills, is part of the estate and open to visitors and their dogs. A former sawmill at the village entrance to the park has been converted into a popular café, 'The Woodshed', for visitors. Numerous events are held in the Park, including Lakefest, a family music festival, and a fireworks competition. Recently, a section of the Berlin Wall has been installed on the site of a former Nissen hut as an added visitor attraction. A well-attended service of blessing for pets was held at 'The Woodshed' in 2025 and will be held again this year.

Visitors to all attractions or activities Eastnor exceed 200,000, some of whom visit the Church and give money via the card reader, and many combine their visits with time in Ledbury, which is connected not only by road, but also by an attractive footpath, which passes the church as it reaches the village.

MAIN PHOTO: *Eastnor Castle and lake.*

INSET: *Eastnor Gothic drawing room.*

THE DIOCESE OF HEREFORD

The diocese of Hereford is the seventh oldest in England¹, and celebrates its 1,350th anniversary this year. The Rt. Revd Richard Jackson is the 106th Bishop of Hereford and was licensed on 20 March 2020 at Hereford Cathedral, just three days before the UK entered the first national Covid lockdown. The diocese has the lowest population of any mainland diocese and, with 402 churches, the lowest population per church too.

There are two archdeaconries, Hereford and Ludlow. Ledbury and Eastnor are in Hereford Archdeaconry. The archdeaconry has seven deaneries, and Ledbury and Eastnor parishes are in the Deanery of Ledbury. The deanery consists of seven benefices, but 33 churches in total, most of them rural.

The parishes of Ledbury and Eastnor adjoin parishes within the Dioceses of Gloucester and Worcester.



ST MICHAEL AND ALL ANGELS, LEDBURY

The parish church of St Michael and All Angels in Ledbury stands magnificently in its large churchyard, reached via the network of narrow lanes and streets of the mediaeval town. As with six other Herefordshire churches, it has a detached tower (allegedly for better defence against marauding Welsh). St Michael's is one of only 300 parish churches across the entire country that have been identified by the Archbishops' Council as a 'Major Church', the next category below Cathedrals. It is described in the current edition of Nicholas Pevsner's *The Buildings of England: Herefordshire* as 'The Premier parish church of Herefordshire. . .'. Simon Jenkins includes the church in the top 100 of his 1,000 best English churches. The church and tower together are Grade I listed, and the Georgian gates to the churchyard are separately listed as Grade II. Both church and rectory lie within the Ledbury Conservation Area.

The majority of the church dates from the 12th to 15th centuries. It is claimed to be on the site of a Saxon foundation. St Michael's is a hall church; the wide north and south aisles are the same height as the nave. This gives the church a pleasant, airy feel. The vestry is in the former Trinity chapel, at the east end of the north aisle, and there is a meeting room off the north aisle (the toilets are off the meeting room). There is a separate 14th century room, with magnificent window openings and high roof, also off the north aisle, known as the Chapter House. There is, oddly, no evidence of there ever having been a chapter at Ledbury. St Michael's has many notable monuments, ranging in date from the 13th century to 1851. The spire, added to the tower in 1733, tops off at 202 feet. It is a landmark that can be seen for miles. The church is open every day, and there is a dedicated team that open and close it each morning and evening.

The church was heavily restored in the 1890s along Tractarian lines. This was not universally popular even at the time, and has caused difficulties since whenever change has been proposed. The church glass also largely dates from the 19th century.

¹After Canterbury, London, Rochester, York, Winchester and Lichfield in that order.

The church gas boiler failed in 2023. A faculty was obtained to enable the PCC to install a refurbished second-hand gas boiler, pending conversion of the church heating to a Net Zero compliant system in 2028. The refurbished boiler was installed in December 2025, and the church is now pleasantly warm again.

The church has been awarded Net Zero Demonstrator Church status by the Church Buildings Council, and has already obtained EcoChurch Bronze status. The church has had an array of 54 PV cells on the roof since 2011, which until the hike in energy prices in 2021 and again in 2022 more than paid the church's electricity bills. As part of the 'greening' project, the PCC is looking to install additional PV cells and to replace the existing ones, which are nearing the end of their design life.

BELOW: *New treble bell marking the centenary of the Armistice at the end of WW1.*

The church is in good repair. It is water and wind tight. Over recent years several major and a number of minor improvements have been made: the chancel and Chapter House lighting have been replaced and much improved, most of the external rainwater goods (gutters and downpipes) have been replaced, and a drop-down screen has been installed. The organ has been fully refurbished. Some of the pews have recently been fitted with castors to allow more versatility in the use of the area at the east end of the nave, for concerts and the like. This has proved very popular.

In 2018-21 the ring of bells was renovated, and increased from eight bells to ten. A display about the bells in the base of the tower is also very popular. There is an active ringing band, which rings before the main worship service every Sunday.



ABOVE: *Renovated bells returned to the Bell Tower.*

The current quinquennial period expires in 2026. The church was complimented by the inspecting architect who stated "The church fabric continues to be very well cared for and the church interior kept beautifully clean". Fabric work is in the charge of the Fabric Sub-Committee of the PCC, which is very active. Three pieces of work remain outstanding from the 2022 quinquennial report: refurbishing the

rooms over the north porch and meeting room, repointing the spire and relining the two roof gutters. The former cannot take place until urgent floor repairs are carried out to the room over the north porch. This work will take place in April 2026. Repointing the spire will require fund-raising, and such funding is currently more urgently needed for the Net Zero project. The roof gutter work has been delayed by the contractor appointed to carry out the work having gone out of business. A replacement contractor is being sought.

The church does not have a church hall. But there are a number of halls available for hire close to the church, and the church uses these to hold events in.



ST JOHN, EASTNOR

The church of St John the Baptist Eastnor is Grade 1 listed and the oldest parts are 12th Century. In 1851-2 Sir George Gilbert Scott rebuilt the church, with the exception of the tower, in early decorated style. It is built and lined in red sandstone and decorated with many ballflowers. Scott also designed aspects of the interior, including the font, chancel screen and a chalice. It has retained the original Victorian pews and choir stalls and is embellished by many memorials including beautiful stained-glass windows by Kempe with monuments by Scheemakers, Stuart and Westmacott. The organ, built in 1867 by Nicholson of Worcester. is considered to have a fine sound for a country church. The quinquennial has just been completed and the church is in good order.

The pretty churchyard is well maintained with a view to supporting wildlife through the mowing regime. A most attractive terracotta bench of five panels in one corner was designed by Lady Henry Somerset, then owner of Eastnor Castle.



Further information about the history of the church building can be found on the church website. There is also a discovery trail created with the assistance of The Arts Society which, although intended for children, has much interesting information.

In recent years we have focused on urgent repairs to the 13th century tower, which did not benefit from Gilbert Scott's restoration and improvements to the church's facilities to enable wider community use. These include an extension that houses a WC and storeroom, installation of a servery, a new oil-fired boiler, the addition of glass doors to the south porch, repair of the tower clock, installation of a PA system and Wi-Fi. Funding was provided by National Lottery Heritage Fund, a range of local and national charities, including the Herefordshire Historic Churches Trust, as well as fundraising by parishioners. A final phase of the project to restore the important stained-glass windows is being planned for 2026-27.

THE WORSHIPPING COMMUNITY

LEDBURY

St Michael's benefits from a varied worshipping community. We are the only Anglican presence in the town, and so need to cater to a wide range of expressions of churchmanship, and also to be the church that serves the civic community as well. There are 100 on the Electoral Roll.

Accordingly, we offer a range of services. There are two services each Sunday: an 8 a.m. said Book of Common Prayer service, and a 10 a.m. Parish Communion. Attendance at the 8 a.m. service tends to be around 11-12, that at the 10 a.m. service over 80 and increasing.

Normally clergy robe for services. Some minor aspects of ceremonial dropped at the start of Covid in 2020 have recently been revived. The elements are now taken to the altar during the gradual hymn, and the officiant is preceded by a crucifer once per month in a procession to the altar.



'Trent'.

On the second Sunday of each month, the 10 a.m service is lay-led. This is gaining in popularity. The church is dog friendly; we regularly get Jack, Pickles and Trent to our services, and sometimes others as well.

Once per month there is a Choral Evensong service, attended by some 30 or so worshippers. Our Director of Music has established a choir that leads this service, and a similar one that sings at the 10 a.m. service twice per month. Each Friday morning there is a Communion service in St Katherine's Chapel in the High Street, attended by around 10 people. This is usually led by a retired priest, of which the Ledbury area has many. St Katherine's Chapel is a small 14th century chapel, owned by the diocese, which St Michael's is happy to use for these services.

OCCASIONAL OFFICES:

| | BAPTISMS | WEDDINGS | FUNERALS |
|------|----------|----------|----------|
| 2023 | 1 | 3 | 16 |
| 2024 | 0 | 7 | 27 |
| 2025 | 2 | 3 | 16 |

St Michael's PCC is active, and assists the rector in the policymaking and administration of the church. It meets every two months, although additional meetings are held as necessary. Two groups report to the PCC: the Worship Review and Development Group and the Fabric Sub-Committee, which meet as necessary. Ledbury sends three lay members to the Ledbury Deanery Synod. There is no established link between the Ledbury and Eastnor PCCs.

Ledbury has a number of other Christian communities. The town has a Baptist church, a Methodist Church, a Roman Catholic Church and a Romanian Orthodox Church. A relatively recent addition to the Ledbury scene is the Kiln Church, which meets in Ledbury Community Hall. It has now joined the Evangelical Alliance.

Today there are many young eastern European families living in or near the town, and there is a local gypsy community. While many of the eastern Europeans are Roman Catholics, the GRT (Gypsy, Roma, Traveller) community uses our church for baptisms, weddings and funerals, and we would love to share more of our regular worship with them. The Romanian community in Ledbury is particularly strong, and the worshipping community has recently been established as a separate parish of the Romanian Orthodox Church. St Michael's has good working relations with them.

Ledbury has a Muslim prayer room. There is a small but increasing community, largely of Afghan, Syrian and Iraqi origin, in the town. There is no known Jewish worshipping community in Ledbury. The nearest Orthodox synagogue is in Cheltenham.

EASTNOR

We have services on the second and fourth Sundays of the month. These start at 11.15am, so that a minister could cover both Ledbury and Eastnor in an emergency. It is close to lunch time so the service is currently usually under an hour with a talk of about 10 minutes. Half the congregation stay for coffee, cake and chat. There is a sense of 'family'.



Service at St John's.

The service currently follows seasonal Common Worship Communion, and is produced in booklet form. Readers are chosen from the congregation as they arrive. Intercessions are currently led by the minister. There are some in the congregation who would like a service from BCP, but as there are two BCP services a week in Ledbury, the majority at St John's are from Common Worship. Revd Joan Wakeling has acted as local minister for 11 years. She has also presided at weddings and funerals and been involved with the school and the care home. There are two other retired clergy who enjoy leading worship at St John's.

We have a regular volunteer organist. The church is heated, but not very effectively. Members of the congregation help as needed to give out books, wash up, set up and clear away. The churchwarden arrives early to prepare the church. Revd Joan sends out an email with notices and news before each service to 60 people who have requested to be on the mailing list.

The Congregation varies between 18 and 32 in number and has been steadily growing in recent years. Numbers are higher at Christmas and at Remembrance (the memorial is inside the church). The last Carol service attracted 177 people, which is full capacity. Christmas day saw 47 gathered for worship. Weddings and funerals often fill the church. The recent addition of a sound system has made these large services more manageable.

In 2026 we have 5 weddings booked so far and 5 baptisms. Funerals are few, between 1 and 6 per year. About a third of the congregation live in Ledbury. Many wish now to be a member of both churches, attend Eastnor twice a month and Ledbury three times a month and are involved in activities at both churches. Others come from over the borders with Worcester and Gloucester dioceses.

LIFE OF THE CHURCH

LEDBURY

St Michael's is a busy church and we have a keen cohort of volunteers who are willing to help with the work.

As well as our regular programme of worship, we have held two series of monthly Thursday night talks and discussions on a range of topics broadly linked to the Diocesan Years of Outreach and Engagement.

There are weekly ecumenical prayer meetings at 7am and noon each Thursday. At our 2023 Parish Awayday prayer was identified as a priority and special events to encourage prayer are featured regularly. Quarterly prayer walks around the town have been appreciated.

Our Pastoral Care Coordinator works with a small team to keep in touch with those in need, including the recently bereaved. The annual Rosemary and Remembrance service provides an opportunity to remember loved ones who have died.

Baptisms have declined. Sadly, along with many other churches, we attract few children these days (usually just one to three per morning service). We would like to attract more. We have volunteers who faithfully prepare material for children each week. The church does not have a Youth Group for lack of young people attending the church.

A number of Home Groups meet weekly or fortnightly according to the group's wishes. Refreshments and prayer support are provided after the main service, and the team of bellringers are faithful in supporting the church.

LEFT: *Bellringers' practice.*

BELOW & INSET: *Family Activity Days.*





Easter lilies.

St Michael's supports the LEAF (Locally Encouraging all to Flourish) charity: members of the congregation volunteer for activities including Experience Easter, Summer Family Fun Days, Forest Fun sessions, an Alternative Halloween Party and an Advent Party, a number of which are hosted in the church building. LEAF is a local ecumenical Christian charity committed to enhancing the well-being of people in the Ledbury area, focusing on those in need and fostering a community where everyone can flourish, its work being centred around three key areas: Physical health, Emotional and mental health and Spiritual health. Ecumenical cooperation of this sort is a growing strength of the Ledbury Christian community. Interestingly, Ledbury Baptist Church has outsourced its outreach activity to LEAF. St Michael's is content to work with, and strongly support, LEAF, but maintains its own outreach work as well.

Our 'Giving Tree' at Christmas provides presents for those identified adults and children who would appreciate a gift. Christingle is a firmly established, well-loved and wonderfully supported service attracting over 400 from the town each year.

Several members are involved with the Ledbury Food Bank, giving time and expertise to this very respected and vital service to the community.

We have a strong link with a local Care Home, taking a monthly Communion Service, as well as celebrating Christmas and Easter with special services.

Each month activities include Coffee Stop, a popular and well attended event attracting members of the public, Praying litter pickers, a Mother's Union meeting, and a Parish walking group.

Every other month another group, Man Chat, attracts up to 18 men who meet for a meal and a chat at a local café. As an outreach event this allows links to be developed with non-churchgoers.

BELOW LEFT: *Christmas lunch.*

RIGHT: *Coffee Stop.*

An Advent Quiet Day and Llangasty Retreat provide annual events giving the opportunity for quiet reflection and spiritual renewal (Llangasty is a retreat house near Brecon).





ABOVE: *Christingle service.*

The church has links with the Church Mission Society and Leprosy Mission; an annual garden party raises funds for CMS.

St Michael's has a rich musical tradition which includes regular Saturday morning organ recitals as well as hosting the Ledbury Choral Society, Brass Band and other musical groups from time to time. Music is important, and appreciated by those who participate and attend, but has not yet led to wider involvement in the church by those who come to concerts, or events such as the annual Christingle service.

The Friends of Ledbury Parish Church contribute to the church finances. This charity raises funds through a varied monthly programme of events and the church book-stall. The Friends also organise visitor welcoming.

As the civic church we host an annual Remembrance Day Service, Town Civic Service, Town Carol Service and other civic services for special occasions.

BELOW LEFT: *Cascade of locally knitted poppies.*

RIGHT: *Remembrance Day parade.*

The Annual Report and Accounts gives fuller details of the work of church committees, organisations and activities.





EASTNOR



Eastnor Primary School holds assemblies/services weekly in the church and invites parents and grandparents a few times a year for special services and at these there are 100 children and 100 adults – full capacity and more.

We serve the local care home in Bircham's Grange with monthly communion services, home communions and individual visits. Sometimes the school send a group to join in services there. We welcome well behaved dogs and held a pet service in 2025 in the Deer Park. 60 came and most were not regular church attenders.

The church has also held quiz nights at the cricket club and concerts at the castle plus other smaller concerts in the church to raise funds for ongoing restoration works. The congregation and village are active in fund raising and charitable giving to support the church.

The bells have recently been refurbished and ringers come in from other towers to assist the small band of ringers at Eastnor.

Couples book the castle for their wedding reception and ask to be married in St John's. Many of them come from distant parts of the UK and even from abroad. Many therefore have to attend regularly for six months and this gives the congregation an opportunity to make them feel part of a church family.

FINANCES – LEDBURY

We aim to manage our finances to balance the needs of our community with caring for a large Grade I listed building. Some 32 members give via the Parish Giving Scheme, with a further 15 giving either by standing order or via envelopes. Others still make cash donations. Our contactless machine attracts donations from both members of our congregation and passing visitors to the church. Our finances are also supported by donations from those who attend our regular musical events. St Michael's has benefitted from a number of generous legacies.

St Michael's is a regular donor to our local ecumenical charity LEAF, as well as other local and national charities.

FINANCES – EASTNOR

Our finances are managed on the same basis as those of Ledbury. We receive income from Parish Giving (via which around a quarter of the congregation contribute), cash collections, contactless giving and fees from weddings. Together this income covers the church's running costs and a parish share. The church has accumulated reserves earmarked for future budgeted expenditure on maintaining the building, the organ and church yard.

The quinquennial review was completed recently without identifying any material defects and the church is in a good state of repair.

LOCAL TRUSTS

The rector will become *ex-officio* chair of both Ledbury Food Bank and Ledbury Consolidated Charities. The Food Bank is well supported and active; the trustees meet four times a year. The Ledbury Consolidated Charities give grants to individuals and charities for the relief of hardship. It conducts most of its business by email; the trustees meet formally once a year. The rector is Master of the Ledbury Almshouses and, as such, is required to host one communion service per week. This is the Friday Communion service in St Katherine's Chapel (see page 11).

The rector is also *ex-officio* a trustee of LEAF (see pages 14 and 16). The LEAF trustees meet quarterly.



MINISTERS

Revd Canon Tony Hodder is licensed as an Associate Minister whose focus as a Pioneer Minister is towards the community. His ministry includes being CEO of LEAF (Locally Encouraging All to Flourish). Tony is directed to community support through the work of this charity. He is available on a limited basis to help with leading services and occasional offices. Tony tends to be the main link between St Michael's and Ledbury's GRT community.

Mary Anne Keyes is an experienced Lay Reader whose ministry is much appreciated and well received.

We enjoy the vital support of a number of retired priests, including Revd Joan Wakeling, who officiates primarily at Eastnor. Furthermore, we can call on several other priests who minister in the two adjacent groups of churches in the Ledbury Deanery. Michael Llywelyn-Jones is a Lay Reader who has given monthly support to St Michael's in the past. Whilst not a member of our church, he chairs the Second Sunday Morning Worship Team.



ST MICHAEL'S LEDBURY MISSION

St Michael's has a mission statement: Worshipping God, Following Jesus, Sharing His love.

We want to be a welcoming church to which people feel drawn. We aspire to provide services where worship is attractive, supportive and inspiring on a personal level as well as a communal one.

Relationships, Reconciliation, Recognition, Reinvigoration

The rector of Ledbury has an opportunity to play a central role in the community. The town is expanding fast, bringing the challenge of reaching those moving into the new estates and integrating them into the church community. We would like our new rector to help us find new and imaginative ways to show the love of God to all the town, and to counter any perception that the church has little or nothing to offer.

The congregations of the various churches in the town work together to hold joint services and events such as the Good Friday 'Walk of Witness' and a Christmas lunch for older people alone at Christmas.

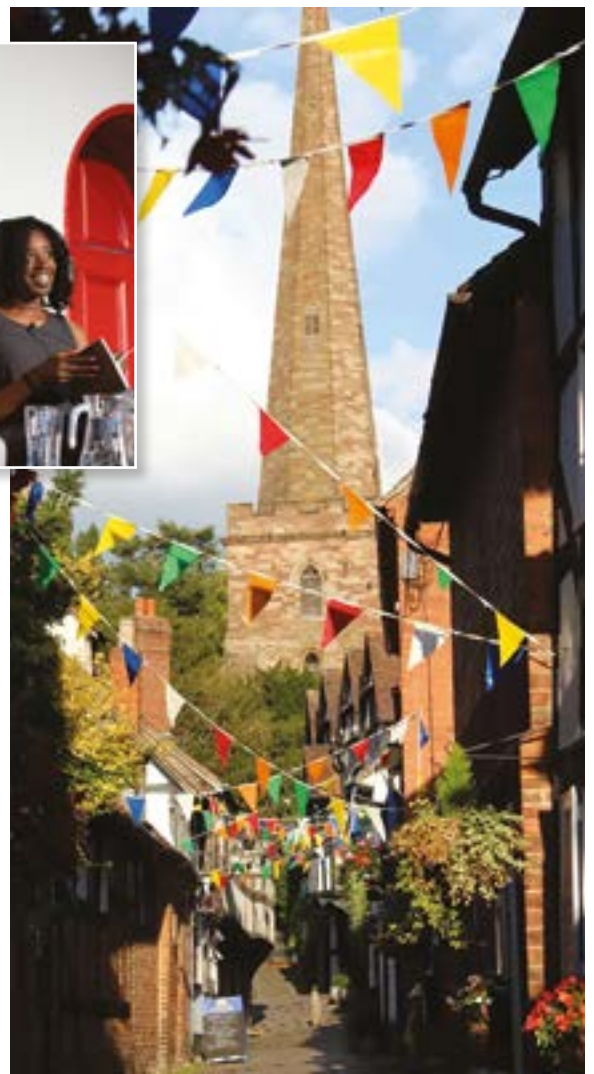


RIGHT: 'Walk of Witness' recalls Christ carrying the cross to Calvary.

FAR RIGHT: Church Lane during Ledbury Poetry Festival.

INSET: Poetry event during the Festival.

INSET CENTRE: LADS production of 'Daisy Pulls It Off' at The Market Theatre, Ledbury.



RIGHT: *Christmas lights turn on.*



BELOW: *St Michael's congregation.*



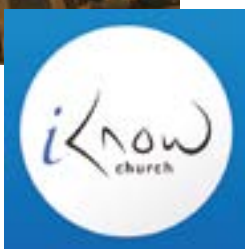
They also work together under the banner of LEAF. There is no formal Christians Together organisation in the town. We would like our new rector to help us develop even closer links with the other churches and with LEAF at both individual and institutional level.

As the only Anglican church, we see ourselves as having responsibility to cater for the spiritual needs of Christians from a range of church and theological backgrounds. The church offers middle of the road Anglican worship and teaching. We are looking for a rector who can explain clearly the truths of the Christian faith, and make them relevant to the daily lives of parishioners.

Our rector should welcome men and women playing equal parts in the life and ministries, lay and ordained, of the church. The church has not yet reached a view on Living in Love and Faith.

We offer a warm welcome to visitors, many of whom comment on the friendliness shown to them. Younger people continue to join us, but we have a preponderance of older members. This, however, also means that we have, between us, a wealth of life experience which, combined with faith and compassion, makes us very supportive of each other. We have a core of hardworking and faithful people, but overall, the congregation is stretched and would be encouraged by greater recognition for the work they do. Like many churches we are short of volunteers to extend our work, and we are trying actively to address this.

We would like the new rector to help us develop a reinvigorated sense of direction and purpose.



Communications, Care, Community

There is always scope for improving communication both within a church and with the wider community, and this is no less true of St Michael's. We use iKnowChurch as the main channel of communication with our congregation. There is currently no parish magazine; instead we produce a weekly pewsheet. We also produce targeted flyers and posters for specific events. We use messages on the local Facebook Group to advertise events.

RIGHT: *St Michael's Church organ*

INSET: *Ledbury Choral Society.*



BELOW: *Evensong Choir.*

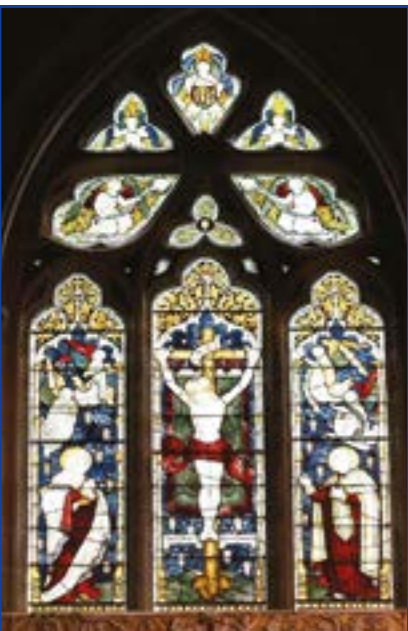


We are hoping that our new rector will bring leadership, visibility, and enthusiasm. We want to extend the relationships already established through work with older people, and with the primary schools, to attract young people and families to the church.

A lot of informal pastoral care goes on at individual level through, for example, house groups, and through our Pastoral Care team, but this is an area we could develop further.

The Director of Music has worked hard to develop a group of singers and she also arranges regular Saturday morning recitals and occasional concerts.

We have the advantage of a beautiful, historic and large building. We are conscious that we could explain it to people better through interpretation. This, and increased community use, could result in a closer understanding between church and community.



East window, St John the Baptist, Eastnor.

ST JOHN, EASTNOR MISSION

We try to be an inclusive church. We believe in being a church that welcomes and serves all people in the name of Jesus Christ; and that does not discriminate against people on any grounds. We do things, to the best of our ability, to express our devotion to God with patience and kindness. Some in our congregation, however, whilst accepting the above statement, are not happy about the blessing of gay marriages in church. We are hoping for a prayerful minister with a ministry of reconciliation, encouragement and healing and a willingness to follow God's leading. It is a privilege to mark significant moments in the lives of local people for baptisms, weddings and funerals.

We are keen to grow in faith, fellowship and numbers and to offer a variety of worship and events to which we can welcome anyone and everyone.

SAFEGUARDING

The Ledbury and Eastnor PCCs are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults. All post holders are expected to share this commitment.

All appointments are subject to acceptable pre-appointment checks, including a satisfactory Enhanced DBS with Barred Lists check.

We are committed to equal opportunities and diversity in Hereford Diocese and welcome applications from all suitably qualified clergy.

The church is seeking a Parochial Safeguarding Officer. Any potential issues are referred by the churchwardens to the Diocesan Safeguarding Officer.

RECTORY

Ledbury Rectory was built in 1958.

- Ground floor accommodation comprises an entrance hallway, cloakroom, sitting room, dining room, study, kitchen and utility room.
- Additional office accommodation with small kitchenette and toilet are located off the garage.
- First floor accommodation comprises four bedrooms with family bathroom and shower room.
- Parquet flooring extends throughout the hallway, study, dining room and sitting room.
- The property is heated by gas central heating.
- A single attached garage is located at the front of the property.
- The garden is laid predominantly to lawn with several mature trees.

The building complies with Green Guide requirements.

Vehicular access to the rectory is through the yard of an adjacent firm of solicitors, governed by a grant of easement and right of way. There is direct pedestrian access to the rectory from the churchyard. There is no separate clergy accommodation in Eastnor.

Weblinks:

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|---|---|
| St Michael and All Angels, Ledbury | https://stmichaelsledbury.org/ |
| SMAA 2024 Annual Report and Accounts | https://stmichaelsledbury.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/10/pcc-Annual-report-2024a-1.pdf |
| St John the Baptist, Eastnor | https://www.eastnorchurch.org.uk/ |
| Diocese of Hereford | https://www.hereford.anglican.org/ |
| LEAF (Locally Encourage All to Flourish) | https://www.leafledbury.com/ |
| EcoChurch | https://ecochurch.arochoa.org.uk/ |
| Ledbury Methodist Church | https://www.herefordshiremethodists.org.uk/ledbury |
| The Most Holy Trinity R.C. Church | https://www.ledburycatholicchurch.org.uk |
| Kiln Church | https://kilnchurch.com/ |
| Romanian Orthodox Church | https://roarch.org.uk/ |
| Friends of Ledbury Parish Church | https://friendsofledburyparishchurch.weebly.com/ |
| Herefordshire Historic Churches Trust | https://www.hhct.co.uk/ |
| Herefordshire Council | https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/ |
| Ledbury Town Council | https://www.ledburytowncouncil.gov.uk |
| John Masefield High School | https://www.jmhs.hereford.sch.uk/ |
| Ledbury Primary School | https://www.ledbury.hereford.sch.uk/ |
| Eastnor Primary School | https://www.eastnorschool.co.uk/ |
| Ledbury Food Bank | https://www.ledburyfoodbank.org/ |
| Ledbury Almshouses | https://www.herefordcathedral.org/almshouses |
| h.Art | https://www.h-art.org.uk/ |
| Ledbury Poetry Festival | https://ledburypoetry.org.uk/ |
| Malvern Hills Trust | https://www.malvern hills.org.uk/home/ |
| Eastnor Castle | https://eastnorcastle.com/ |

