

Associate Priest of the North Wakefield Benefice

I am delighted that you are considering the possibility of serving as the next Associate Priest in the churches and parishes of the North Wakefield Benefice. Population wise, this is the largest benefice in the Wakefield Deanery and, as such, the post of Associate Priest is a significant and important one within the Deanery and Episcopal Area. The benefice comprises four parishes and four churches: St Paul's Alverthorpe, St Mary Magdalene's Outwood, St Peter's Stanley and St Anne's Wrenthorpe, in suburban Wakefield. All four churches have prominent roles within their parishes and local people continue to look towards them to mark key events in their lives and the life of the community. The previous Associate Priest has recently been appointed as Vicar, and we are now looking to appoint a new Associate Priest to work with her in the leadership of this benefice.

Churchmanship ranges from Evangelical to Anglo Catholic, and the sacramental ministry of women is welcomed in all four churches. Each church has a variety of services each month, which include Morning Prayer, Services of the Word, Holy Communion/Mass and Communion by Extension. Service times have recently changed to better accommodate shared working. There will be opportunities for the new associate priest to lead their own areas of work and projects in partnership with the Vicar and other clergy, LLMs and lay leaders. The Associate Priest should have a pastoral and caring heart, supporting the congregations and families through the joys and challenges of life.

The history of coalmining in the area continues to be a significant factor in the benefice, while new housing and the benefice's excellent transport links and proximity to major employment centres have brought in large numbers of young families and commuters. In particular, the City Fields housing development on the north and east side of Wakefield, which partly falls within Stanley parish, represents a huge opportunity for missional engagement.

There are eighteen schools in the parish, and it will be important for the new Vicar and Associate Priest to work together to consider how best to maintain good relationships with these schools, as well as with the ten local care homes and Wakefield Hospice situated in Stanley.

Our Diocesan Vision is to nurture and equip confident followers of Jesus who will tell and live out the good news of Jesus, grow the church and transform their communities. In appointing to this post, we are looking for someone who has a joyful and confident faith with a track record of enabling the ministries of all baptised followers of Jesus, effective ministry among children and young people and positive community engagement.

Working closely with the Vicar, the Associate Priest will focus on:

- growing the congregations, spiritually, numerically, and in generosity,
- reaching out to the communities in mission and evangelism, especially to schools and to families,
- growing take up of occasional offices, and follow up from these,
- being a unifying presence across the benefice,
- engaging and energising the congregations, nurturing lay leaders, and encouraging active participation in church life,
- leading on specific projects as agreed with the Vicar.

The new Associate Priest will find the Vicar and other colleagues in the deanery and in the wider Episcopal Area to be friendly, enthusiastic and supportive in sharing the joys and challenges of ministry. As you prayerfully consider this exciting ministry opportunity may you know the guidance of the Holy Spirit and the peace of our Lord Jesus.

With every blessing

+ Malcolm Wakefield

Bishop of Wakefield

March 2026