THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND
Diocese of Leeds

Associate Priest of The Benefice of Pontefract
To be known as
Priest Missioner

ROLE DESCRIPTION

Role description signed off by The Ven Cat Thatcher, Archdeacon of Pontefract

November 2026

To be reviewed 6 months from appointment and 3 yearly thereafter

Details of post

Role title (as on licence):	**Associate Priest**
Name of Benefice:	**The Benefice of Pontefract**
Episcopal area:	**The Episcopal Area of Wakefield**
Archdeaconry:	**Archdeaconry of Pontefract**
Deanery:	**Pontefract**
Initial point of contact on terms of service:	**Archdeacon of Pontefract**

2 Role Purpose

Specific

The person appointed will

1. Share with the Bishop and the Vicar the responsibility, under God, for identifying and carrying out God's vision for ministry, mission and worship in the Benefice of Pontefract.

2. Be committed to building up the worshipping communities within the Benefice in discipleship, love, generosity, mission and numbers.

3. Work with the Vicar and other members of the clergy team to share pastoral responsibility for the people of the Benefice.

4. Carry out the normal day-to-day duties of an associate priest, including but not limited to, conducting occasional offices, presiding at the Eucharist at the times and places assigned on the worship rota, attending the PCC meetings in each parish, the Benefice Mission Steering Group and sitting on any additional committees as directed.

5. Will work in collaboration with the Vicar and lay leaders in developing and growing the mission of God within the Benefice. They will also have a substantial role in the continued shaping and execution of the overall vision for the Benefice now and into the future.

6. In partnership with the Vicar and others maintain and grow new partnerships and collaborative relationships that reflect the place the church has within the community, but also reflect the core vision of the Benefice – 'Strengthening Faith, Building Community'.

7. Have a heart for the four parishes and their distinct communities, and to develop and lead new projects focussed on these community, and create or strengthening relationships with them, as agreed with the Vicar and under his oversight.

8. Enjoy working with children, young people and families, as we continue to develop our existing ministry and explore ways in which we can reach out to others.

9. As and when required, stand in and act on behalf of the Vicar in his duties.

General

- To have regard to the calling and responsibilities of the clergy as described in the Canons, the Ordinal, the Code of Professional Conduct for the Clergy and other relevant legislation including safeguarding;
- To build up the Kingdom of God in the Benefice of Pontefract, and more widely in the Diocese;
- To promote the health of the Church and its growth in numbers, in spiritual commitment and in service to local communities;
- To have regard to the Diocesan Strategy, as expressed in the Barnabas Programme (https://leeds.anglican.org/how-we-can-help/barnabas-encouraging-confidence/), and to engage with the Barnabas team insofar as is relevant to the parish.
- To undertake any duties that may reasonably be required of the role.

3 Key Working Relationships

- The Bishop of Leeds
- The Bishop of Wakefield (with responsibility for the Wakefield Episcopal Area)
- The Archdeacon of Pontefract
- The Vicar of Pontefract
- Ordained and Lay Leaders of The Benefice of Pontefract

Supportive:

• Clergy Counselling Support

4 Health and Wellbeing

The Diocese of Leeds is committed to promote the wellbeing of our clergy and their households in terms expressed in the Church of England's Covenant for Clergy Care and Wellbeing. We also expect our clergy to manage their time well to ensure that they:

- Take a regular day off each week, trying to ensure that this includes the preceding evening and if the weekly day off is compromised for whatsoever reason, to take a day off in lieu;
- Take their full annual leave allowance each year (six weeks holiday plus Bank Holidays, or time in lieu of Bank Holidays);
- Pay attention to their spiritual wellbeing, including daily prayer and Bible reading, reading / learning in general, quiet days and an annual retreat;
- Build collegial relationships across the Deanery, Episcopal Area and Diocese;
- Engage fully with their annual Ministerial Development Review and Continued Ministerial Development and Education;
- Advise the Vicar of Pontefract, Area Dean, Archdeacon or Area Bishop as early as possible of any health, stress or anxiety concerns;
- Engage in a continuous learning relationship (e.g., work mentor, spiritual director, peer group) which supports and encourages their ministry. The Area Bishop or Archdeacon can provide a directory of spiritual directors and mentors should this be required.

The Diocese of Leeds works with Health Assured, our Employee Assistance Programme, in delivering a confidential, professional source of support, including a helpline and counselling services, to its clergy and spouses.

Despite the reference to 'Employees', the programme provides services closely suited to the needs of clergy. Details can be seen at https://www.healthassured.org.

The HR team at Church House are also available to talk through any issues or questions. For further information, go to the diocesan website: Ministry Wellbeing - Diocese of Leeds or ring this free and confidential helpline: 0800 028 0199.

5 Archdeacon's Comment

Our vision as the Diocese is about confident clergy equipping confident Christians to live and tell the good news of Jesus Christ. For all of our appointments we are seeking clergy who have a joyful and confident faith which has inspired a track record (however defined) of church growth. In return we offer a helpful and creative Diocesan Team, focused within the Barnabas Initiative (https://leeds.anglican.org/how-we-can-help/barnabas-encouraging-confidence/), ready to support imaginative ministry in the parish.

The New Benefice of Pontefract came into existence 1st May 2024, and is made up of four parishes, five churches and currently has a population of c.50,000, which is set to grow further with the creation of new housing developments within the area.

The Benefice of Pontefract is a busy and active group, with two 2* listed churches and two unlisted churches as well as a daughter church based within a community centre. Pontefract is a traditional mining town, and over the past two decades has seen massive regeneration which

continues today. The Benefice is a mix of severe deprivation through to areas of affluence, and as such has a mixed demographic.

Additionally, Pontefract is a town steeped in history, having not only its own castle, where it is believed that King Richard II died, but also being the site of a series of sieges during the civil war. One of our churches, All Saints, was the church connected to the castle and destroyed in the 17th century, then in the 1950's the new church was built within the ruins of the old church, and has been developed into the church it is today.

Pontefract is still a market town, and has an active Civic Society, who the church works closely with, and the churches take part in events such as the Heritage Open days, the annual Liquorice Festival, where St Giles, see around 2000 people pass through during the weekend, and other annual events, that attract people to our town.

With three train stations and situated right next to the M62 there are excellent travel links to all the major cities in Yorkshire as well as a high-speed rail link to London. Within the Benefice there are eight primary schools, two high schools, North East Wakefield 'New' College, The Prince of Wales Hospice, Pontefract Hospital, and is the home of the Haribo factory!

We have churches set in Rural, suburban and Civic contexts, and the churchmanship is as equally varied from more evangelical to Anglo Catholic. The churches are in a mix of condition ranging from excellent to one sitting on the 'at risk' register with a number of building projects in development and others in progress.

All of these elements make The Benefice of Pontefract an exciting opportunity for the right candidate.

The Vicar of Pontefract is now looking for a new Associate Priest (to be known as Priest Missioner) to be a partner in the Gospel and further the missional outreach of the Benefice. Working throughout the Benefice, the successful candidate will have a heart for mission and reaching out to those on the periphery of faith, and engage with those who are searching.

To enable the Priest Missioner to focus upon the wider mission of the Benefice, the Vicar will undertake the significant part of the administrative responsibilities, including those legally prescribed.

The Priest Missioner will carry out the normal functions of a priest in a Benefice (e.g. leading worship, carrying out occasional offices, attending PCCs and other relevant meetings) as well as at times standing in at Civic and Parochial events as required, and leading on projects as agreed with the Vicar and under his oversight.

There will be a need for the new Priest Missioner to focus on:

- growing the existing congregations, spiritually and numerically
- reaching out to the community in mission and evangelism, especially to older folk, families and to the occupants of the new housing estates in the Benefice
- growing children's and youth ministry
- engaging with people throughout the Benefice

- investigating how resources can best be used to engage with the residents of Chequerfield
- strengthening the relationships currently enjoyed with the schools, and continuing to forge new ones.
- Working together with the Vicar
    - building wider missional links within the Benefice, including civic and other business opportunities
    - investigating new ways of reaching those on the fringe and periphery of the church

The Deanery of Pontefract comprises parishes with a similar history and demographic, and the new Priest Missioner will find a supportive and friendly welcome in the clergy chapter. We expect the new post holder to work with a spirit of generosity in sharing wisdom and insights about ministry within the Deanery of Pontefract and across the Episcopal Area.

All new appointees in the Diocese are required to undertake:

(i) the diocesan induction programme which includes diocesan training for safeguarding children and vulnerable adults,
(ii) a course on presence and engagement in the context of other faiths, and
(iii) the residential "*Leading Your Church into Growth*" course (LYCiG).

Leading your Church into Growth (LYCiG) and Jesus Shaped People (JSP) are two excellent initiatives born in this Diocese and now adopted in other Dioceses. They have enabled church growth and developed confidence in congregations. Newly appointed clergy are required to book onto a LYCiG conference within 12 months of their appointment, and ideally to attend with some people from their parish. Experienced mentors and training are available to new incumbents to make the most of LYCiG and JSP.

The accommodation offered will be the Vicarage in Carleton Parish, further information can be found in the application pack, and prior visits, if necessary, can be arranged via the Archdeacon's PA. Please contact Anne Sparks Anne.Sparks@leeds.anglican.org