THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND
DIOCESE OF NEWCASTLE

Role Description: Benefice of Walker

1 Introduction

The role description gives an outline of the responsibilities of a position. These may develop while someone is in post and this document will need to be kept up to date. It should be reviewed as necessary at Ministerial Development Review, alongside the setting of objectives.

2 Details of post

2.1 Role title: Vicar of Walker

2.2 Name of benefice: Walker

2.3 Patronage: The Bishop of Newcastle

2.4 Deanery and archdeaconry: Newcastle East; Northumberland

2.5 Initial point of contact on terms of service: The Archdeacon of Northumberland

3 Role purpose: General

3.1 To share with the Bishop in the cure of souls.

3.2 Ever prayerful and mindful of the responsibilities laid upon you in the Ordinal, the Canons, national Safeguarding policies, and all other relevant legislation, in accordance with the Archbishops' statement *Guidelines for the Professional Conduct of the Clergy*, your ministry will be shaped by the Diocesan vision Seeking, Sharing, Sending and marked by a generosity of spirit, an engagement with the people and situations you serve, and an openness to the promptings of God's love.

3.3 Your priestly vocation demands the careful preparation for, and the leading of public worship, the imaginative proclamation of the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ and the loving service of all God's people entrusted to your care. Together with your priestly colleagues and lay ministers, you will work collaboratively to enable the gifts of all God's people to be developed in the Service of his Kingdom.

3.4 In your priestly ministry you will take an active part in the Diocesan strategy Seeking, Sharing, Sending. This will include collaborative parish conversations and planning for mission and ministry as well as working with colleagues across the Deanery and more widely in the life of the Diocese. A number of supports are available to you through the provision of pastoral supervision, spiritual directors and Continuing Ministerial Formation programs, and you will be expected to participate in the scheme of Ministerial Development Review.

3.5 Above all, you will remember that we are called to minister by a gracious, generous self-giving and loving God, as together we seek the Kingdom, share the faith, search for truth, serve our neighbour and follow Jesus in his suffering love for the salvation of all people.

Role Purpose – Generic and Specific

3.6 To take responsibility for pastoral care, occasional offices and leading of regular public worship in the parish of Walker Christ Church and to explore greater collaboration with the neighbouring parish of St Anthony's.

3.7 To build upon, and strengthen, existing relationships with clergy and congregations across the Mission Initiative Newcastle East (MINE), the Bishop's Mission Order covering six parishes in Walker, Byker and Walkergate. As MINE goes through a re-visioning process, to prioritise working together to discern areas for partnership in mission across the BMO, in activities such as schools' and youth work and tackling food poverty.

3.8 To engage creatively with the community through existing relationships and to seek out new missional opportunities and discern potential for new worshipping communities.

3.9 To encourage the congregation to grow in faith and in numbers through preaching, worship, teaching, prayer, and service to the community, and to lead the parish in the development of its vision and strategy for growth.

3.10 To grow and develop an active team, recognising the talents and skills of lay people, and where appropriate making links into the diocesan authorised lay ministry initiative. This is particularly important for the area of pastoral care.

3.11 To encourage and develop existing work with children and young people in the church and build on engagement with local schools, particularly those in the Church of England Academy Trust.

3.12 To engage with social justice issues in the area through engaging with local initiatives and actively listening to local concerns.

3.13 To lead the parish and church community into creative and active partnership with the deanery in a time of change, to be open to closer cooperation with neighbouring parishes and communities than previously expected in the sharing of wider responsibilities in mission. Active engagement with Deanery Chapter, Synod and the Deanery Development Group is expected.

3.14 To be pro-active in ensuring that you continue to access new resources for your ministry and that personal spiritual nurture, refreshment and development is given priority.

Key contacts and relationships

4.1 Generic

a. The Bishop of Newcastle and the Archdeacon of Northumberland;
b. The Churchwardens and the Parochial Church Council;
c. The Deanery Chapter and Synod.

4.2 Specific

a. MINE licensed colleagues, congregations and the MINE Council;

b. Head Teachers, pupils and staff of local schools, particularly those in the Church of England NE Academy Trust;
c. Leaders and Trustees of local community groups and projects, particularly those currently using parish buildings;
d. Local councillors and MPs.

4.3 Supportive

a. The Archdeacon of Northumberland;
b. The Area Dean, Lay Chair and colleagues in the Newcastle East Deanery;
c. Pastoral supervisor and spiritual director.

5. Role Context

Walker still bears the hallmarks of its heritage as a neighbourhood serving local industries and with a sense of pride in this. The church building itself reflects this heritage whilst seeking to respond to the rapidly changing social issues around it. There are several projects in the parish currently seeking to regenerate housing and local businesses and the Pride in Place funding presents significant opportunities. Walker has good links to the city centre and to the coast and attracts support from local government and other agencies making it a diverse and lively place to live and work.
The congregation are welcoming and generous, closely embedded in their community. They are keen to work with clergy to grow the church and increase the positive impact of the church locally. Christ Church is already a trusted partner in many community initiatives. There are already good links with the people of the neighbouring parish of St Anthony's (confusingly titled Byker) and it is hoped that these will be strengthened whilst the future of St Anthony's building is being explored. The MINE church partnership is a source of support and encouragement for mission and ministry in the area. Whilst ministry can sometimes feel fragile there is a great deal of faith, warmth and energy alongside a pragmatic approach to being church in this place.

6 Benefice summary as at time of compilation

Number of parishes	One
Churches and listing	Christ Church, unlisted
Parsonage	4 bedroomed house 10 minutes' walk from the church
Other buildings	Church hall attached to the church
Churchwardens	One
Ministers (including local ministry)	No licensed ministers. Support from a retired priest with PTO Part of the Mission Initiative Newcastle East (MINE) Bishop's Mission Order
Population (2021 census)	9,216
Usual Sunday Attendance	31
Parish Share (2025)	£8,600
Resolution under the House of Bishops Declaration on the Ministry of Bishops and	No

Priest?	
Church tradition	Traditional eucharistic worship with vestments.
Pastoral Reorganisation Proposals	The BMO allows for collaborative working across the six parishes in MINE. There is a proposal to explore a closer pastoral partnership with the neighbouring parish of St Anthony's.
Outreach/service to the wider community	Strong links with local schools, including a church school; Work with other local community organisations; Church hall provides a community facility.
Business element	Some income from church hall users.
Ecumenical links	None at present due to recent church closures.

7 Review

The Archdeacon will review this role description with you when you have been in post for six months.