



BENEFICE OF GRASMERE; BENEFICE OF RYDAL (HELD IN PLURALITY); RYDAL HALL



Welcome

'The loveliest spot that man hath ever found...' (William Wordsworth)

This is an exciting opportunity to work with the combined parishes of Grasmere and Rydal and with the Diocesan Centre of Rydal Hall. The Hall provides a wonderful opportunity for Christians and other groups to come together to experience a wide range of activities in a beautiful setting.



Village and Place

Grasmere

Grasmere is a friendly village with multiple societies, a strong WI with over 70 members, and an active Village Hall which organises well attended events. The village is celebrated as the home of William Wordsworth who spent his later life in both Grasmere and Rydal. The family grave is in the churchyard. Today, Wordsworth Grasmere is a vibrant part of the village and an international centre for the study of Wordsworth.

<https://wordsworth.org.uk/>

The Primary School is excellent and a short walk from both the Church and the Vicarage. <https://www.grasmereschool.com/>

There are two secondary schools nearby: Keswick School and The Lakes School in Troutbeck.

In addition, there is a Post Office, Village Store (Co-op), Pharmacy, the famous Grasmere Gingerbread Shop and many cafes. It is a wonderful place to live!

Rydal

Rydal, in the heart of the Lake District, has strong Wordsworth connections and provides the access to Dora's Field, the church has major links with tourism.

Rydal is a hamlet comprising approximately 60 properties spread over six miles. There are approximately 12 second or holiday homes. There are no shops and no school but there is a pub, three hotels and two guesthouses.

The main community building is Rydal Hall where some village activities take place. Most of the inhabitants work locally or are retired.

Hill farming and tourism are important to Rydal. Farmers make their living mainly from sheep but also a few cattle, with their farm buildings on the edge of the village. Rydal Mount, Wordsworth's best loved family home, and just up the hill above St Mary's, is open to visitors for tours and meals. It is also licensed for civil weddings.

Getting About

Although a rural community there is a regular bus service between Lancaster, Kendal and Keswick. The nearest train station is 9 miles away at Windermere, with the main West Coast line at Oxenholme. Manchester airport is approximately an hour and a half away. The M6 motorway is within 25 miles.

St Oswald's Church, Grasmere

Set in a sheep farming area, Grasmere is one of the leading tourist villages at the heart of the central Lake District, now The Lakes World Heritage Site. Grasmere's current resident population is 500 – 600, amplified by a significant number of holiday lets, hotels and second homes. St Oswald's is a mediaeval church on a 7th century site - a sacred place of prayer and celebration since the earliest days of North British Christianity. St Oswald's continues to offer worship, music, festivals and poetry today. The patron of St Oswald's Grasmere is The Queen's College, Oxford.

The core congregation is made up of retired professionals complemented by visitors to the areas. On significant days, we attract a large congregation, for example, 110 members for Easter this year. Each Christmas Eve and Good Friday we have held outdoor services. The weekly service has traditionally been Holy Communion but we now hold an 'Open Church' service, led by members of the congregation, on a fortnightly basis.

A Parish Magazine is produced by the church and appears bi-monthly. <https://oswaldparish.news/>.

Every two months the congregation runs a Parish meal catering for over 50 people from the community. The village celebrates a traditional Rushbearing festival every July inviting locals and visitors to process through the village with rush and flower-covered bearings.



St Mary's, Rydal

We describe our worship as liberal catholic tradition using Common Worship Order One. The PCC supports the ordination of women. Congregation numbers vary for the Sunday morning Eucharist between summer and winter. During the summer, with visitors from the campsite and the Bunkhouse, numbers can rise to 40 but a typical winter average is 10. St. Mary's has a garden of rest, with an open policy about eligibility for interment of ashes in it.

For many years we have been holding monthly Taizé-style services on the first Sunday of the month. These candle-lit services, with their singing of distinctive prayer chants, are attended by many who travel quite a distance. For some of the congregation this is the only contact with 'organised religion' that they have. The opportunity for meditation and prayer in a busy world is highly valued by those who attend. The organist and one of the Churchwardens currently lead these services. Our Taizé-style services are an important part of our mission –we know that some visitors who come to this service talk about wanting to introduce something similar in their own churches.

We hope that our new priest will develop the partnership between Rydal Hall and St Mary's, working with the Management team at the Hall and the resident community. We hope that the community will take part in worship in the church.



Music in the Parish

Music is a key part of the Church and has grown in strength since the restoration of Grasmere's Church Organ in 2023. We are very fortunate to have Ian Hare, a nationally recognised organist, to lead music at Grasmere. This year there is a full concert programme, including choral music, organ recitals and concerts from the Lake District Summer Music.

Mission Community

We are part of the Central Lakes Mission Community and we are keen to develop our relationship with the other churches in the Mission Community. The types of service at St Mary's Rydal and St Oswald's Grasmere are different, and while neither parish wishes to lose its individuality, both churches recognise the advantages of working more closely together. We pray for a priest who will help us to make the whole more than the sum of its parts.

Grasmere and Rydal Services

Sunday Church Services

Weekly Church Services are as follows unless advertised separately:

9.30am Holy Communion at
St. Mary's Rydal

11.00am Sunday Celebration at
St. Oswald's Grasmere

Taize Prayer is every first Sunday at
7.00pm at St Mary's Rydal



Rydal Hall



Rydal Hall is the retreat and conference centre of the Diocese of Carlisle - a unique venue that is open to all regardless of faith or background - set in 30 acres of tranquil gardens and woodland. It's a place of restoration and re-creation, with spaces to reflect, to listen, and to respond to God's call.

The Diocese recognises the enormous missional value of Rydal Hall, not only through its regular programme of Christian activities and retreats, but also with its potential for innovative ministry to the many thousands who annually pass through the grounds as part of their enjoyment of the National Park.

In addition to the 30 bedrooms in the Hall itself, guest accommodation comprises 2 holiday cottages, a self-catering bunkhouse sleeping 28, and an extensive back-to-nature campsite, which includes wooden cabins.



The Work Involved

The Chaplain will play an active role in engaging with the staff as well as guests and those passing through Rydal and its grounds.

To Encourage those who do have faith to be active in that faith in Rydal.

Deliver ministry to the whole site as well as support and mentor interns.

Follow Daily - Establish a regular programme of prayer and worship appropriate for different levels of faith, this will be part of our Follow Daily. Forge the Rydal Hall community which is made up of our live in staff as well as those who live out, board members and volunteers

Care Deeply – Working with the General Manager, lead and implement Rydal Hall’s programme: retreats, quiet days, church groups. As well as a programme of bursaries.

Speak Boldly – Build a network of speakers and create a clear expectation of what to speak about. Help shape a network of groups staying at Rydal in addition to the local community and enable more connections with under-represented groups

Tread Gently - To enable more sustainable ways of using our resources here at Rydal and help develop the use of St Mary’s Church.

Assist in expressing a Christian viewpoint on environmental issues.

Link Rydal Hall with the wider Church, Deanery and Diocesan Schools.

The key relationships

Rydal Hall General Manager .

Chair of the board (Archdeacon of Carlisle) and board members.

The Bishop.



Who are we looking for in our parishes?

We are looking for someone who:

- ◆ Will give us spiritual leadership, pastoral care, inspiration in our worship and guidance with our role in the Central lakes Mission Community.
- ◆ Show a commitment to mission and pastoral ministry for local residents and visitors.
- ◆ Have a desire to see the Church grow: by uniting the church, the community and the C of E Primary School.
- ◆ Values the traditional service format but has an openness to develop services which are innovative and accessible.
- ◆ Offers strong leadership with good administrative and organisational skills.

We can offer strong lay support. Both congregations have grown and matured during this and previous interregnums and want to see people come to know the love of Christ, and for the Church to be an integral part of village life.





Who are we looking for as our Chaplain?

We are looking for someone who:

- ◆ Has an enthusiasm for Rydal and to embrace our vision.
- ◆ Is an outgoing natural evangelist who is hands on and is energetic in supporting Rydal.
- ◆ Offers strong leadership with good administrative and organisational skills.
- ◆ Has the ability to build networks and who is willing to work with a variety of Churchmanship.
- ◆ Is comfortable working with a range of ages especially reaching those in the growing younger strategy including youth groups and universities and their Chaplains.
- ◆ Has discernment and wisdom and is able to nurture people spiritually but also not afraid to be direct and straight-talking.
- ◆ Is hospitable
- ◆ Is willing to engage with pioneers and pioneering.

Willow Bank Rectory

The Rectory is located near Dove Cottage, in Town End, at the edge of Grasmere, and just a short walk from Grasmere Church.

Originally built in the 1970's the detached four-bedroom house is undergoing extensive renovations to the highest environmental standard, with solar panels, underfloor heating and a new kitchen. The views from the house are stunning, looking out over the village and further afield to the mountains, including Helm Crag.



Buildings

- Both churches are in good structural order
- The most recent Quinquennial inspection for both churches was 2021/2022
- The renovation of the tower at Grasmere church was carried out approximately 4 years ago.
- In addition, Grasmere is planning to install a new kitchen area, and social space within the church and a new toilet facility externally.

Finance

- The Parish share is paid in full. In 2023 St Oswald's contributed £30,000 and St Mary's share was £4,700.
- The financial reports for both parishes are attached.