

Parish Profile

# ST MARY WESTFIELD

Workington Deanery

House for Duty Appointment



## St Mary, Westfield

# WELCOME

In this profile, you will find:

- An introduction from the Bishop of Carlisle
- A summary of our amazing story
- A pen portrait of the parish
- Information about St Mary's Church
- The Person Specification
- Information about your home

Thank you for your interest in this exciting role in the Diocese of Carlisle. The Diocese of Carlisle is committed to the God for All vision. Launched in 2015, it is underpinned by a commitment across four denominations in Cumbria (the Church of England, Methodist Church, The Salvation Army and the URC) to see God's Kingdom flourish across the county. The vision is based on four values:

- **Follow Daily** (helping each other to follow Jesus more closely)
- **Care Deeply** (serving our communities and challenging injustice)
- **Speak Boldly** (sharing our faith in Jesus in everyday ways)
- **Tread Gently** (seeking to sustain and renew the life of the earth)

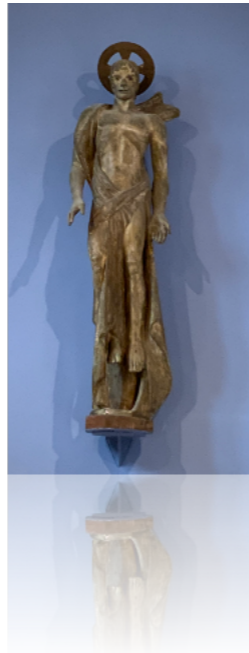
Mission Communities are the way in which the Church in Cumbria seeks to live out the God for All vision. They are deeply collaborative groupings of churches - between denominations, between clergy and laity, and between different communities - working together to proclaim afresh the gospel to each generation, faithful to its tune but improvising together to create new melodies for our place and time.

We are looking for clergy who resonate with this, who love God and love people, who will look outwards into the community in mission, help people grow in faith and who will enable the faith and gifts of all. If this stirs something in you, we'd love to hear from you.

+Rob Carlisle



# BY GOD'S GRACE, ST MARY'S CHURCH IS ON A BREATHTAKING JOURNEY OF TRANSFORMATION.



The pioneer priest who oversaw this transformation has moved on to a new calling and we are now seeking to take forward the leadership of this church with two appointments:

- A House for Duty priest-in-charge;
- A Community Hub Mission Enabler (lay pioneer)

Both of these posts will work collaboratively to build on the group of leaders who have emerged in this place. The parish has formed a close working relationship with the neighbouring benefice of Harrington & Distington and their Rector, Revd Dom de Mattos, as well as a group of emerging leaders within the parish of Westfield.

Three years ago, it was a church building that was underused in an area that felt quite overlooked. Just three years later, this is a story of quite astonishing growth in many ways: a busy parish centre and hall, with social groups and new worshipping communities with 80 plus regularly making this their home and a Sunday congregation that has grown from 6 to 25-35. This is a church that has reached a whole community with the welcome of Christ and is bringing transformation.





How did this happen? The answer isn't just good ideas, or sudden investment, but through prayer and focusing on Jesus. Longed-for change, faithful prayer, some good practices and an inclusive welcome, inspired by the Holy Spirit, has opened the door for an amazing work of God in this place.

This is now a time of change as the much-loved priest who oversaw this astonishing first phase of our transformation, has moved on to a new calling. But her leadership enabled considerable participation with many people becoming involved in the life of this church at various levels. Many have grown into positions of leadership, but do not necessarily yet see themselves as leaders.



You will work with the lay pioneer to be appointed Community Hub Mission Enabler to develop the life of this parish and enable the ministry of the developing indigenous leaders in this place. A copy of the Community Hub Mission Enabler job description is attached to this profile, to give you a flavour of how the two roles might work together. Ideally, we are seeking a candidate who is also interested in applying for the Church Planting Lead post in Carlisle Diocese. Although not formally combined, we believe these two posts will provide the successful candidate with the opportunity for sustaining priestly and planting ministry alongside a part-time specialist diocesan role.

# A PEN PORTRAIT OF THE PARISH

Westfield is a post-industrial area, immediately south of Workington, with a population of around 6,000, a high deprivation index and (by Cumbrian standards) a high population density. In recent years, Housing Associations have been using demolition and new-build to accommodate increasing numbers of young families in low-cost housing, and to provide elderly people with bungalows or apartments.

Within St Mary's parish are remnants of the coal mining industry and the site of the Steelworks which was famous for making railway lines and exporting them around the world (railway motifs can be seen in St Mary's church). The site was cleared in 2009 and is to become an urban village-style housing development. The area is seeking to adjust to the loss of heavy industry by regenerating itself as a retail centre and by attracting manufacturing, chemicals, and service industries, and light engineering to support the 'Energy Coast' initiative.





The parish contains a Care Home, two Sheltered Accommodation sites and 2 schools (Nursery & Primary). Fantastic links have been re-established with Westfield Primary School. Church representatives go into the school every week (terrific for a non church school) to take collective worship and there is a weekly wellbeing nurture group run by church volunteers. Once or twice a term the assemblies take the form of an Open the Book presentation by a team drawn from Harrington and we are looking to draw volunteers from a wider area including people in Westfield. Monthly communion services take place in the care home.



There is a weekly mental health group, currently being remodelled slightly towards a renew wellbeing cafe, currently being led by Rev Ruth Illman, who of course was formerly chief educational psychologist for the county. There is a Tuesday morning toddler group 'Jelly Tots' run by a team of mothers supported by the two interns (who provide the bible story element) and volunteers who do the catering and crafts. A Connect group meets on a Thursday evening.

There is a very strong Churches Together fellowship group in Workington that meets weekly for prayer, and who join together for missional activities at various points during the year.

# ST MARY'S CHURCH

The church, which was opened in 1889, has a traditional Victorian sandstone exterior which belies the gem of a modern light interior produced by a re-ordering in 1958. Pews of Agba and light oak provide a seating capacity of 160. The Chancel contains choir stalls, a pipe organ (not in use) and a modern electric organ. Behind the altar hangs a much-admired modern sculpture of the Risen Christ by a distinguished Cumbrian artist, Josephina de Vasconcellos, who also produced a striking modern depiction of Christ on the Cross, flanked by Mary and John.

In St. Cuthbert's Chapel, the sanctuary Lamp is a converted Coal Mining lamp. The base of the altar rail, and steel detail in the floor, are made from railway track, made and given by the Steelworks, whose workers also designed and donated the outdoor Steel Rail Cross in the Church garden.

The network of church halls includes a professional catering kitchen and a comfortable meeting room. A further detached hall in the grounds, currently let to the Workington Amateur Boxing Club is in the process of being sold to the tenants.



The grounds of the church include a Garden of Remembrance which is still in use. A dead space at the back of the church has been transformed into a community garden and the excellent network of church halls has sprung back to life with extensive new groups and new worshipping communities.

Between Wednesdays for breakfast, cake and craft, and coffee mornings, Jelly Babies, and the Community Choir, over 200 people regularly come through the doors of this community space, but it is at 'Monday at 4' that most of our children, parents and carers have found their home.

Alongside the new worshipping communities, the regular Sunday congregation has grown from 6 to 25-30 and the PCC has been reborn. St Mary's has joined the Inclusive Church network and won an Eco Church Bronze award. Its churchmanship has broadened from its Catholic roots to incorporate charismatic worship in an inclusive evangelical tradition.

The different styles of worship reflect a diverse growing community, held together with a quasi-monastic model: based on a theology of hospitality and welcome, all the spaces, and the groups that gather in each, function in a shared life that makes visible the work of God in the world.



# PERSON SPECIFICATION

We are praying for a priest who will be:

- A prayerful shepherd of this parish, leading us faithfully in the ways of Christ;
- An inspiring and creative teacher of the faith;
- A collaborative leader, enabling the ministry of others;
- Excited by the diversity of worship styles and able to handle the challenges of a growing church;
- Able to see Christ in every person coming through our doors and able to love us in Christ's name;
- Passionate in telling the story of what Christ is doing in our lives and in this community;
- deeply steeped in Christ, with spiritual maturity and depth of theological insight;
- Effective within the time constraints of a House for Duty post, by drawing on the gifts and contributions of others, building up the whole body of Christ.



# YOUR HOME

The Vicarage is situated next door to the church in the Moss Bay area of the parish. It has a large garden adjoining the church garden. Because of its position sited on a hill it enjoys views of the Solway Firth and Southern Scotland. The house was built in 1958. It has four bedrooms, a fitted kitchen, lounge, dining room and separate study; it has gas central heating and double glazing. There is a garage and parking space for four cars.





*Carlisle Cathedral "Under the Stars" project at St Mary's, 2025*

Thank you for considering this post. An application form can be found on the website of the Diocese of Carlisle:

<http://www.carlislediocese.org.uk/>

For an informal conversation, please contact the Venerable Stewart Fyfe, Archdeacon of West Cumberland on 07552 428772 or [Archdeacon.West@carlislediocese.org.uk](mailto:Archdeacon.West@carlislediocese.org.uk)