



THE CHURCH
OF ENGLAND
Diocese of Southwell & Nottingham

CLUSTER ONE

River Idle Benefice
Blyth, Scrooby & Ranskill
Oswaldbeck
Idle & Sands



RURAL CLUSTERS

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BACKGROUND

Led by the desire to share the living hope that is found in following Jesus Christ (1 Peter 1:3) we are on a mission to grow new disciples with compassion confidence and courage. We believe that this vision is as relevant in the rural villages of our diocese as it is in our other contexts. We are also aware that there are some particular challenges in our rural parishes and we have spent time developing a plan that we hope will enable the church to grow and flourish into the future. While we understand the challenges in rural ministry, we are excited and motivated by the many opportunities that we see. However, the church needs to reach out to people outside of its usual congregations, grow younger and be future focused. As a diocese we are committed to supporting and developing ministry in our rural communities. We have spent time reviewing our learning and have identified several things that work well, including a focus on schools, strategic planning of resources, and the development of contemporary styles of worship, alongside the more traditional forms and styles.

We are drawing on examples of good practice in the rural where we have seen growth – Connect Church in school (Farnsfield, Aslockton); The Potting Shed Church (work with schools, children, families and youth); River Idle benefice (multi-parish benefice, with a focus on children's and families work)

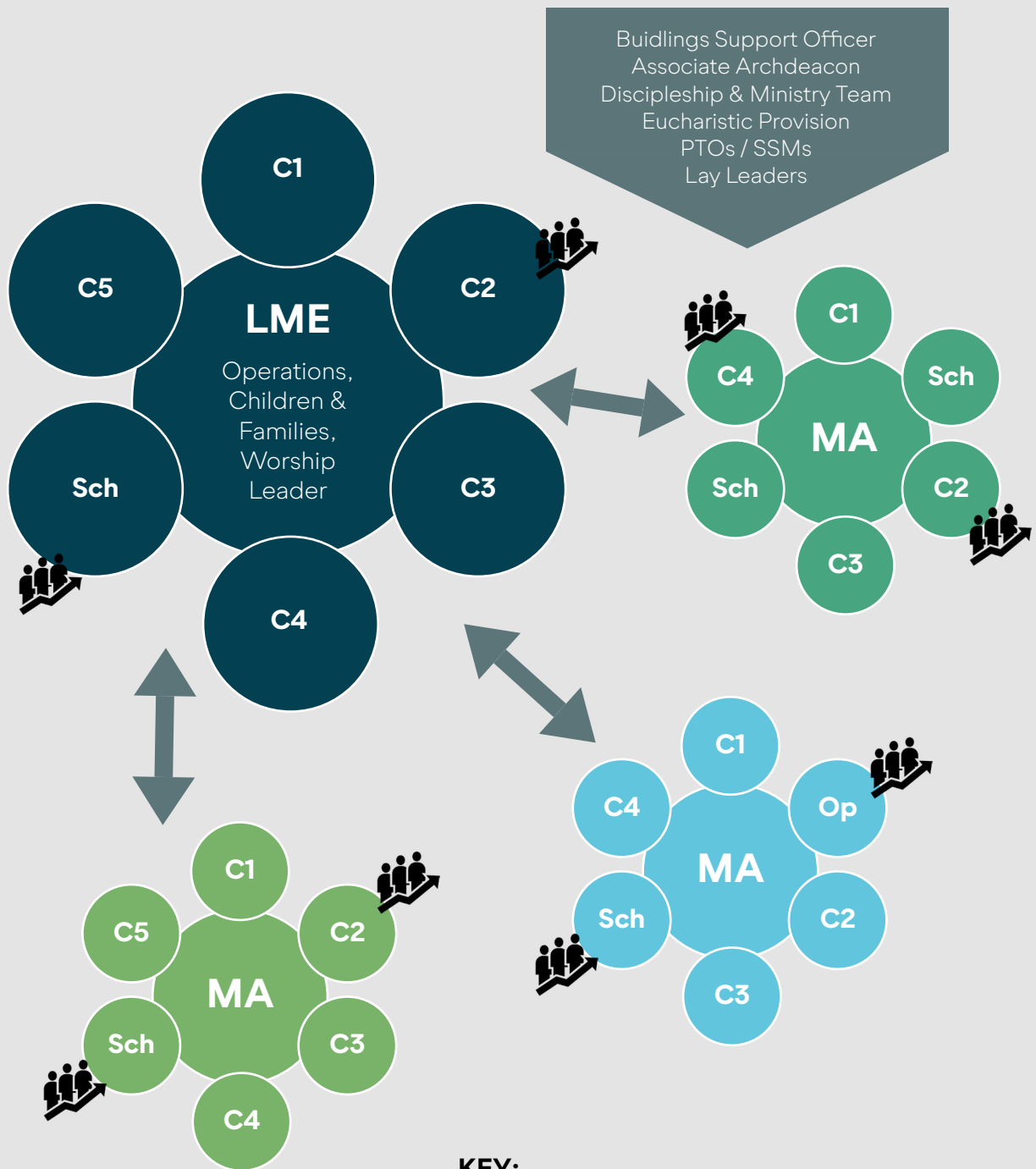
We are proposing a new model that draws together several (likely 3 or 4) benefices into a new cluster. Each cluster will have a priest who will act as lead mission enabler (LME) who will lead the strategy and vision for the cluster, and priests who will be mission associates (MA) focusing on leading one of the benefices. In addition, we have proposed a combination of other roles that can support the cluster (this may include an operations manager, children and family's leader, contemporary worship pastor). These roles will be funded by our successful bid from the national church through the diocesan investment programme.

We are looking for several mission associates to come and help us deliver this innovative vision. These posts will be time limited (initially for 3 years with a 3-year extension) with the hope that they can become permanent posts beyond this point.

We are piloting three clusters. This pack provides the information for Cluster 1.

RURAL CLUSTER PILOT MODEL

The model below demonstrates how this pilot will work.



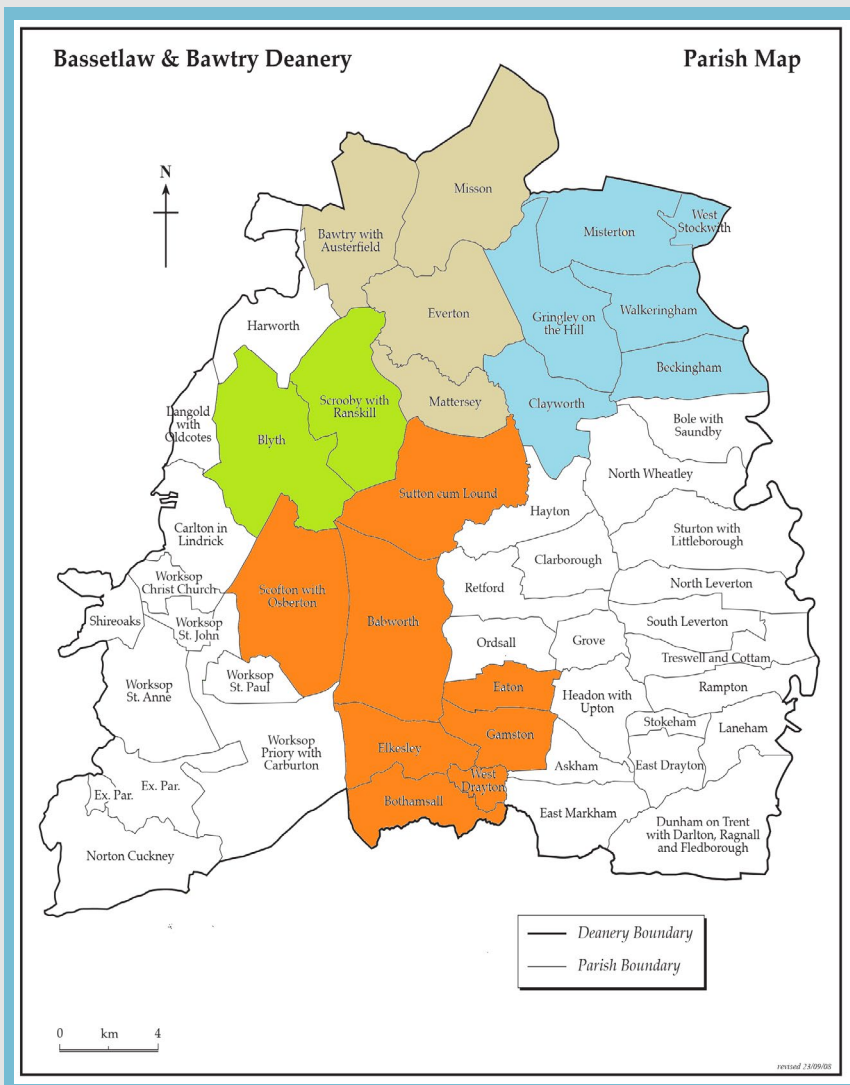
KEY:

- LME = Lead Mission Enabler (ordained)
- MA = Mission Associate (ordained)
- C1 = Church 1
- Sch = School
- Op = Other Opportunity
- = New Worshipping Community

LOCATION

Situated in the north of the diocese, wrapping around the town of Retford, cluster one is comprised of 4 benefices:

- 1. **River Idle Benefice** (Bawtry with Austerfield, Mattersey, Misson, Everton)
- 2. **Blyth, Scrooby & Ranskill**
- 3. **Oswaldbeck** (Gringley-on-the-Hill, Misterton, Clayworth, Walkeringham, Beckingham, West Stockwith)
- 4. **Idle and Sands** (Sutton cum Lound, Scofton, Babworth, Elkesley, Bothamsall, West Drayton, Eaton, Gamston)



PEOPLE

The Lead Mission Enabler will be **Revd Becky Hancock** (pictured right) who is currently the vicar of the River Idle Benefice.

We have opportunities for 3 mission associates (Priest-in-Charge roles) in Blyth, Scrooby and Ranskill, Oswaldbeck and Idle & Sands benefices. The MA role at Blyth, Scrooby and Ranskill will work with and provide some additional support to the Lead Mission Enabler.



There are **23 churches** in this cluster serving a population of **22,259**.

There are **6 C of E primary schools** and 9 non-church primary schools.

The villages are home to families who have lived there for generations, as well as those who have moved to enjoy this rural context more recently.

The benefices enjoy **good links to the A1 and the East Coast mainline railway** and because of new housing developments, attract those commuting to neighbouring towns and cities (Lincoln, Doncaster, Sheffield) as well as those further afield (York, Leeds and London).

OPPORTUNITIES

We have some good links with the schools, but these need to be developed with more effective pathways to faith. Many of our churches have few or no children attending on a Sunday and few young adults, but we have good relationships that can be built on to enable greater connections.

We consider that in this cluster, initial opportunities can be found with the schools at Gringley-on-the-Hill, Blyth and Gamston.

CENTRES OF STRENGTH

These will be places where a new worshipping community is planted, focusing on reaching younger and to new people - those who are not currently part of a worshipping community (the de-churched or un-churched), with the gospel of good news that faith in Jesus Christ brings. [As recent research suggests](#) new things tend to reach new people.

These centres will share the following characteristics:

- Create a space where people can encounter God
- Focus on those who may be unfamiliar with the church (outreach)
- Desire to build a place of inspirational worship (likely to be contemporary worship style)
- A clear plan around discipleship pathways, beginning with a generous welcome, outreach events, explorer courses and pathways that enable a clear route from initial contact to full participation.
- A culture that understands what it is to be a disciple of Christ in the rural context in the 21st Century.

A place that can act as a hub for teaching, training and social gatherings for the whole benefice.

We envisage that in this cluster, potential centres of strength could be developed at Gringley-on-the-Hill Church, Blyth or Ranskill churches and Gamston Primary School.

Location (residence) of the 3 mission associate posts in the vicarages at:

- Misterton (Oswaldbeck Benefice)
- Blyth (Blyth, Scrooby and Ranskill Benefice)
- Elkesley (Idle and Sands Benefice)

OUR BENEFICE

The Parish of Idle and Sands, Retford (the benefice) was formed in August 2019 and comprises the former parishes of Babworth & Ranby, Scofton with Osberton, Sutton-cum-Lound, Bothamsall, Eaton & Gamston, Elkesley and West Drayton. Despite the challenges of the pandemic and the departure of its incumbent in 2020, lay leaders worked to ensure that ministry and mission continues to flourish in our communities, where we believe God is truly at work. Congregations in some churches have now grown above pre-pandemic levels, and 36 baptisms and 22 marriages have taken place across the benefice since it formed. Seven candidates have also been put forward for confirmation. Community support continues to be strong as evidenced by the generous giving which has enabled two of our churches to complete major re-ordering projects.



OUR LOCALITY

Our benefice is situated close to the historic market town of Retford in North Nottinghamshire. Retford is surrounded by charming villages, and our parish covers several of these. Set in beautiful surroundings featuring farmland, woods and rivers, these also offer many local opportunities for walking, cycling, running and even wild swimming!

The demographics of our villages are changing. Whereas most traditionally served farming communities, new housing developments and the conversion of farm buildings into residential dwellings have meant an influx of younger families, particularly thanks to our area having excellent road and rail transport links which enable people to commute to work. We expect this trend to continue as flexible/remote working patterns and the desire to move out of urban areas encourage people to seek a more rural lifestyle. This brings significant opportunities to grow new disciples, particularly through our schools.

OUR MINISTRY & MISSION

Lay leaders in the benefice, many of whom have undertaken training for leading worship, take an active role in the liturgical life of the churches in the parish, offering a variety of services ranging from family services, morning and evening prayer and special services such as Christingle and Hymns & Pimms. They work together closely as a team, sharing resources and working to put together a monthly service rota which encourages congregants to travel for services between the villages whilst also meeting the needs of each community. In addition to services in church, there are other areas where ministry has flowed out into the communities including messy church, school collective worship, school choirs and forest church.



OUR CHURCHES

There are **eight open churches** within this cluster including a modern Chapel of Ease at Ranby, an estate church at Scofton and buildings with medieval features at Babworth and Sutton-cum-Lound. All Saints' Babworth is notable as a Pilgrim Church which attracts many visitors each year, particularly from North America. The churches and churchyards are well-cared for, and in 2024 St Bartholemew's Sutton-cum-Lound completed a re-ordering project to add toilet and kitchen facilities as well as improvements to its bellringing tower.

The church buildings at Elkesley and West Drayton have medieval features where the churches at Eaton and Bothamsall which were rebuilt by the Victorians. The churches and churchyards are well-cared for, and in 2023 All Saints' Eaton completed a re-ordering project to add toilet and kitchen facilities. This is enabling All Saints to accommodate a wider variety of worshipping styles for all ages and they have recently launched services aimed at children and families with the opportunity for food, faith and fun. There is also an additional church, St Peter's Gamston, which is now under the care of the Churches Conservation Trust. The building is closed for public worship but, following a £1.3 million restoration project, it re-opened in 2022 for visitors, special events, and worship/activities for the village school.

To complement worship in church, more informal/contemporary services and activities have also taken place in the village halls at Elkesley and Bothamsall. This includes Alpha and Lent courses as well as Messy Church. More traditional church-led activities such as harvest suppers and door-to-door carol singing also take place in some villages. The churches are also very proactively involved in supporting their local and wider communities throughout outreach activities. This includes hosting book swap libraries and collecting donations for the local Foodbank and other charities that meet the needs of struggling families. There are also links between the church at West Drayton and the residential care home in the village.

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GOOD NEWS STORIES

ST JOHN'S SCOFTON

Originally built as a private memorial chapel for Osberton Hall, St John's is now the parish church for the hamlet of Scofton on the Osberton estate.

Despite the small population that it serves, St John's has a large congregation for its regular services which continues to grow. People from the towns of Retford and Worksop and surrounding villages are attracted not only by the church's beautiful setting, surrounded by parkland which radiates peace and tranquillity, but also the outreach work undertaken by the church to engage with the wider community. In recent years, this has included an annual Rogation Walk followed by tea and a service, summer concerts with Pimms and cream teas, a pet service and annual dog show, and an annual Road Peace service to remember those killed or injured in traffic accidents. The Allegra Voice Choir which was formed at the church in 2019 also continues to regularly perform at its services, and the year culminates with a carol service featuring a donkey who likes to join in the singing and who is a great favourite with the children! People of all ages who come to these special events and services often return for regular worship throughout the year.

ST BARTHOLEMW SUTTON-CUM-LOUND RE-ORDERING

St Bartholemew Sutton-cum-Lound completed its re-ordering project to add kitchen and toilet facilities in 2024. This is enabling the church to accommodate a wider variety of worshipping styles for all ages as well as making the building more welcoming and accessible. Already, the new facilities are supporting the re-vitalisation of the church, with so many new people joining the congregation that leaders are increasing the number of lay-led services each month to meet this increased demand. The facilities are also making the building more accommodating to the pre-school children who visit the church on a monthly basis, and are also helping to strengthen links with the village primary school with its Messy Church and choir. Popular special events run by the church on an annual basis including arts festivals and a Christmas tree festival also serve to ensure that St Bartholemew's remains at the heart of its community.



VOLUNTEERS AT ALL SAINTS EATON

In Eaton, when the Parish Council withdrew its grant for churchyard maintenance, the churchwardens at All Saints decided to turn this financial challenge into an opportunity. They established a monthly working party where volunteers from the local community were invited to help out with mowing and weeding on a Saturday morning in return for refreshments and fellowship. This has developed into a valued opportunity for the community to come together to socialise and attracts people of all ages including many who have not worshipped in church apart from occasional festival services. It has resulted in new connections being made between people as well as with their church. Following a conversation, one regular volunteer decided to come along to an informal lay-led Hymns & Pimms service and is now worshipping regularly. These connections and opportunities to try different worshipping styles have continued to develop with the addition of toilet and kitchen facilities and has resulted in a re-vitalisation of the church community. Congregations are growing, and in 2023 and 2024, All Saints put forward three candidates for confirmation. The church now offers regular all age services which attract families from the parish's primary school, and it also acts as a community hub in the absence of a village hall, hosting a popular monthly coffee morning, children's holiday clubs, Spring and Christmas Fayres and other events and social activities.

FAMILIES IN ELKESLEY

Elkesley is the largest village in our cluster with a population of 852. It had a predominantly agricultural economy until the opening of the nearby Bevercotes colliery in the 1960s. This brought an influx of families to a new purpose-built housing estate in the village, many coming from mining communities in Wales and the North East. A primary school opened in 1961 to serve this rapidly growing population, and the school and wider community have long enjoyed close links with the church. However the closure of the colliery in the 1990s has resulted in increased levels of deprivation amongst families in Elkesley, with a third of pupils at the primary school currently being eligible for Free School Meals. In recent years, work has been undertaken by church leaders to engage with and support these families. A children's book exchange was established at St Giles and toys donated at Christmas were collected by a charity that supports deprived families. A 'mini church' at St Giles for pre-schoolers and their families was established, and this grew into a popular Messy Church in the village hall run by volunteers, with food provided for children and adults. Forest Church also took place in the ancient woodland, once part of Sherwood Forest, that borders the village. Church leaders also organised a popular Easter trail around the village which incorporated a service, food and children's activities at St Giles. These initiatives served to strengthen the links between the community and its church, and there continue to be opportunities to further develop these relationships.

OUR SCHOOLS

There are **4 primary schools** in the Benefice:

GAMSTON ST PETER'S C OF E PRIMARY

A Voluntary Aided academy with 114 pupils on roll that is part of Southwell & Nottingham Multi Academy Trust. Ofsted Good, SIAMS Good. A significant proportion of pupils are the children of the staff at the Jamia Al-Karam Islamic Studies College at Eaton Hall which adds a multi-cultural dimension to the school. Festival services take place at the village church, St Peter's, which is able to offer 6 services per year under the care of the Churches Conservation Trust. Pupils and their families also attend worship at nearby All Saints Eaton.

ELKESLEY PRIMARY

A community school with 104 pupils on roll. Ofsted Good. The school engages well with its village church through festival services and class visits to St Giles. Families in the village started to become connected with the church through activities such as Mini Church (aimed at pre-schoolers), Messy Church and Forest Church which ran pre-pandemic.

RANBY C OF E PRIMARY

A Voluntary Controlled school with 110 pupils on roll. Ofsted Good, SIAMS Outstanding. The school has a strong worshipping community both at its term-time Messy Church and services at the village church, St Martin's.

SUTTON-CUM-LOUND C OF E PRIMARY

A Voluntary Aided school with 100 pupils on roll. Ofsted Good, SIAMS Outstanding. The school has a strong relationship with its village church, St Bartholemew's, with classes making regular visits for activities and worship.

The Jamia Al-Karam Islamic Study College is also located in the former Eaton Hall. It offers opportunities for better understanding and dialogue with Muslims, and the churchwardens and congregation at All Saints Eaton enjoy a strong relationship with the staff and students.

OUR BENEFACTORY

The Oswaldbeck Benefice includes the parishes of Beckingham, Clayworth, Gringley-on-the-Hill, Misterton, Walkeringham, and West Stockwith in north-east Bassetlaw.



SIGNIFICANT FEATURES

The Benefice has a long history: it takes its name from the 1086 Domesday Book. There, the area was the Hundred of Oswaldbeck, in the County of Nottinghamshire. The term 'hundred' is first recorded in the laws of Edmund I (939–46) as a measure of land and the area served by a hundred court. Bassetlaw was a wapentake (equivalent to a hundred). The wapentake covered an area roughly equivalent to the modern Bassetlaw local government district. The place name Bassetlaw means the hill of the people of Bersa. Bersa was an early Anglo-Saxon leader, who settled in the area.

Each of the parish churches is a Grade 1 or 2 listed building: five date from around the 1100s while West Stockwith's parish church was built in the Georgian era. Each of the churches has its own special features. Of particular note is St Peter's in Clayworth, which is home to the Traquair murals (1904/05): the largest work of art in the east of England by the eminent Scottish artist Phoebe Traquair. The Church also features a 13th century stone screen – rare in a village church – and the Fitzwilliam tomb (1556), the oldest known complete plasterwork monument in the UK. The Church also has nine Kempe stained-glass windows, recognised as the best collection of early Kempe windows in the country.

Misterton also has Kempe and Tower windows. The huge east window in the sanctuary has remarkable tracery, which dates from about 1230. The adjacent Holy Cross Chapel is early English style and has a stone altar. It is thought to be the original Saxon mensa, displaced by Cromwell's soldiers. It was found, having been used as part of the stone floor for centuries.

During renovations in 1965, it was replaced and rededicated. The east window here was designed by John Piper OM and made by his glassmaker,

Patrick Reyntiens. The two had worked together on Coventry Cathedral's baptistry window.

Running through the Benefice is the Chesterfield Canal and the Rivers Idle and Trent. The Canal is a significant visitor attraction with a marina at West Stockwith and one being developed in Walkeringham. There has been significant house-building in Beckingham, and some in Misterton and Walkeringham where both areas are covered by Neighbourhood Plans with manageable housing targets. Gringley had a large housing estate built a decade or more ago but house-building there, and in Clayworth and West Stockwith, is limited due to their conservation status.

OUR CHURCHES

Each of the six parishes named above has a parish church, although the one in Walkeringham is currently closed. Since going into vacancy, Sunday services rotate around the five functioning churches, with many communicants visiting other churches:

- 1st Sunday of the month - Beckingham 11am
- 2nd Sunday - Clayworth 11am
- 3rd Sunday - Gringley 9.30am
- 4th Sunday - Misterton 11am
- 5th Sunday - West Stockwith 11am

There is a mid-week, lay-led service in Misterton and a monthly service in the elderly care home in Walkeringham, also lay-led. Misterton is the only village with a church of another denomination (Methodist) and there is scope for closer ecumenical working.

Misterton and West Stockwith parish churches are undergoing extensive refurbishment and modernisation. The PCC of St Mary's in West Stockwith has recently repaired its roof, repainted its interior, and repaired the floor.

Both West Stockwith and Misterton churches have been given bronze A Rocha 'eco' awards. All Saints' in Misterton has a substantial grant towards creating a performance space with audio system.



The PCC is increasing the number of bells to six, with a seventh for tolling; has plans for a WC and refectory; and will develop an area of the church dedicated to local history, heritage, and culture.

Clayworth parish church is undertaking security measures and has plans to renovate the Traquair murals.

OUR LOCALITY

Once a well-known agricultural area, which offered employment to many 'on the land', with mechanisation these employment opportunities have largely disappeared. Misterton had an engineering works that helped supply the landing craft for the WW2 D-Day landings, but this has closed. Most people of working age, therefore, have jobs outside the village, many commuting to Retford, Worksop, Gainsborough, Doncaster, Lincoln, Sheffield, and further afield to London taking advantage of the fast train service from Retford to London. The villages, therefore, have a significant older population. With poor local bus services, once no longer able to drive, for them rural isolation becomes a reality.

There are few opportunities for young people in the villages: their secondary education is in nearby towns, tertiary education in universities some distance from north-east Bassetlaw, and most never return to settle in the villages.

For those who do make their home in the Benefice, there are many positives. Housing is comparatively cheap, road and rail networks are good. There are plenty of opportunities for walking, cycling, fishing, cruising on the Canal – and pollution levels are comparatively low.

WORKING TOGETHER

As indicated above, since going into vacancy at the end of 2020, the parishes have united to form the Oswaldbeck Benefice, which received the consent of Bishop's Council in 2021. Meetings are held approximately every other month. Representatives of many of the parishes have taken on special responsibilities for the whole Benefice, such as booking clergy for services, ordering common supplies, coordinating weddings, and producing a common pew sheet and other admin tasks. Parishes have retained their parochial church councils but Benefice-wide issues are dealt with by the Benefice Council.

GOOD NEWS STORIES

YOUNG PEOPLE AT WEST STOCKWITH

West Stockwith, although a small congregation, has managed to engage local young people in the refurbishment and restoration project. Young people, former attendees at children's services are, this year, providing the Harvest Supper.

WORKING WITH LOCAL SCHOOLS

Misterton Primary School holds its Harvest Festival in the Methodist Church and Christingle in the Parish Church, the latter supported by the clergy from Bawtry, who have also been involved with a class on living the Christian life.

Clayworth Parish Church has popular special services: Lammas, Remembrance, Plough, etc.

Gringley Parish Church has a good relationship with the CofE school, and Beckingham and Walkeringham schools visit their local churches (despite Walkeringham's being closed). Beckingham school holds its end-of-term assemblies and Christmas and other services in the parish church.

OUR SCHOOLS

Gringley has a Church of England primary school; other primary schools are in Beckingham, Misterton, and Walkeringham. There are no secondary schools in the Benefice.

OUR BENEFICE

The Combined Benefice of St Mary & St Martin, Blyth and St Wilfrid, Scrooby with St Barnabas, Ranskill is in the Diocese of Southwell & Nottingham and in the Deanery of Bassetlaw & Bawtry on the borders of Nottinghamshire & South Yorkshire.

Post Covid we presently rotate services weekly, Blyth, Ranskill and Scrooby, with supporting retired minister living in Ranskill and another who is a Prison Chaplain from a neighbouring diocese.



OUR CHURCHES

ST MARY'S & ST MARTIN'S BLYTH

Originally Blyth Priory, dating from 1088, with many historical features such as the medieval Doom painting. It has a bell tower, an organ, a kitchen, 2 WC's including disabled, central heating and is in good repair following much renovation work. Blyth features in many books on church trails and architecture. The original nave, now the North aisle, is an open space used for hospitality.

Attracts many weddings, in association with Hodsock Priory, for follow on receptions with subsequent Baptisms when families increase.

A group of children attend Family Worship with a local schoolteacher running the service, with helpers on a monthly basis.

The church is mentioned "A Thousand Best Churches in England", by S Jenkins, and features a Doom Painting. Stained Glass Windows, Medieval artwork on screen and walls, Obelisk in churchyard in memorial to Joseph Dymond, 18c Astronomer. All of which many tourists come to see.

ST WILFRID'S SCROOBY

The 13c limestone church with its tall early fifteenth century tower and steeple is Scrooby's focus. The west window is also early 15C. The south aisle was added in the early 16C. The church's roof, pews, font, pulpit and east window were restored in 1864 after a period of neglect. The east window received stained glass in 1889. It is in a good state of repair and decoration. It hosts concerts, a flower festival, Scripture Union Schools and R.E. days. It has a kitchen but needs a WC.

Home to William Brewster – Pilgrim Father – In 1620 Brewster boarded the Mayflower as the elder of the Separatist Church members; they later became known as the Pilgrim Fathers and were the founders of the Plymouth colony in New England. Brewster died in Plymouth in 1644 aged 78. Scrooby is a place of pilgrimage, especially by American descendants of the Pilgrim Fathers. Thus it can be argued that the principles and ideas of liberty which drove the foundation of the United States had their origin in Scrooby.

The church, the Old Vicarage and the Manor are obvious examples of buildings still in use that William Brewster would recognise. These are preserved as listed buildings.

ST BARNABAS CHURCH RANSKILL

Victorian church built in 1878 which has undergone a major re-ordering and refurbishment to create a more flexible worship space and community resource. With new heating, seating, a kitchen and WC, it is a warm and welcoming space for Concerts, Cinema Nights, Art Exhibitions and Village Festival Activities. Members of the Community who use the Church include the Book Club, Lunch Group, Ramblers Group, Guides and the Craft Group. There is a fellowship group for older residents, charity events and coffee mornings. The Mothers Union meets regularly (est. 1892).



OUR LOCALITY

BLYTH

A population of approximately 1500, many of whom travel to work in Doncaster, Rotherham, Sheffield, Nottingham and surrounding towns.

There is a Village Hall, well-managed Morrison's Daily mini-supermarket and Post Office, 3 pubs, Indian Restaurant, Doctors Surgery, Dentist, Chiropractor, Hairdresser, Garage and several small businesses and shops. A venue nearby - Hodsock Priory is licensed for civil weddings.

The New Vicarage is located at St Martins Close, Blyth, Worksop, Nottinghamshire S81 8DW.

The property, purpose built as a Vicarage, comprises: 4 bedrooms, bathroom, separate WC, lounge, dining room, conservatory, kitchen, study, downstairs cloakroom/WC, utility room. Garaging for one car, with hard standing for further vehicles. Pleasant, enclosed garden at rear including a greenhouse and large shed.

SCROOBY

A population of approximately 300, with a wide demographic mix of age groups.

We have an Annual Village Show which attracts familiar activities of best vegetable growing with family entertainment including good food and bar.

Scrooby has long had an association with agriculture which has concentrated on arable crops and livestock husbandry in particular. There are 2 farms and a livery yard. On the west side of the village is a racing stable and more horse owning establishments.

There are several small enterprises in and around the village. There is a fabricator of dog kennels, two catteries, a local landscaping business and a car sales garage. A number of individuals carry out work from their homes. There is a local quarry and lakes for fishing.

The village has a pub, two B&Bs and a small farm shop. The travelling library visits regularly. Scrooby is a key contributor to the monthly 'Star' magazine/newsletter which is provided free to each house in the villages of Scrooby, Torworth and Ranskill.

The Village Hall is well-used and provides a focus for village activities. The Harvest Supper and the old people's party are regular events there. The Kick-boxing Club, Keep Fit, an Art Club and the Scrooby Gardening Club meet there regularly. The hall is currently used by the Ranskill Explorers, Scouts, Cubs, Beavers, Brownies and Rainbows.

The village hall has been renovated including new windows and doors, toilets and kitchen, installation of a modern heating system also making extensive improvements to the exterior of the village hall and included new paths a tiled entry area and a stone-clad patio at the rear.

RANSKILL

In the 80s, 90s and 00s Ranskill has continued to develop and has a population of approximately 1,700, with residents commuting to local towns/cities of Retford, Worksop, Doncaster, Gainsborough and Sheffield.

St Barnabas also serves the village of Torworth (pop 200) half a mile away. It has its own Parish Council and runs the Cemetery with the R.P. Council.

The Reading Room hosts the Snooker Club, there is a Crown Green Bowls Club, Allotment Association, Ramblers Group, Village Festival, Guides, W.I., Investment Group, Explorers, Scouts, Cubs, Beavers, Brownies and Rainbows. The Church contributes to The STAR newspaper instead of a Parish magazine.

The village is an active community with a Primary School, combined Village Shop and Post Office, Pub and Fish & Chip Shop.

The benefice is in a country setting where life encourages supportive communities. There are plenty of areas and facilities for recreation, Cricket, Bowls, Walking, Amateur Dramatics, and Children's play areas. We are away from the hustle and bustle of urban life but not too far from larger towns and good travelling time to nearby cities with good road, rail and soon the reopening of Robin Hood Airport (Doncaster 8 miles away).

OUR TEAM

The Ministry Team currently comprises of:

- Lay people with the Bishop's permission to administer Holy Communion in all 3 churches, we have 1 Reader
- Active Volunteers for Flower Arranging, Cleaning, Graveyard Upkeep, Tour Guiding
- 1 Organist
- A visiting team of Tower Bell Ringers at Blyth
- A willing team of skilled helpers for the various events and activities

The 2 Parochial Church Councils are efficiently supported by active secretaries and treasurers. We have the use of a new photocopier and access to a printer used for the STAR newspaper. Volunteers compile rotas for readers, intercessors, sides people, flower arrangers and cleaners.

GOOD NEWS STORIES

We welcome families and visitors who come for Occasional Offices who then come along to our services. We have been very active in fundraising and managing the upkeep of our buildings. This shows the local community that we are active as a group, which in turn brings a return of interest and continued support.





**GROWING
DISCIPLES**

COMPASSION CONFIDENCE COURAGE