A Pioneering role in a pioneering deanery

We hope to recruit two Rural Pioneer Priests in the Abbeydore Deanery, each with oversight of one of two benefices - the Ewias Harold group of parishes or the Borderlink Benefice

Thank you for your interest in what are two truly exciting and challenging posts and, whether or not you put in an application, we ask you to join with us in praying for God’s hand on this appointment process. Much of the content of this pack is adapted from our Mission Action Plan, but it also includes a profile of the Abbeydore Deanery where both posts will be based. We invite you to read it and to consider whether it fires your imagination and inspires you. We realise that when it comes to the role specification we are dealing with the realm of the ideal and that no one human could ever be expected to be an expert in all the requirements. They would not be human if they were.

The newly appointed Priests will be part of a Deanery Team that initially will have five Stipendiary Parish Priests across the Deanery. We are in a transitional phase and in due course we anticipate any reduction in Stipendiary clergy will be balanced by the appointment of an administrator, a pioneer missioner or pioneer curate. We are at the start of something exciting in terms of the Kingdom of God.

If you’d like to know more of the plans for the Deanery please email the Rural Dean, The Revd Nicholas Lowton, at lowton.nicholas@virgin.net to arrange a phone conversation. He will be very glad to hear from you.

Background

The aim and the vision of the Diocese of Hereford is to continue to resource and encourage church communities to grow spiritually and numerically.

Our Mission Action Plan [MAP] “Transforming Mission in the Abbeydore Deanery” is a model for the renewal of Anglican Church life across a very rural and beautiful Deanery, developing a creative and dynamic church life that learns and borrows from current practice in other dioceses but is tailored to fit our own context. Our key objectives are to develop;
1. Thriving missional communities in the parishes across the Deanery.

2. An effective ministry to our five key groups. [See below]

To do this we will need;

1. To continue nurturing and training lay leaders in ministry, who can work in teams and be deployed across the Deanery.

2. To develop communications across the deanery.

3. To continue the move to ensure that stipendiary priests are released from the management of Church buildings and churchyards so that they can concentrate on missional, pastoral and sacramental work.

The Task of the Rural Pioneer Priest

The Abbeydore Deanery is reorganising the way it works and introducing a new structure in order to grow new Christians and grow the Church and meet the needs of its diverse population. While retaining responsibility for the pastoral needs of a designated benefice, the aim will be that each Pioneer Priest, including the current incumbents, will spend 50% of their time as part of a team working across the Deanery. Success will be measured by the growth of new Christians and the life of the Church in the Deanery following the implementation of the MAP “Transforming Mission in the Abbeydore Deanery.”

The MAP has identified five key areas of mission for growth:-

1. Children and young people
2. The missing generation (21 to 50)
3. Long term Herefordshire residents
4. People moving into the Deanery
5. People who attend life services

Each member of the deanery team will be accountable for one of the five areas of mission, developing effective strategies for growth and putting them into practice. The pioneer priest will be part of a mutually supportive team. It is therefore essential that each Pioneer Priest is a team player. The deanery team will meet together regularly.
Deanery Role [50%]

Mission

Each Pioneer priest will take the lead on one of the five areas of mission developing effective strategies, ensuring their implementation. This will mean:

1. Owning, holding, developing and communicating the vision and mission of the MAP “Transforming Mission in the Abbeydore Deanery”.

2. Working with the Deanery Team and local Church leaders to grow confident teams.

3. Encouraging growth in the current worshipping communities

4. Developing new congregations and groups.

5. Developing lay leaders and a culture of evangelism and discipleship.

The deanery will develop a coordinated approach to baptisms, weddings and funerals, which may involve the Pioneer Priest in officiating in different parts of the deanery.

Communications [as part of the Deanery Team]

1. Develop and maintain fruitful partnerships with other churches and community organisations.

2. Develop and deliver a Deanery-wide communications strategy.

3. Develop an engaging and welcoming culture within and beyond the church, extending to places such as our 8 primary schools and 2 secondary schools, our pubs and other community settings.

Self-development:

Each pioneer priest is encouraged to set aside time for reflection, personal faith and professional development and to enable others assisting in the church’s ministry to do the same. As a Deanery we are keen to encourage leaders, lay or ordained, to pursue and develop special areas of creative ministry whether that be through interests such as the environment, the arts or issues of justice.
Benefice [50%]

As a pioneer incumbent, to be responsible for the care of people living within a designated benefice.

1. The Pioneer priest will ensure that the following are provided in the benefice on occasion and in conjunction with the deanery:
   a) Creative mission and community building
   b) Discipleship and training courses
   c) Sunday and other services and Home communions
   d) Baptisms, weddings, and funerals

The Pioneer Priest is not expected to be a member of any PCC.

The Pioneer Priest will

1. Identify and encourage those members of the laity with particular gifts for mission and ministry to receive appropriate training and help.
2. Take an active role in local events, as this is a means to grow mission.
3. Open doors to those from all backgrounds so that they may know Christ and have the opportunity to explore and grow in faith.
4. Ensure that all parishes feel a part of and know how they can participate and how they can be heard as we tread new and challenging ground together.

Location

- There are clergy houses in each Benefice but if a candidate wishes to live in his or her own house in close proximity to the Deanery, this is open to negotiation.

Safeguarding

- The candidate must adhere to the Diocese of Hereford’s Safeguarding Policy and procedures. This role requires an enhanced DBS check.
Person Specification

Qualifications and competencies

1. A clear testimony of faith in God and a vital, growing personal relationship with Christ and a life filled with the Spirit.
2. An established pattern of personal prayer.
3. A clear sense of God’s call to pioneer ministry.
4. A team player
5. Strong track record as a leader in ministry and mission.
6. Imaginative social and communication skills including the use of social media to engage with everyone in the Deanery.
7. Be an ordained Anglican priest with at least 3 years’ experience post ordination.
8. A capacity for innovative thinking and implementation

Experience

1. Growing new congregations.
2. Confidence in the planning and leading of high-quality worship in widely differing contexts.
3. Encouraging and training the laity in the development of their skills and talents in growing as disciples and furthering the mission

Knowledge and Personal characteristics

1. A desire to help new congregations to grow
2. Openness and generosity of spirit.
3. A passion for people.
4. An ability to recognise and release the gifts of others.
5. A vocational desire to develop leaders.
6. Resilient, flexible and adaptable.
Skills

1. Be a confident and compelling preacher who can apply the scriptures faithfully.
2. The ability to build community and engage with all
3. Strong people management & leadership skills, including effective time management, prioritising and delegation.
4. Excellent pastoral skills.
5. Good organisational & administration skills.
6. Strong written and verbal communication skills.
7. Proficiency in IT.
8. Full clean driving licence.

This role description is a summary of the key areas of responsibility. It is not intended as a definitive statement of role content.