PARISH PROFILE

Vision Statement:

We want to be a living expression of God's love



HOUSE FOR DUTY OR SELF-SUPPORTING ASSOCIATE MINISTER

with primary responsibility for

ST MATTHEW'S, SALFORD PRIORS WARWICKSHIRE

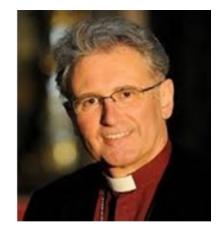
BISHOP'S INTRODUCTION

As a part of the Heart of England Benefice the people of St Matthews Salford Priors have benefitted in all sorts of ways, including sharing of resources. At the same time, they have also found themselves wanting to do more, to serve more, to be more, and to develop the distinctive characteristics of their life in Christ. So they are keen to expand their ministry with the appointment of a charismatic evangelical associate minister to take them forward in new ways. By doing so, it will allow me to release their incumbent to harness the missionary energy of the other parishes.

Salford Priors, set in a beautiful part of England, is a village with great opportunities for missional advance and growth. Indeed, some of this potential is being realised through the recent appointment of a Family Link Worker, but there is more to be done. The right appointment here could enable wonderful things to develop.

This is an exciting time in the life of this parish and across the wider benefice, a place where "the fields are ripe for harvest" and where ministry is likely to be rewarding and fruitful.

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DEANERY SUMMARY:

Our Deanery is situated in rural Warwickshire and has a vision for ministry built upon the diocesan priorities to worship God, make new disciples and transform communities. The Deanery has over 20 churches, mostly rural. Alcester, Studley, Bidford and Henley are the largest population centres. We currently have a planned deployment of 6 fulltime clergy, and 4 House for Duty priests, supported by many helpful and valued retired clergy who have moved to this area. The parishes cover almost all Anglican traditions, and the Chapter as a whole is broadly Central and/or Evangelical. The Chapter is supportive and helpful, with good relationships, and provides valuable opportunities for sharing faith, prayer and fellowship as well as growing a common heart for mission and learning. We are beginning to explore how we might share our ministry across ecclesiastical boundaries in order to develop a truly Deanery wide approach. A very warm welcome awaits from the Alcester Deanery for the person God sends to join us at St Matthew's, Salford Priors!

Kate Mier

Area Dean Alcester Deanery



RECTOR'S SUMMARY

Dear Colleague

This Associate Minister post is an exciting opportunity for the person God is calling to be part of a growing rural church, with good schools' links and a supportive team around them.

I am praying for a pastoral evangelist who will bring energy, creativity and wisdom to ministry in Salford Priors. They will minister 3 Sundays a month at St Matthew's Church and offer up to 1 Sunday a month to the wider group of parishes. Most of their midweek involvement will likewise be in Salford Priors. Whilst working as colleagues, I expect to give them considerable freedom in the shaping of their ministry. It is likely that over the next few years St Matthew's will further develop a mixed economy of traditional and fresh expressions of worship and the person appointed will need to be comfortable with both of these.

In more than 30 years of ministry I have always worked as part of a team with lay and ordained ministers and I have valued that. While I now rejoice that my erstwhile colleagues here in this benefice (including my own wife!) have found new positions that give scope for their flourishing, it has left me without sufficient ministry input to run these 6 churches. By focussing on St Matthew's, the new Associate Minister will free my energies to focus on other churches in the benefice, and I would hope that in our fellowship, one with another, we would support and encourage each other in the Lord's work in this benefice.

If you would like an informal conversation about this post, or to arrange a visit, please get in touch.

Yours in Christ

Peter Walker

Rector of The Heart of England Benefice



BACKGROUND TO POST

St Matthew's, Salford Priors, is a lively, evangelical church, with a history of good lay leadership and initiatives. It lies within one of the larger villages (population about 1,500) of the Heart of England benefice, in south-west Warwickshire.

It has been decided that this village has missional and growth opportunities which would warrant some dedicated leadership. The benefice has therefore decided to appoint an Associate Minister on a House for Duty or Self-supporting basis with primary responsibility for the leadership of Salford Priors. In practice this means being focused for pastoral and ministry energy in Salford Priors, with at least 3 Sundays a month at Salford Priors, and occasionally supporting other churches in the benefice. There is strong lay leadership at Salford Priors so laity undertaking and helping at services will not be a problem.

This is a strategic rather than isolationist decision, to make the most of the missional potential, and engage with the local village and associated schools. As a sign of missional intent, a 'Family Link Worker' was appointed last year, funded by St Matthew's and supported by the Diocese. This worker 'links' school (specifically Salford Priors Academy where the needs are greatest) and church, by working with and supporting families in the school, assisted by



support available within the congregation of St Matthew's. We are seeing very positive results from this work and envisage reaching many more local families in the coming years.

The Heart of England benefice, of which we are a part, was formed in 2010, and comprises 5 parishes: Bidford (the largest village), Binton, Temple Grafton, Exhall with Wixford, and Salford Priors. It was previously served by the current rector and his wife on a 1.5 basis, but she has now been appointed to a new post in another Diocese. This has led to some creative re-thinking about an appropriate configuration for the benefice, taking into account missional opportunities as well as finance, and the fact that a house was still available in Salford Priors. The benefice is therefore now to be served by a full-time priest and a House for Duty/Self-supporting Associate Minister. The Associate Minister will have primary responsibility for Salford Priors, with the incumbent taking primary responsibility for the other villages.

This newly created post is therefore very exciting and offers an excellent opportunity for achievable and enjoyable part-time (20 hours a week – 2 days plus Sundays) ministry within a single village context, supported by excellent laity, in a church congregation where there is life and there is love.

ROLE SPECIFICATION

The role of this post is to lead the church in fulfilling the Diocesan Mission Purpose of:

- Worshipping God
- Making New Disciples
- Transforming Communities.

This will be achieved by developing our complete Vision Statement:

We want to be a living expression of God's love by:

- Reaching out to everybody and making a difference in this community and beyond
- Encouraging everyone to experience a life changing relationship with God
- Growing together into the fullness of life in Jesus Christ



PERSON SPECIFICATION

We welcome applications from gently charismatic, evangelical candidates who are:

- Pastoral evangelists who would love to exercise these gifts in a village context, with a particular heart and passion for reaching families, including via schools.
- Able to ensure worship is attractive and relevant to the whole village community, including younger families. We would also welcome being sensitively moved forwards in understanding and greater experience of spiritual gifts in worship, mission and everyday life.
- Able to prioritise ministry within one village whilst working within the relational dynamics of a wider benefice.
- Fun to be with and enjoy working with and empowering lay leaders.

We have also put together a video showing our parish, which can be found here: <u>https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4EEs-OtGmwY&feature=youtu.be</u>

Lay Leadership

Although there is unanimous support for lay leadership, there is no specific process in place for identifying and training them. We hope that the Associate Minister will help us develop appropriate lay training and leadership development processes.

The lay leaders who are in place (2 Church leaders and 7 other Ministry Team members, plus the Family Link Worker) take responsibility for 2 non-Eucharistic services every month, together with the organisation of homegroups and pastoral issues within the church.

Although there are no processes in the church for identifying people's passions, skills and gifts, people will often volunteer to try something new and they are usually encouraged to go ahead. For example, Contemplative Prayer sessions are currently being held on a monthly basis.

We would welcome some gentle development in our understanding and expression of all the spiritual gifts in worship, mission and everyday life.

Prayer

We acknowledge the power and need for prayer, and regular prayer sessions are held weekly and attended by a small minority of the members. The church is open daily for private prayer.

Giving

Financial giving has dropped over the past 2 or 3 years, partly because of people moving away or leaving the church for various reasons and partly because we have failed to regularly review our financial commitment to the church. In addressing this we have recently applied to join the Diocesan Parish Giving Scheme and hope to hold a Stewardship campaign early in 2020.

Worship

We are trying to make all our services more 'family friendly' and informal, with much lay involvement and we are adjusting our pattern of services in 2020 to make this achievable. The inside of the church has been significantly modified over the past 2 years by removing the pews in the south aisle and replacing them with stackable chairs, building a full width platform across the front of both nave and south aisle areas, installing new LED lighting in the south aisle and introducing a new sound and vision system with large retractable screens and projectors in each aisle. This has produced a much more adaptable space where the south aisle can be converted into open area or set up with tables and chairs for refreshments and shared meals.





For our Sunday services there is a group of singers and musicians forming a small worship band that leads the singing of modern and traditional songs and occasional hymns. This can be enhanced by use of recordings when necessary. Whilst St Matthew's does have an organ



in costume to enact the Nativity story.



Our Christmas Eve afternoon Family Service attracts a huge congregation each year. This year it was "Follow the Star" themed with puppets as well as the opportunity for children and adults to dress up

there is no organist, but several local ones can be called on for funerals and weddings.

Songs and hymns are usually chosen by the music group in consultation with the minister leading the service and suggestions from members of the congregation. We are about to launch a Worship Planning Group to plan services in more detail 2 months ahead. Our worship is mainly contemporary song-based but we also try to include an occasional traditional hymn where appropriate.

We usually offer prayer ministry in the choir stalls after the main services.

Group services are held in different churches on the 5th Sundays and also on special occasions – like our Rogation Sunday service (usually outdoors).

There is a small children's group, **JAM** (Jesus And Me) which meets on one Sunday a month, led by our Family Link Worker and a team of volunteers and parents.



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There are good links with the local uniformed organisations who attend Remembrance Day services and some festivals.

Small Groups

The homegroups are currently being re-formed to include some of the new parents who have been attending the Family services. The groups will be meeting in homes mostly outside the parish and one is made up of a mixture of members of St Matthew's and other churches in the benefice. These groups provide a forum for sharing and supporting one another as well as a time and place for bible study and prayer.

The leaders currently receive no formal training and there is a need for support and encouragement for them. About 30% of the congregation are nominally part of a homegroup.

Outreach

This is an area where we have put in a lot of effort over the past few years as we have wanted to connect more with the local community. We have a number of community focused initiatives - Cup Cake Café, the Community Group, Heart & Homes, Fresh Expressions, Week of Kindness and Family Fun Day.

The church has run a "**Week of Kindness**" in the village for the last few years, encouraging everyone to get involved by carrying out Acts of Kindness to members of the community. In previous years this has culminated in a Family Fun Day held in the church grounds during September, but this year it was separated and brought forward to June to take advantage of the longer evenings.



The **WoK** has grown into a busy week with events

including placing flowers around the village whilst collecting litter, giving out free ice creams to the school children at both schools, tidying up some gardens for those unable to do themselves and culminating in a 'Big Breakfast Car Wash' where cars were washed whilst the drivers enjoyed a Big Breakfast of bacon, egg, sausage and black pudding baps – all free of charge.









The free **Family Fun Day** held on a Saturday in September around St Matthew's Day, attracts many folk from the village and beyond, some with their Teddy Bears, which have been launched from the church tower in various ways over the past 4 years including parachutes and single and double zip wires! A bouncy castle, bungee run, barbeque, Cup Cake Café, Craft Tent and garden games have all contributed to a wonderful day enjoyed by all and has now become an annual event. In 2019 we also enjoyed a display by the local Irish Country Dancing school.





In the evening of the third Sunday in the month a few energetic church members run a **Youth activity** session in the local community hall, which successfully attracts youngsters from the community to a time of games, refreshments and Christian videos. Youth for Christ have recently become involved to help us and we will be using some of their material on Sunday evenings in the future.





On most Thursday evenings, two dedicated church members lead a lively **Community Group** of villagers who are questioning, debating and "searching" for faith, with some taking the step of joining us for Sunday worship. This group also meets in the local community hall.



Another outreach event is **Cup Cake Café** which opens on the first Saturday morning of each month, attracting customers from all parts of the village and further afield for a convivial morning of chat and wonderful coffee and homemade cakes. This is again led by church members, supported by Christians from other churches in the area and is held in a smaller, homelier, community venue known as TOPS (The Other Place in **S**alford Priors).

Ministers from the Group used to pay monthly visits to **Salford House Residential Home** (almost opposite the church) with communion, but regrettably, due to fewer staff, this has lapsed. However, several members of the congregation visit folk in the home on a regular basis and arrangements have been made with a local retired priest from a nearby village to take communion there. We usually go Carol Singing at the home at Christmas and also visit during the Week of Kindness. Some church members are Pastoral Visitors and regularly visit sick and housebound folk who are no longer able to get to church. One PCC member is licensed to take Home Communion to the sick and housebound.

An initiative called "Heart and Homes" has been launched recently by St Matthew's, with support from other churches and is about to take responsibility for resettling one Syrian refugee family in the area. A charity has been set up and they are now almost at the stage of welcoming a family early in 2020.

We feel we are meeting some of the needs of our community and at each of these events there is a good atmosphere which helps to attract many people from the village.

We have not run any exploring Christian faith courses recently but we are hoping to run an Alpha course in the spring of 2020.

Structures

St Matthew's has its own PCC of 9 members plus churchwardens. At present we have 3 vacancies. Meetings are currently chaired by the Rector but it is anticipated that the Associate Minister would take on this role. There is a maximum of 10 meetings a year, making decisions on the overall ministry, finances and plans for re-developing the church buildings.

St Matthew's also has a Ministry Team comprising two lay church leaders, seven other lay members, the Family Link Worker and currently the Rector (who will be replaced by the Associate Minister on appointment). The Team is responsible for guiding the congregation and presenting a vision for God's plans for the church. In addition, it oversees many aspects of church life: Sunday services; Home Groups; pastoral issues; outreach projects such as the Family Fun Day and Week of Kindness. Some items are deferred by the PCC to the Ministry Team which then reports back for the PCC to discuss their recommendations. It meets once a month to discuss business and then on another occasion to pray together. It is envisaged that the Associate Minister will become the leader of the Ministry Team.

The relationship between the PCC and Ministry Team seems to work well, but we are open to considering alternative ways of working. We are fortunate to have an accountant on the PCC who assists the treasurer in maintaining and managing our financial resources.

THE PARISH

History

The parish of Salford Priors underwent something of a revival in the 19th century, having for many years previously been considered "a poor living", where few services were held and with very little organised church life. It often came under the care of the vicar of nearby Bidford. Then in 1830 the parishes were separated and 3 hardworking incumbents spanning the rest of that century oversaw the building of 2 schools, the restoration of the church building and the building up of a really active parish life. At this time too the "low church" tradition of the church was developed, including the patronage passing to the Peache Trustees. Since the winding up of the Peache Trust, the patronage has now passed to CPAS.

In the 20th century a variety of incumbents brought different skills to develop and serve the church, but the changing national clergy numbers and finances meant that in 1995 the last Priest-in-charge was appointed on a part time basis (beginning as a half time youth officer, later taking on 4 nearby small rural churches).



Another of the 20th century vicars adopted a very strict baptism policy which was interpreted by at least one village family as a refusal to baptize their child. The argument made the national press at that time and the feeling that the church rejected certain families is still occasionally encountered amongst their descendants to this day. On a more positive note, the church was left a local house in a gentleman's will and after its sale has enjoyed many years of prosperity culminating in the recent repairs and developments to the building.

In 2010 the present incumbent and his wife came as a clergy team (1.5 posts) to cover what had previously been 3 benefices: Bidford-on-Avon; Salford Priors; and the 4 smaller village churches (Binton, Temple Grafton, Exhall and Wixford). This reduction in staffing has been unpopular, and was made worse by the death, departure or promotion to other positions of all five assistant clergy, including the Rector's wife who moved to a post in another Diocese.

Following a review of ministry in the benefice it was decided to appoint a House for Duty minister to focus on and have primary responsibility for St Matthew's Salford Priors.

Location

Salford Priors is a small rural village set within sight of the beautiful Cotswold Hills. It is located just off the main A46, 8 miles west of Stratford-upon-Avon and 5 miles northeast of Evesham, in the Vale of Evesham, an important agricultural centre and soft fruit and vegetable growing area.

The river Arrow joins the river Avon at Salford Priors and it is a popular location for fishermen. The parish of Salford Priors, which incorporates the hamlets of Abbot's Salford, Dunnington, Iron Cross, Pitchill, Rushford and the Bevingtons, is the largest parish (by area) in Warwickshire and dates back to before the 10th century.

Local industry is mainly agricultural, although there is also a machinery manufacturer and a sand and gravel company. Salford Priors also caters for tourists with some B&Bs, three pubs, a Best Western hotel (very popular venue for wedding receptions), a cookery school and some caravan parks. Despite appearing to be an affluent area, it was identified by the diocese in 2004 as being the most deprived parish in the deanery. As is happening in many villages, Salford Priors is seeing the completion of several new mixed housing schemes with further development in the pipeline resulting in an increase in population of about 200-300.

The village has a short mat Bowls Club, a Salford Ladies' Group (formed from the Women's Institute), a Scout Group, a Cinema Club, two church schools, a pre-school nursery school and a Residential Care Home. There are a number of retired people in the village as well as professionals, but there are also people in the middle to lower income groups.

The Salford House Residential Home, just opposite the church, has residents who are visited regularly by members of the congregation. We usually go Carol Singing there at Christmas and also visit during our annual "Week of Kindness".

The ecclesiastical parish of Salford Priors, along with the parishes of Bidford, Binton, Temple Grafton and Exhall with Wixford, comprise the benefice of the Heart of England Group.



Population

The population of Salford Priors is about 1,500 with approximately 740 residences. This is going to increase with the present housing developments in the village.

Buildings

St. Matthew's Church was built by the Normans and is mentioned in the Domesday Book. You can see their influence from the moment you enter, as above the door is a typical (and magnificently) carved stone arch with different patterns. It is protected by a Victorian porch with wrought iron gate which was put there to keep out the sheep!

The church has an unusual semi octagonal tower, which may have been a beacon tower to guide travellers across the (often) flooded meadows. Every Good Friday trips are organised up the main tower (Health and Safety notwithstanding) to view the surrounding countryside.

In 2017 the church went through extensive re-ordering as mentioned earlier. In addition, an updated kitchen with cooker was installed in an existing meeting room at the west end of the church. The church can seat about 220 people in its traditional pews in the nave and new chairs in the south aisle.



Having reviewed a number of plans to achieve in house toilets and more space for childrens' work and associated storage, a new scheme is about to be launched to make further alterations inside the church building.

There is a dedicated children's area in the south aisle with play equipment and small tables and chairs.

The only other buildings are a concrete toilet block and the Rainbow Room, a wooden shed structure well-furnished and insulated which has been used for children's and youth work over the past 10 years or so. It was erected with temporary planning permission which has now expired, and we will have to remove it and hopefully replace the space with a new development within the church itself. Although we had hoped to be able to keep the Rainbow Room until this is completed, the access has now become unsafe and it has been taken out of service.

There is an open graveyard at St Matthew's, one half of which is maintained by the Parish Council.

The two fields in front of the church either side of the car park are owned by the church and are rented out to a local farmer for grazing his cattle. With the farmer's permission we are sometimes able to use one of them as an overflow car park for large wedding parties or funerals.

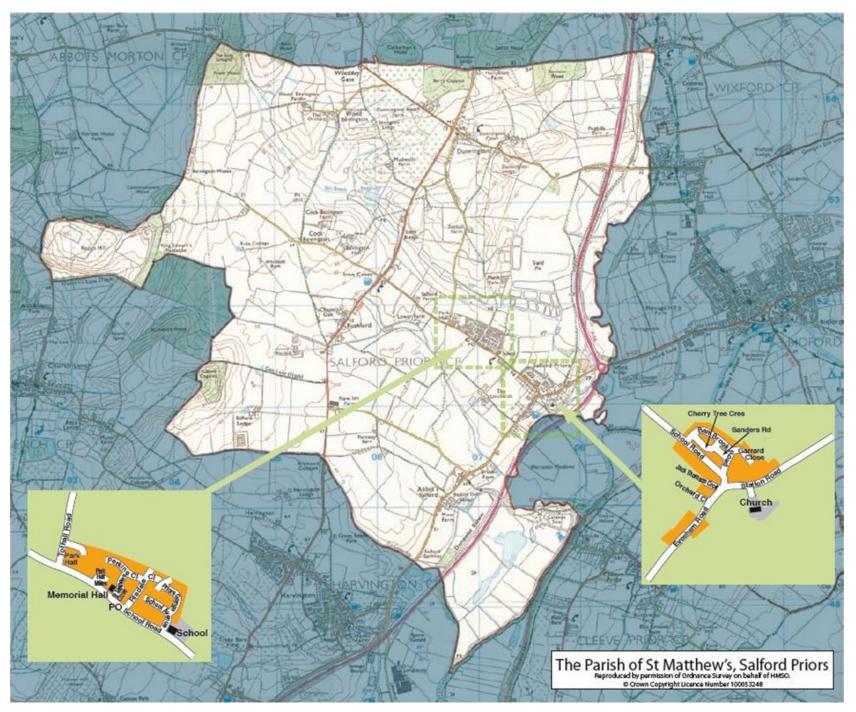




Vicarage

The vicarage is a 1960s purpose built 4-bedroom detached house situated three doors away from the church down a short lane setting it back from the main road. It has front access to a study, a large rear garden and garage. There is a gated pathway across the field in front of the vicarage giving quicker access to and from the church.

The PCC are offering to cut the grass of the lawn area in the vicarage back garden.



Services:

An example of the normal monthly service pattern (from January 2020) is shown below:

<u>1st Sunday</u>	<u>2nd Sunday</u>	<u>3rd Sunday</u>	<u>4th Sunday</u>	<u>5th Sunday</u>
8.45am		8.45am		
Holy Communion		Holy Communion		
10.30am	10.30am	10.30am	10.30am	10.30am
Family Service	Holy Communion +	Family Service	Family Communion	Group Service
	JAM			(Held at different
		7.00pm		churches in the group)
		Fresh		
		in the village Community Hall		

The 8.45am service attracts between 3 and 10 attendees. At the 10.30am service we have about 40-45 (approx. 32 adults and 7-8 children on average). The Electoral Roll is 76.

The church has a diverse membership with most age groups represented. Although it is a predominantly white British congregation, this does reflect the local community which has few immigrants or other nationalities. However, as referred to earlier, we have recently set up the "Heart & Homes" charity to receive and support a Syrian refugee family for re-settlement in this area.

Currently the Rector or one of the assistant retired clergy will preside at the Holy Communion Services. When there is a shortage of clergy within the benefice, either the Reader from Bidford or one of our lay leaders with the bishop's permission will conduct a service of Holy Communion by Extension.

Members of our Ministry Team usually organise and lead the Family Services.

On average each year there are 3-4 baptisms (which all take place within the main morning service), 7-8 funerals and 4-5 weddings.

Other Weekly/Monthly Events:

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	Ministry Team meets monthly (1st week)	Ministry Team meets monthly for prayer	Evening Home Groups (days vary) PCC meets monthly on 4 th week	9am Morning prayer meeting 7.30 pm Community Group meet in the village Community Hall	6.30pm Evening prayer meeting in a local home	Cup Cake Café (1 st Saturday in the month in a local community building)

School Links

A page summarising the work of the DBE with schools can be found here: <u>http://www.dioceseofcoventry.org/images/document_library/UDR01414.pdf</u>.

There are two church schools within the parish - Salford Priors Academy Primary and Dunnington Primary School. We have very strong links with both church schools. Assemblies are taken by our Group Reader approximately once a month. There are at present 2 Foundation Governors at Dunnington but none at Salford Priors, although we are trying to recruit more to fill vacancies. The Groupwide "Open the Book" team performs Bible stories in dramatic form to all 4 church schools in the Group. Unfortunately, over the past few years there has been a fall in the number of children attending Salford Priors School and this has been addressed by the school recently becoming part of the Coventry Diocese Multi Academy Trust. A Commissioning service was held at St Matthew's last year for the new Head of School and both schools come into church 2 or 3 times a year for special services.

The church has employed and is currently totally funding a part-time Family Link Worker for Salford Priors' Academy in conjunction with "Together for Change", a charitable joint venture between the Diocese of Coventry and the Church Urban Fund, to resource and equip churches to transform their



communities and tackle issues of systemic poverty. The Worker's time is split evenly between the academy and church and her church work can include whatever is wanted within the time available. Attendance at church is part of her commitment and her work includes organising and overseeing Sunday Schools, involvement in Family Services and other events which can be children and family orientated.

There is an independent nursery which makes use of some of the Academy rooms.

Ecumenical Links

There are sporadic links with the Baptist Chapel in Dunnington and the benefice has links with the Catholic, Baptist and Methodist churches in Bidford. There are no other places of worship in the neighbourhood.

Administration

There is an unpaid volunteer Administrator who acts for the whole benefice but is based at St Matthew's. He acts as the first point of contact for enquiries about weddings, funerals and baptisms. The parish office is situated in his home and there is a multi-function photocopier/printer installed in the Church Room at St Matthew's. The administrator produces and distributes the weekly pewsheets for all the churches in the benefice together with a small number of service sheets for St Matthew's.

The Heart of England Group produces a monthly church magazine (except January and August), called "Heartbeat" which is circulated in the six parishes, with an article from one of the ministers and contributions from our church members. There is a church website for St Matthew's (as well as the HoE Group website) which is maintained and regularly updated, with contact details, rotas and news.

Finance and Stewardship

The table below summarises our financial situation in 2018. Full sets of accounts for the last three years are available on request.

	St Matthew's Church		
General Income (collections)	£5,734		
Planned Giving	£20,780		
Gift-Aid	£6,400		
Fees (weddings, funerals etc)	£4681		
Grants	-		
General Expenditure	£47,018		
Parish Share Contribution	£29,000		
Unrestricted Reserves	£259,660		
Restricted Reserves	£9,904		
Any special considerations, future expenditure etc?	£200,000 allocated for church extension		
	£60,000 ring fenced for future maintenance		

Clergy expenses are met in full and our Parish share, which is a shared expense with the other parishes in the benefice, is also paid in full each year.

FURTHER DETAILS

For further details and an application form please contact:

Matt Robinson, Assistant to the Archdeacons By email to Matt.Robinson@CovCofE.org (024 76 521 342)

Informal conversations welcome. Please contact:

Archdeacon Missioner: Barry Dugmore, on <u>Barry.dugmore@CovCofE.org</u> (02476 521337)

Rector: Peter Walker, on peter@heartparishes.org.uk (01789 772217)

Area Dean, Kate Mier on rector@ardenmarches.co.uk (01527 852830)

Closing date for applications: Noon, Friday 28th February 2020 Interview dates: Monday 23rd March

An application form can be downloaded from the Diocesan Website: <u>http://www.dioceseofcoventry.org/vacancies/current_vacancies</u>

Enhanced DBS disclosure is required for this post.