



TEWKESBURY ABBAY



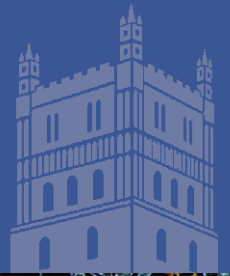
Associate Vicar

Tewkesbury Abbey with Walton Cardiff & Twynning & Leader of the Celebrate Community

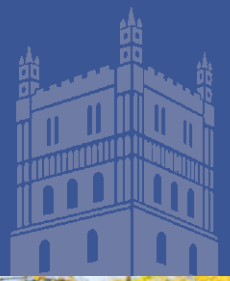
Tewkesbury's Abbey

*Welcoming all as Christ, offering glimpses of glory,
growing in faith and living out God's love in the world*

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Message from the Vicar



Thank you for your interest in the role of Associate Vicar. Our diverse benefice is situated in a beautiful area of the country around the confluence of the rivers Severn and Avon. At its heart for over 900 years lies Tewkesbury Abbey, one of our nation's Major Churches and a monument to the love of God.

It has been a minster church, a Benedictine Abbey, parish church and now the centre of a wider Benefice and Deanery Mission Area. Alongside the Abbey are 'Celebrate', our Fresh Expression of church on the Prior's Park estate and the adjacent parish of Twyning situated upriver, near a thriving village community.

This is an exciting yet challenging time in the life of the Benefice and Abbey. As a Benefice, we are discovering new ways of working together between differing congregations and distinct local communities. We are inclusive, affirming congregations that celebrate the ordained ministry of women and men and are looking forward to progressing the new possibilities afforded by the Living in Love and Faith conversations. As an Abbey community, we are working hard to build back after COVID, to develop a sustainable business plan and to double visitor numbers over coming years, welcoming all as Christ and offering them glimpses of glory.





Within the Celebrate community we are emerging from a period of instability and feel a strong need to build up the congregation and reconnect with families on Priors Park. Across the Benefice we have four primary schools and links with two secondary schools in the town. Children and families are, however, underrepresented in our worshipping communities and we know that we have a huge opportunity to connect with them through children and family's ministry, including our choirs, so that they can take their place within the worshipping life and mission of the Benefice.



As a hub Benefice within our wider Mission Area, there are exciting new opportunities presented by the fastest growth in new housing in the country, the Tewkesbury Garden Plan, the Cotswold Designer Outlet at junction ten and Cyber Park developments in the Golden Valley.



Within this context, I am looking for a creative, missional colleague in leadership, able to share oversight and work flexibly across the benefice; a priest with a pastoral heart, able to work with people on the margins, and with a love of work with children and families, someone able to serve with integrity across differing traditions and to make kingdom connections between staff, volunteers, congregation members and differing communities.

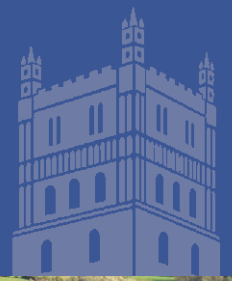
You will be in my prayers as you discern whether God may be calling you to this role. I hope that as you read this profile you will catch a glimpse of how God is at work amongst us and where he may be leading us in the next 900 years of our life. I look forward to hearing from you!

Pax et Bonum

Revd Canon Nick Davies MA, MTh (Fr Nick)

Vicar of Tewkesbury with Walton Cardiff & Twyning

Contexts



Tewkesbury and the Abbey

Tewkesbury is a market town of around 10,000 people which is shaped by the geography of the rivers which meet here and its medieval history. Much of that history is wrapped up with the Abbey and the Wars of the Roses. At the Reformation the town bought the Abbey from the King to be their parish church and it remains a much-loved feature on the southern edge of the town and a heritage destination for the wider region and beyond. Tewkesbury has a riverside frontage, a fine Tudor townscape criss-crossed by a network of medieval alleys and is bounded by floodplains which are sites of special scientific interest.

It is home to a leisure centre, several museums, many pubs, the Roses Theatre and the Borough authority. Situated next to the M5, at the northern edge of the county and diocese, it lies in between defined regions which can mean that it is sometimes overlooked for funding and investment. It is a place with long memories and cherished local traditions, including much-loved fairs and





festivals which are well supported by families, some of whom have lived here for generations. Fast growing new housing and retail developments around the M5 may well bring new investment and jobs to the town but may also present new challenges.

The Abbey has an important role in the life of the town and the diocese as a major church and a visitor destination. There is, however, a sense that it is yet to realise its potential and has not invested in visitor experience or in being as open to the town as it might be both as a cultural hub and community resource. Whilst the Abbey is well loved by many, for others it can seem distant, formal and 'not for them'.



As a congregation we celebrate our Benedictine roots and enjoy choral, catholic spirituality and worship. We have an electoral roll of 279 and around 170 worshipping here each Sunday for BCP Communion, mid-Morning Eucharist and Choral Evensong. Later this Spring we will be launching a new pattern of Sunday morning worship which will aim to complement our traditional Sung

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Eucharist with contemporary and all age Communion services. The daily office is said each day in the Abbey and regular midweek Eucharists take place. We cherish this confident catholic liturgy and have a dedicated

team of altar servers. Much of our worship is enabled by our well-supported choirs who enjoy leading a rich Anglican choral repertoire; the Abbey Choir, sings on Sundays and for all major feasts, and during term time, Choral Evensong is sung by Schola Cantorum from Dean Close Preparatory School.



We have an active and engaged PCC overseeing diligent subcommittees with responsibility for Fabric, Finance, Liturgy & Music and our GIFT (Mission) group. Our shop, tearoom, tours, events and other trading is conducted through Tewkesbury Abbey Limited, whose Directors include the Vicar and Churchwardens.





We also have two very active charities supporting the work of the Abbey; the Friends which is a membership organisation set up in 1933 and the Foundation which was set up in 2021 with the aspiration of creating an endowment fund. Both groups have broad briefs encompassing funding fabric, ministry, our choral foundation and mission.

The Abbey has a central role in the civic life of the town hosting Mayor making, Remembrance Day, Holocaust Memorial Day, numerous community and school carol services, as well as a 'Battlefield Eucharist' and plainsong Compline during the annual medieval festival which commemorates the Battle of Tewkesbury. The great feasts of Christmas and Easter are celebrated with a full liturgical programme and are busy, rich and transformative seasons that draw large congregations. Last year our lively Christingle service, held on Christmas Eve, was attended by around 1,300. Associated with the Abbey are two Almshouse charities which have begun conversations regarding a potential merger.



We also host the Musica Deo Sacra Festival each August which is a festival of music within the liturgy. Established over fifty years ago, the festival features a gathered choir of professional and semi-professional singers and notable guest preachers for a programme of services over a week including Sung Eucharists, Choral Evensongs, Solemn Matins and a Requiem Mass.



The Abbey faces a number of significant challenges. Many of these are common to the wider Church of England but the scale of the Abbey, as Major Church which is larger than fourteen of our cathedrals, means that these have significant financial





implications. These have been exacerbated by COVID, lockdowns and clergy vacancies. These challenges include growing a new sense of vision and confidence, engaging with children, families and schools, developing a strategic business plan, an annual event programme and scoping our next capital development. Following some positive early conversations, we are about to submit an application to the Heritage Lottery Fund for a development grant to scope capital works for the next five to ten years.

The Abbey has a significant staff team including vergers, finance and administrative staff, tearoom staff and a shop manager. If successful, our lottery application is likely to enable the growth of our staff team over the coming year as we look to double income from visitors and scope our next capital project. Our staff team also work alongside committed groups of volunteers including servers, sidespeople, choir, intercessors, concert stewards, bellringers, welcomers, brass cleaners, flower and sewing guilds and gardeners.

Priors Park and Celebrate

Celebrate began fourteen years ago as a Fresh Expression on the Priors Park estate. This post war ex-council estate is home to 4,200 people with many rental properties. The estate is bounded on the east by the 102-acre Tewkesbury Nature Reserve which also acts as a seasonal flood plain. The estate includes a small parade of shops, the Queen Margaret Primary School and a number of

community organisations working to address issues of multiple deprivation on the estate, including 30% of children living in poverty.



"For many of us, the beautiful music is a treasured route to God."

"There is an urgent necessity for progressive growth to ensure inclusion of younger generation."

"Tewkesbury Abbey is seen as a safe place for many hurt, broken and in need."

Abbey congregational members

"Celebrate is my church family. We worship, study, share bread and have fun together from the youngest child to the eldest member – we are family."

Celebrate church member





"Celebrate is important because it's a safe place to be yourself and to feel included. No-one is judged or frowned on. Being open to all is important to me about Celebrate and being able to share things in confidence."

Celebrate church member

The Church currently meet on Saturday afternoons for relaxed and informal worship, enjoying Communion once a month. The congregation consists of families who love to come together to have fun, get to know Jesus, grow together in faith, support and care for one another and those in the wider community. Celebrate is an inclusive community that enjoys sharing events and meals together. Supporting individuals in times of crisis and need has been an important part of their mission and has provided kingdom opportunities to share the love of God. There have also been activity days and trips away which have given families opportunities for play, rest and recreation which they may not otherwise have enjoyed. We look forward to offering these opportunities again.

In recent years the community used a house on the estate as a Church base for gathering and hospitality. That house is currently being managed by the property department. Celebrate is currently in the process of exploring new bases for worship and mission and we are keen to develop a more integrated relationship between the Abbey and Celebrate as we develop 'mixed ecology' working across the Benefice. There may well be opportunities to explore the insights of new monasticism and sacramental fresh expressions, as we weave together the pioneer calling of Celebrate and the sacramental traditions of the Abbey. The last minister



"If celebrate hadn't been there for many of the families during the height of Covid, we would have seen some implode by now."

Social Worker, Tewkesbury

with oversight of Celebrate left in the summer of 2022 and whilst there has been some interim cover, the congregation of Celebrate has dwindled over this period, now has a core membership of around fifteen people and is looking for new direction and ongoing pastoral care.





Twyning & St Mary Magdalene

St Mary Magdalene Twyning, is situated between the Severn and Avon. Twyning is a desirable village, has a population of around 2,000 and has a primary school, two pubs, a large village green and a local shop. The large Church building is a slight distance from the village at Church

End. There was a Minster Church here from the seventh century which has been variously linked to the Abbeys of Worcester and Winchcombe, before being gifted to Christchurch College Oxford after the Reformation. Today the church has a regular congregation of around thirty and enjoys 'middle of the road'

Today the church has a regular congregation of around thirty and enjoys 'middle of the road' Eucharistic worship, accompanied by organ and a small choir.



Eucharistic worship, accompanied by organ and a small choir. Each month it also hosts a Morning Praise Service, including a children's talk. There is good support for Christmas and Easter services from the village when congregations can rise to around 200.

Following the retirement of the Ven. Ron Hesketh as a House for Duty priest in the village the congregation is in a transitional phase of developing ministerial, pastoral and administrative support from the Abbey. There is a well-supported PCC which is chaired by the Vicar which is responding well to the opportunities and challenges which lie ahead.

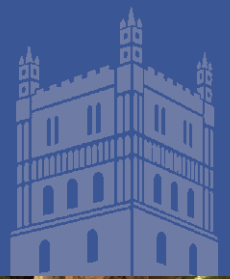


The Wheatpieces estate

The Wheatpieces estate to the east of Tewkesbury is a 1990's housing development, built on historic floodplains, which is home to around 4,000 people. The estate has a parade of shops, a community centre and a pub and, in many ways, is a suburb of Tewkesbury. It is served by well-respected John Moore Primary School which is currently awaiting the arrival

of a new Headteacher in September. Despite a church-shaped community centre, there is no Church presence on the estate and there are significant missional opportunities here. It is envisaged that the Associate Vicar would lead on this area, particularly with regard to developing school links.

Children and Young People



Work with children, young people, families and schools is in urgent need of redevelopment.

We have a few young people in our choir at the Abbey and a couple of families in the congregation. The Abbey also has POPITs, a thriving baby and toddler group, which meets weekly during term time and holds a couple of services in the Abbey each year. However, the formality of Abbey worship can be a barrier to the engagement of many families. We have two families at Celebrate and two families regularly engaged at Twynning. At the Abbey we are about to introduce an all age first Sunday of the month Family Mass in partnership with the thriving Boys Brigade in the town. We have also reestablished regular collective worship led by the Vicar in the Church school, oversight of which is shared with Holy Trinity, Tewkesbury. This Spring we are also holding our first 'Be a chorister for a Day' event, promoted to each of the schools.

It is envisaged that the Associate Vicar role will provide us with new capacity to address this strategically. This will include developing our presence in the three primary schools in the parish and exploring the development of family friendly events and services across the benefice. This is likely to include joint working with our Events and Marketing Manager and our Director of Music, as our choir is one key opportunity for children and young people to engage with our worshipping life. In this way we hope to develop the significant seasonal attendance of families and schools by providing stepping stones into the worshipping life of the benefice where the voices of children can be heard, faith grown and families engaged.

The Ministry Team



Following the appointment of our Vicar in 2023, we are looking forward to the appointment of our Associate Vicar to help shape ministry across the Benefice during this time of change. We have two very active licensed Readers in the team one based at the Abbey and the other at Twyning.

We are also blessed by the ministry of six retired priests and three other clergy ordained within other denominations who are members of the Abbey congregation and valued members of our ministry team. The Benefice has long been a valued place for the training of Curates and we look forward to welcoming a new Curate in 2025.

Across the town we work in partnership with Holy Trinity, notably at our shared Church of England primary school, and enjoy good ecumenical links with the Baptist and Methodist churches and two independent chapels with an annual programme of shared services and monthly meetings of the ministers.

Following a period of change across the Deanery, we are now in the early stages of rolling out our deanery strategic plan. This plan is based around more integrated working and is focussed on three mission areas including our own of Tewkesbury. The Vicar is one of the assistant Area Deans working on delivering that plan.



The Appointment

As Associate Vicar your role will include the following...

- Participation in daily prayer, regularly leading Morning & Evening Prayer and Choral Evensong at the Abbey.
- Ministerial leadership of 'Celebrate' enabling worship, developing mission, providing pastoral care and growing the congregation.
- Pastoral lead for Priors Park, connecting with residents, community groups and statutory organisations.
- Acting as a pastoral and spiritual resource for Queen Margaret Primary School. This may well include becoming a governor, leading collective worship and being a trusted figure within the school community.
- Taking a strategic lead on the development of children and families ministry across the benefice, working with ministerial colleagues and volunteers to grow an effective programme of work which grows our engagement with schools and families.
- An active ministerial role across the Benefice, regularly leading Sunday and midweek worship at the Abbey & Twyning, leading occasional offices and playing an active role in busy festive periods.
- Exploring the possibilities for missional engagement with the Wheatpieces community and John Moore Primary School, including the possibility of developing a new worshipping community on the estate.
- Working flexibly and creatively with the Vicar in the leadership of the Benefice, enabling joined-up thinking and a strategic approach.
- Acting as a Trustee of the Grove Almshouse Trust and Tewkesbury Almshouse Trust.



Person Specification

- A missional priest with a pastoral heart able to minister to those on the margins.
- Experience of pastoral leadership in one or more of the following contexts: fresh expressions, estate ministry, major church/ cathedrals.
- Experience of developing ministry amongst children, families and schools.
- An understanding and an appreciation of catholic spirituality.
- At ease in your own spirituality, you will be able confidently to lead worship in both informal and formal contexts. You will be able to draw upon your own experience and have an ability to explore and inhabit liturgical spaces which may be less familiar to you.
- A team player able to work strategically alongside lay and ordained colleagues and outside agencies.
- Ability to exercise 'second chair' leadership working flexibly with the Vicar and other ministerial colleagues in an emerging and changing context.
- Energy and resilience to respond to new opportunities in a busy context.
- Able to exercise a boundaried ministry with good practices regarding your own wellbeing and spiritual growth and development.

Appendix



The following chart aims to give a sense of the expected divisions of responsibility. This would be a basis for discussion with shortlisted candidates and is likely to change over time as we work with lay and ordained colleagues to discern emerging opportunities for ministry and mission.

Areas of Responsibility	Vicar	Associate Vicar
Governance	Chair Abbey PCC Chair St Mary, Magdalene, Twynning PCC Chair Development Group Attend Finance committee Attend Liturgy & Music Committee	Lead Tuesday Celebrate weekly meeting Attend Abbey PCC Attend GIFT Committee
Pastoral Lead	Abbey Congregation (with pastoral contact team) Tewkesbury Town Twynning (with Reader) CofE School Governor	Celebrate Congregation Priors Park Queen Margaret School Governor (tbc) Hospital Chaplaincy Wheatpieces Estate John Moore School liaison
Portfolio	Civic engagement Town & Borough Schola & Dean Close School liaison Foundation Trustee Friends of Tewkesbury Abbey Trustee Tewkesbury Abbey Ltd Director Attend Publications Group	Community Engagement Priors Park Children and Youth Work lead Trustee Grove Almshouse Trust Trustee Tewkesbury Almshouse Trust
Liturgy <i>(Details agreed through quarterly rota planning)</i>	Abbey & Twynning rota & leadership Abbey preside/preach: 3/month Celebrate leadership: 1/month St Mary, Magdalene, Twynning: 1/month Leadership of seasonal school services Attend daily Morning Prayer (lead 1/wk.) Leading Choral Evensong Leading Midweek Holy Communion	Celebrate rota & leadership Celebrate leadership: 3/month Abbey preside/preach: 2/month St Mary, Magdalene, Twynning: 1/month Leadership of seasonal school services Attend Morning & Evening Prayer (lead 1/wk.) Lead Choral Evensong Leading Midweek Holy Communion
Line Management	Head Verger Director of Music Events/Marketing Post	Line Management of named Abbey Staff
Ministry Meetings	Deanery Chapter Deanery Synod Ecumenical ministers meeting Benefice Ministry Team	Deanery Chapter Deanery Synod Ecumenical ministers meeting Benefice Ministry Team



Housing

There is a three-bedroom house on the Prior's Park estate which is currently managed by the Property Department. Alternatively, a housing allowance will be payable.

Employment Terms

This post has been approved by our Diocesan Mission and Pastoral Group (DMPG) as a full-time stipendiary Associate Vicar, initially for a fixed term transitional period of 3 years as provided for under regulation 29 of Common Tenure. There is every expectation that this will become a permanent role and this is likely to be reviewed by DMPG early in 2025.



Further Information



For an informal conversation about this role
please feel free to contact the Vicar,
Revd. Canon Nick Davies
email: vicar@tewkesburyabbey.org.uk
or call: 07801 336144

