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# **The Lyn Valley Mission Community**

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**Shirwell Deanery  
The Diocese of Exeter**



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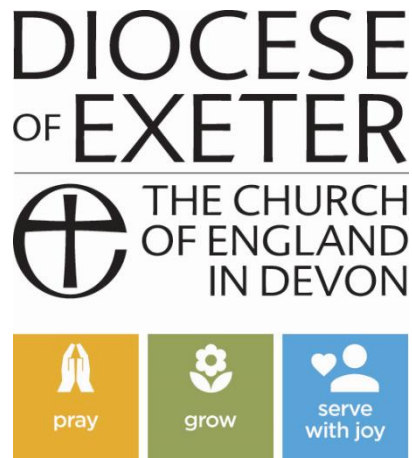
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## **ARCHDEACON'S FOREWORD**

**The Venerable Verena Breed, Archdeacon of Barnstaple**



Thank you for your interest in this post.

Do you have a heart for and love of Rural Ministry?  
Then this post is for you!

The Lyn Valley Mission Community (MC) is looking for a new vicar who will join these parishes in a stunningly beautiful part of North Devon.

We are seeking a priest with a heart for pastoral care and a desire to help us develop & strengthen our mission and ministry. You will be working with a group of parishes seeking to deepen their working

together, bringing together churches and communities, and growing in faith and discipleship. We would hope that the right candidate will bring enthusiasm, energy and creativity to this role of Vicar.

The successful candidate will get to know people in the Mission Community, and work with them to find new and exciting ways to making a difference in the communities, grow new disciples and enable disciples to grow in their discipleship; they would be someone who is open to explore the possibilities of rural ministry, to develop lay ministry and is prepared to work ecumenically.

## Our Diocesan Vision

We seek to be people who together are:

### Growing in Prayer

Prayer is conversation with God and is part of a healthy Christian life. Prayer is a life-giving activity that opens up deep places within us to God's transforming grace. It is essential if we are to become the people and the Church God calls us to be.

### Making new disciples

As the Christian story is less and less known, we must find new ways of telling the story, of explaining the faith and giving a reason for the hope that is in us. With Jesus Christ as our companion and guide, we can travel through life differently.

### Serving the people of Devon with joy

As followers of Jesus Christ, we want to make a difference in the world and make God's love and justice known. In our church life, we seek to be local, participatory, and outward-looking.

Further information regarding our Diocesan Vision can be found in our Next Steps document at [www.exeter.anglican.org/who-we-are/vision-strategy](http://www.exeter.anglican.org/who-we-are/vision-strategy)

## Living in Mission Communities

Our strategy centres on Mission Communities - parishes working together to share the Gospel of Jesus Christ more effectively in Devon. The phrase Mission Communities sums up what we need to be as a Church in the 21<sup>st</sup> century: **mission-orientated, community-focused, and locally rooted.**

Mission Communities help us to work together and support one another better. They enable us to be more flexible in our mission and more responsive to the different contexts and cultures of Devon.

A Mission Community aims to express the fullness of the life of the Church **locally**. This will include:

- regular prayer and worship
- pastoral care
- evangelism and mission, often in collaboration with ecumenical partners
- opportunities for learning, teaching, nurture and growth for disciples of all ages
- youth and children's work and worship
- equipping members for ministry in the community and the local Church
- connecting with the local community, especially in service to the poor
- good administration and stewardship of time, resources and buildings

If our Mission Communities are to flourish, they need to be more than just a structure. They need to live and embody the life of Jesus Christ and to share that life with others.

Jesus came so that we can have life in all its fullness. That is our vision and our hope for the Church in Devon.

In this Profile, you will find something of the vision and challenges of this Mission Community. I commend it to your study and prayer as you seek to discern your next step in ministry.

## **Deanery & Diocese**

The Lyn Valley Mission Community (Brendon, Countisbury with Lynmouth, Lynton with Barbrook, Martinhoe, Parracombe and Trentishoe) lies in the Archdeaconry of Barnstaple, and so under the care of the Bishop of Crediton. The MC is part of the Shirwell Deanery of which the Revd Preb Rosie Austin is Rural Dean. Rosie is Rector of the Shirwell MC.

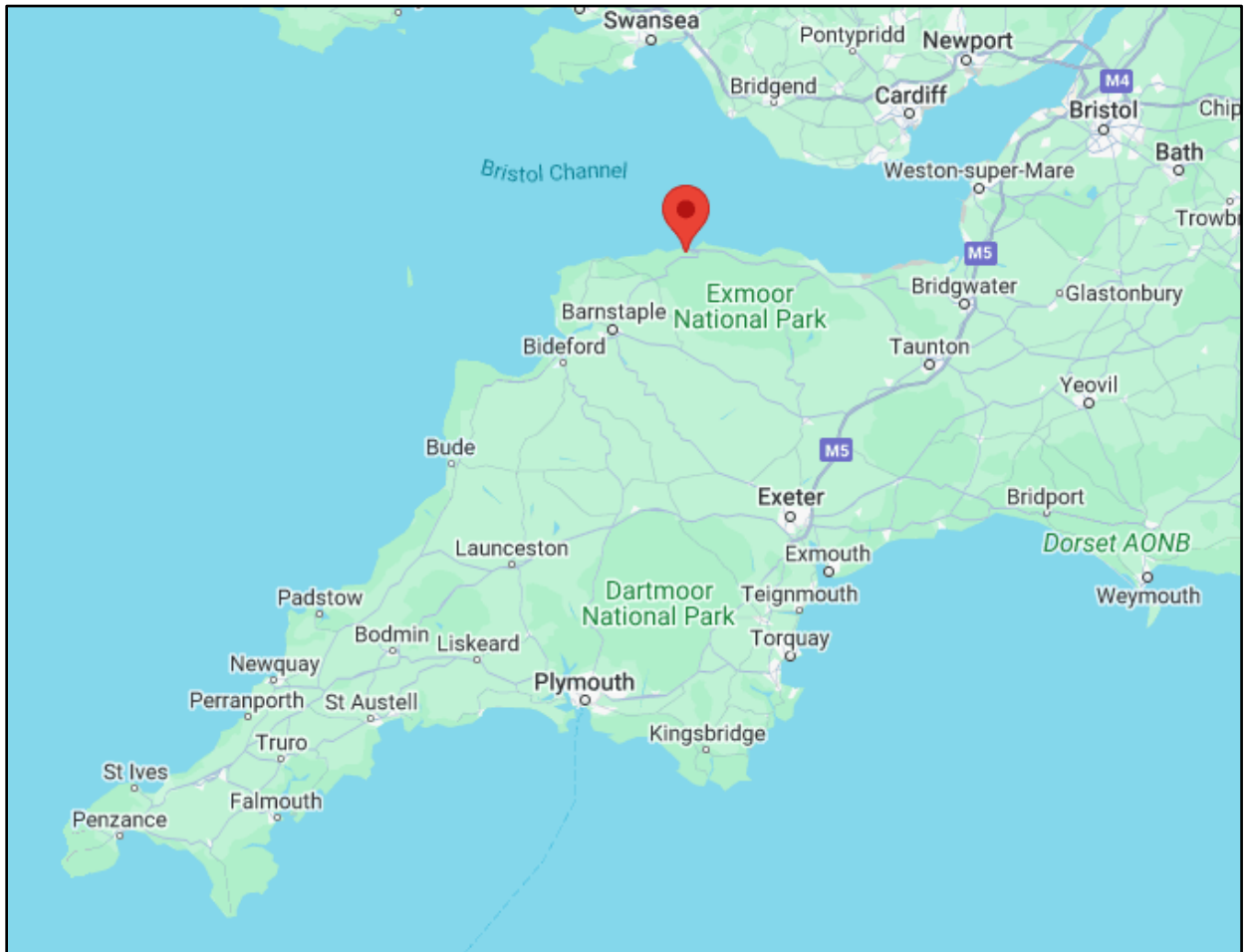
In the Diocese of Exeter, we are working together to live out our three diocesan priorities - to grow in prayer, to make new disciples and to serve the people of Devon with joy. We aim to be a diverse and truly representative diocese, and particularly welcome applications from women and those from black and minority ethnic groups. Not only is Devon a beautiful place to call home, but we believe the Diocese of Exeter is a great community of which to be a part.

You are warmly invited to contact me directly if you would like a confidential conversation about the post.

We look forward to welcoming you to the Diocese.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, reading "Jerecia Breed". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looped 'J' and a stylized 'B'. The signature is positioned on the left side of a light gray rectangular box.

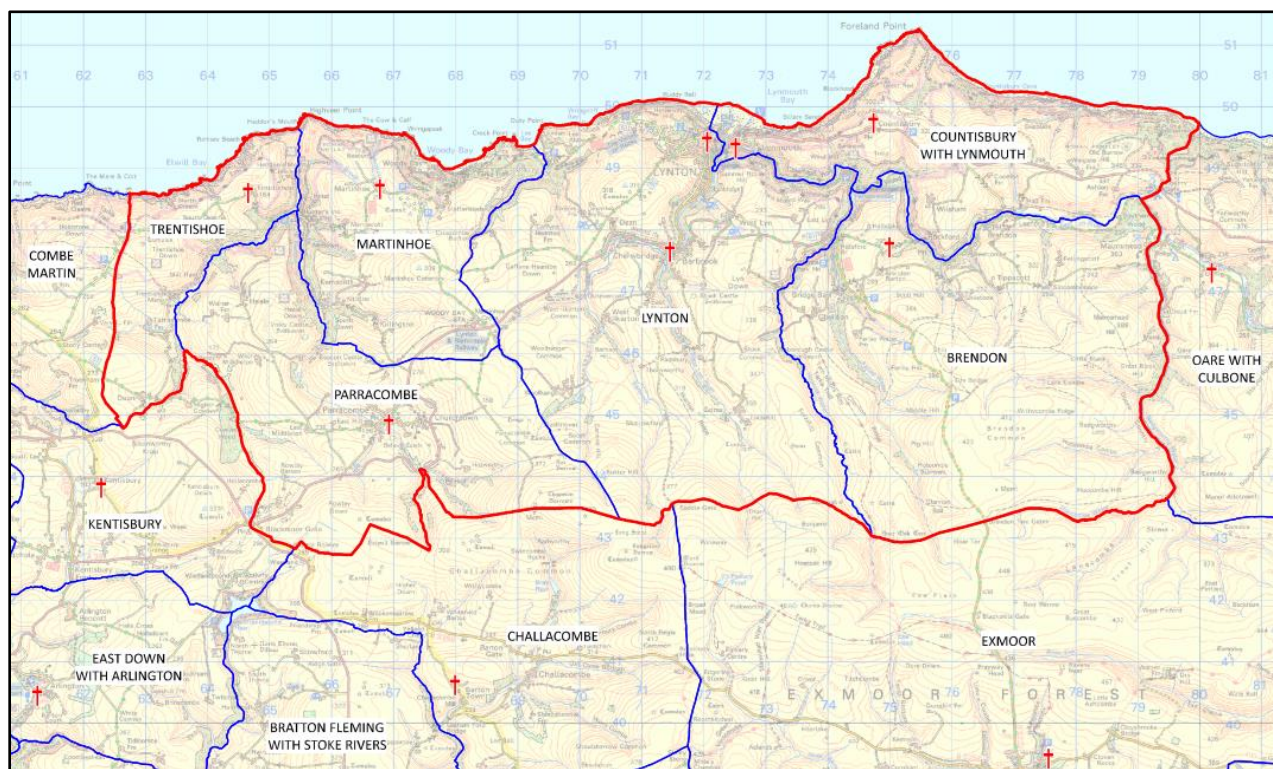
# WHERE WE ARE AND AREA PROFILE



The Lyn Valley Mission Community is on the picturesque north coast of Devon in an area of outstanding natural beauty within Exmoor National Park. The nearest motorway is the M5, and it takes just over the hour to get to us via the link road and the A399. Taunton is 45 miles distant and our cathedral city, Exeter, is some 60 miles away.



The red lines on the below map mark the boundaries of the Mission Community, with the blue lines detailing individual parishes. Churches are marked with a red cross.



The Lyn Valley Mission Community comprises six ecclesiastical parishes with eight churches:

**Brendon**

**Lynmouth & Countisbury**

**Lynton & Barbroom**

**Martinhoe**

**Parracombe**

**Trentishoe**

**St Brendan**

**St John the Baptist in Lynmouth**

**St John the Evangelist in Countisbury**

**St Mary the Virgin in Lynton**

**St Bartholomew in Barbroom**

**St Martin**

**Christ Church**

**St Peter**

The Churches are all within 20 minutes driving distance of Lynton. Lynton's coastal neighbour is Lynmouth with wonderful rock pools where many a happy hour can be spent rockpooling, while the beautiful North Devon coastline contains sandy beaches and 30 miles of designated surfing reserves of which there are only twelve in the world.



Barnstaple, the regional centre of North Devon, is 20 miles away with a thriving shopping centre. There are many of the high street names you would expect to find and a privately owned department store, Banbury's. There is also a covered Shopping Precinct, Pannier Market and the renowned Butchers Row! Situated just out of the town are several large supermarkets all of which now deliver.

North Devon District Hospital with A & E provision is on the outskirts of Barnstaple. There are secondary schools at Barnstaple, South Molton and a C of E Academy at Ilfracombe and notable independent schools within easy reach. Barnstaple provides leisure facilities including the Tarka tennis centre, a new Leisure Centre, a Multi-Screen cinema, the Queen's Theatre, and many types of restaurants.

Barnstaple has a regular rail connection to Exeter, where there is an expanding airport. Other notable towns are Ilfracombe and Combe Martin to the Northwest and Minehead to the East.



# **OVERVIEW OF LYN VALLEY**

## **MISSION COMMUNITY**

### **Our Vision and Sense of Purpose**

*Our work as the Church in our communities will be strengthened by our determination to work together in love across the region we seek to serve, as a Christ-centred worshipping community in many small localities, inviting and encouraging all people to participate in our life together; and through our daily lives to bring witness to our faith through deep involvement in the community.*

The Lyn Valley Mission Community (MC) lies within the Shirwell Deanery, in a rural location. Like many rural locations, regular church attendance is low but major services are well attended.

The parishes in the MC are growing ever closer, with Trentishoe PCC now to meet jointly with Martinhoe and the Countisbury with Lynmouth and Lynton with Barbrook PCCs already meeting together. This has many benefits, not least the feeling of mutual support and encouragement, but also on cutting down the number of meetings attended by a priest and mission administrator. We hope that the small Brendon PCC will shortly join with Lynton and Lynmouth to realise the advantages of mutual support and encouragement.

The Mission Community is very fortunate to have the services of an excellent and dedicated administrator working across the whole group. The administrator is a visible link across the Mission Community and beyond to the Deanery. She is funded by the Group Council, where previously financial costs were shared across the various parishes according to numbers on electoral roll. However, for the first time ever, the whole Mission Community is coming together to hold a Christmas Fayre early in December at St Mary's, Lynton with all proceeds going to Group Funds. This will ease financial burdens on smaller parishes but also help engender a togetherness across the Mission Community. More events are planned.

We hope any incumbent would be happy to continue a lively approach to weddings and baptisms, as well as services. We are an inclusive and welcoming community, valuing and supporting all those we meet and that visit us. Approachability, warmth, and a bit of flexibility would all help a person settle into our parishes. Whoever were to be appointed would have the whole-hearted support of all the members of the parishes.

**Current Service Pattern in the Lyn Valley Mission Community**

	<b>1<sup>st</sup> Sunday</b>	<b>2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday</b>	<b>3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday</b>	<b>4<sup>th</sup> Sunday</b>	<b>5<sup>th</sup> Sunday</b>
<b>Barbrook</b>	Evensong	-	-	-	-
<b>Brendon</b>	-	-	-	X	-
<b>Countisbury</b>	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Lynmouth</b>	-	-	9.15am Eucharist		-
<b>Lynton</b>	11am Eucharist	11am Eucharist	11am Eucharist	11am Eucharist	11am Eucharist
<b>Martinhoe</b>	-	9am Eucharist	-	11am Morning Worship*	-
<b>Parracombe</b>	9am Eucharist	-	Morning Worship (self-led)	-	-
<b>Trentishoe</b>	-	-	-	X	-

X = services not regularly taking place due to the Vacancy.

\* = a Eucharist service is currently provided by a retired member of Clergy.

There are also a number of significant and seasonal services which take place throughout the year:

**Countisbury** Epilogues run from July to September. These half hour services began in 1968 by a Parishioner and her husband as a way of keeping the Church from being closed. They start at 8.30pm with a different invited leader each week (lay or ordained) who leads a service on a theme of their choosing. Sometimes these are followed by a drink at the Blue Ball over the road after admiring the beautiful sunset and views of almost all the entire Mission Community! a Rogation service and a stroll to the top of the hill followed by a short service and restorative tea and cake.

**Lynmouth** Evensong with Act of Remembrance marking the anniversary of the Lynmouth Flood Disaster in August on Sunday nearest 15<sup>th</sup> August  
Exmoor Carol Service and Readings takes place in December and is supported by the wider community

**Lynmouth Harbour** Blessing of the Boats

**Martinhoe** Lammas service with cream teas

**Parracombe** Plough Sunday

Harvest Services and suppers occur at a number of Churches.



# **PERSON SPECIFICATION**

We are looking for a person who:

- has an understanding and love for life in rural areas and has a willingness to become part of our village communities
- senses the beauty and spirituality of the natural world.
- is open hearted and easily approachable with empathy for people of all ages making no distinction between those inside and outside the church
- has experience in helping to develop children's ministry both in school and church
- is deeply prayerful with a contemplative spirit to sustain their own spiritual life which they will share with us by teaching, preaching, and leading us in our individual spiritual journeys
- has the ability to recognise gifts in the laity and to develop those gifts
- has experience of working in a team and a commitment to collaborative working with lay and ordained colleagues and furthering the cooperation between the parishes
- is able to care for their own work life balance
- is of creative ministry with an appreciation of music and the arts
- someone to help traditional Anglican worship meet the needs of 21<sup>st</sup> century people

We can offer:

- a warm welcome and the goodwill and love of a close, supportive church family
- the opportunity to live in an area of outstanding natural beauty and to be inspired by the spirituality this brings
- a fine residence in the heart of the community in Lynton
- a willingness to work hard to assist you in your journey with us
- the support of an excellent part-time administrator working across the Mission Community
- friendly and welcoming communities
- a Federation of schools at Lynton and Parracombe with long established relationships with the church
- a recognition and support for days off, holidays and times for retreats etc

# THE RECTORY



The Rectory is situated on Lee Road in Lynton, in an ideal location in the heart of the village and just a short walk to St Mary's Church. It has a garage and parking for an additional two cars. The house is south facing and has a large, enclosed well established rear garden which gives a wonderful area for relaxation and gardening.

The house is heated by oil fired central heating, with seven bedrooms and is double glazed with large rooms.

**The ground floor** of the house comprises porch, entrance hall, WC, study, living room (with a wood burning stove), dining room, kitchen and utility room.

**The first floor** has four bedrooms (one en-suite), bathroom, and WC.

**The second floor** features another three bedrooms. It currently has insulation laid on the floor and is shut off from the rest of the house to cut down heating costs.



# PARISH PROFILES

## BRENDON



Brendon is a rural parish comprising the small village of Brendon, several hamlets, outlying farms and cottages and a great deal of moorland. Like the other parishes we have a lot of visitors who are well served by a variety of holiday accommodation.

The resident population of the parish is about 120. The village lies mostly along the East Lyn River in the Lyn Valley and is about 3 or 4 miles (15mins drive) from Lynton. There are Inns at Brendon and Rockford, popular with both locals and visitors. People depend on their cars for getting to work, shopping etc. and also to

go to the church which is about 1.5miles from the village of Brendon. The main A39 road from Lynmouth to Minehead is about a mile from the church.

The housing is predominately private but there are a good number of second or holiday homes. The few children who live in Brendon attend the primary school in Lynton and the secondary school in Ilfracombe.

Although not committing to regular church attendance, local people recognise the church at the heart of their community, are supportive of it and are prepared to be involved in fundraising to maintain the beautiful 18<sup>th</sup> Century building which is an oasis of peace and calm. Carvings of saints can be found along the East wall by John Floyd, a self-taught local woodworker. Fundraising is helped by generous annual donations from some second homeowners and a volunteer maintains the large, sloping churchyard.

There is a service at Brendon once a month and the church is used for weddings and funerals. A farmer's funeral is one occasion when one can expect the congregation to overflow into the churchyard.

Brendon shares a Parish Meeting and village hall with Countisbury, though both have their own churches.

Our last major project was the recent refurbishment of the bells.

## **COUNTISBURY WITH LYNMOUTH**

This small rural parish has two church buildings and is a tourist hotspot. It is called variously “Where Exmoor meets the Sea” and “Little Switzerland”. There are few parishioners, 16 on the electoral roll and mostly elderly, a PCC of 5 including a treasurer, but no Churchwardens. The housing includes several small guest houses, inns, hotels, holiday accommodation and farms. There is limited transport, and all are reliant on cars.

The Parish pays its own share of apportioned expenses and is financially sound.

We are known as the twin villages of Lynton and Lynmouth, who work in close co-operation and look forward with much prayer to playing a full part in the Lyn Valley Mission Community

### **St John the Evangelist, Countisbury**

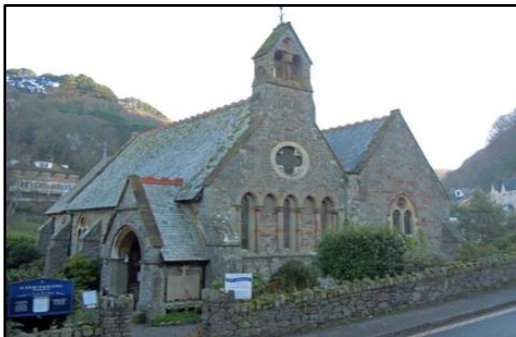


The Church is situated on some of the highest and most beautiful sea cliffs in England. It is the ancient Parish Church and Burial Ground and, although for its age is in reasonable repair, is needing work on the roof and interior walls.

*“We arrived at the top of the hill and paused for a time of reflection, experiencing the wild, incredible landscape, the earth, the sea and the sky, the silence, the stillness, the warmth of the sun, the gentle breeze, butterflies and insects on the air and perfect peace.”* A quote from a Rogation Sunday walk.

We benefit from an influx of summer visitors who boost donations through the wall box. There are occasional weddings/blessings, baptisms, and funerals. St John’s is a shelter full of the peace of God and is open day and night.

### **St John the Baptist, Lynmouth**



Built in 1869 in the centre of the beautiful harbourside village of Lynmouth surrounded by a peaceful garden. It is a chapel-of-ease, the building is in reasonable repair having withstood the major flood of 1952 and has recently benefited from a large grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund to repair the roof, install a servery and an exhibition about the district and the flood. This draws in many visitors during the summer months.

We have a modern electric church style organ played regularly by an enthusiastic organist and there are occasional weddings/blessings, baptisms, and funerals. Other Church activities through the year include a well-supported fund-raising Harvest Auction in October and pre-pandemic, a week-long flower festival around 15<sup>th</sup> August.

## **LYNTON WITH BARBROOK**

### **St Mary the Virgin, Lynton**



The church of St Mary the Virgin is situated in the centre of the North Devon coastal town of Lynton, with magnificent views from the churchyard of Lynmouth Bay and the Welsh coastline beyond. Lynton sits within an area of outstanding natural beauty being part of Exmoor National Park. The tower is 13<sup>th</sup> century, the main body having a series of restorations and rebuilding between 1868 and 1905 – the church itself is nationally renowned for its Arts and Crafts detailing. The Rectory is

based here in Lynton, a short walk via the main road from the church.

Lynton benefits from a range of amenities including local shops, restaurants, cafes, a museum, a magnificent Victorian town hall, a cinema, a library, a VA primary school, a modern health centre and a care home. The 2021 census records Lynton and Lynmouth ward with a population of circa 2000 but this will rise threefold when visitors are included in the holiday seasons.

The community consists of a balanced cross-section of people from young families to those of retirement age. As the nearest town of any size is 20 miles away in any direction, there is a strong sense of community in the town, with many formal and informal clubs and organisations. The main industries in the area are tourism and farming.

The PCC is very active and has introduced a number of changes for the benefit of the church. As part of our drive to increase funding to enable improvements to the church building, we have recently installed a card machine and Wi-Fi in St Mary's to take advantage of the generosity of the many thousands of visitors to our beautiful church and area. We have set up two campaigns for donations, one linked to general church business and another specifically for use on the church fabric. We are also preparing QR codes for display to further encourage donations. St Mary's has not had a church hall for decades, but the current active PCC are preparing a faculty for provision of a purpose-built servery in the south side of the church and turning an area previously used as a porch into an accessible WC for church users. The intention is for the church to become more of a community hub for differing events than it is at present. Once this work is complete, we are then to tackle some damp issues in the west end of the church.



We have an active and loyal congregation, mainly consisting of the elderly age groups, although younger people and children do attend on many occasions. St Mary's is always supported by the community, especially in fund raising events, although the numbers who attend such events are not regular churchgoers – one of our aspirations. There is a URC church in the village, and a convent (Sisters of the Morning Star) attached to a small Roman Catholic church. Lee Abbey, the C of E based Christian Retreat,

Conference and Holiday Centre is nearby, and all churches maintain close links with each other. The school uses the church for services across the year.

The church is open to the public every day and thousands of visitors look in to view regular exhibitions which we hold across the spring/summer seasons. In the churchyard, there are several picnic tables and benches which are used by people to rest and admire the stunning views over the sea.

We are indeed very fortunate that St Mary's church building exhibits such wonderful Arts and Crafts detailing depicting the beauty of the natural world within the fabric of the church, and it is this beauty we seek to incorporate into our worship. We aim to ensure that everything we do is rooted in prayer and worship.

Visitors provide a very welcome addition to our finances by donating in various collecting boxes we hold. We have also recently introduced a "Prayer Tree" with opportunities for all to write a prayer on leaf shaped card to hang on the tree, and which are included in our prayers in services monthly. This is proving very popular, and hundreds of prayers have been written in the last few months. We also receive many positive comments in our visitors' book.

Currently there are 28 people recorded on our electoral roll. St Mary's has a Eucharist every Sunday at 11.00 a.m. and average attendance is around 20, although special services swell that number appreciably. A sociable informal time is spent after each service for tea/coffee/biscuits, a chat and welcoming of visitors. A short informal prayer group service is held at 9.30 every Thursday morning in the Lady Chapel – a recent innovation – and is always supported. Sacramental Ministry has been provided by clergy in the care home and from time to time by licenced laity to individuals in their own homes.





Following the difficult Covid era, the church finances are now stable with the Common Fund being paid in full for the past 3 years. The Common Fund is seen as a priority by the PCC and was paid in full in January 2023 for the ensuing year. We have several invested funds with specific purposes.

We have close links with the VA school, with an assembly conducted by clergy once a week and regular services in church at special times of the school year. We have

recently introduced a social coffee morning on the second and fourth Saturdays of the month at 10.30a.m. All are welcome to attend and these events are held in various local cafes and wider afield such as in Parracombe, where members of other congregations are invited to join us. We intend to expand the places we visit even further so that the Mission Community can meet socially outside of church.

We are fortunate to have an accomplished organist to play our fully restored three manual organ (restored 2014). We also have a team of bellringers who ring prior to the service on the second Sunday of each month, as well as on special occasions.

We benefit from Study Groups where we receive a richness of teaching, thinking and group discussion.

In conclusion, in this Parish a willing and collaborative working team has been established and we would welcome a new incumbent who could build on this and embrace the many opportunities and challenges this post brings.





## St Bartholomew



St Bartholomew is a small chape-of-ease, situated in the village of Barbrook approximately two miles from Lynton. To maintain services post Covid, a monthly Evensong is held which attracts a small group of loyal worshippers.

An annual Flower Festival is held in July and a Community Carol service at Christmas. St Bartholomew benefits from a village hall adjacent to the chapel which can be hired for church functions and fundraisers such as the

longstanding Ascension Day breakfast, and the like. A community coffee morning held monthly in the village hall is a very sociable gathering and provides an opportunity for fellowship.

Barbrook is a friendly village where people are willing to support the church even though they are not regular worshippers. The small garden surrounding the church is maintained by the community.



## MARTINHOE



The hamlet of Martinhoe is nestled in the stunning landscape of the Exmoor National Park, close to Woody Bay and Heddon's Mouth. The Southwest coastal path can be accessed easily from Woody Bay offering walks towards Lynton and Lynmouth via the spectacular Valley of Rocks, a dry valley that runs parallel to the coast. Valley of Rocks is popular with tourists and is known for its herd of incredibly agile goats, its landscape and geology. In the other direction, you can walk to

Heddon's Mouth for a swim or to spot a seal before enjoying a fabulous pub meal at the Hunter's Inn and continuing on the path to Combe Martin or Ilfracombe.

The Southwest coastal path is an accessible route and offers stunning views of the sea and of Wales across the Bristol Channel. Nearby Hunter's Inn is a beautiful hotel, offering accommodation and wonderful food in breath-taking surroundings. It is owned by the National Trust and therefore enjoys the activities laid out by the Trust. Over the Christmas period, you can enjoy finding the wooden reindeer and snowmen dotted around the paths down to Heddon's Mouth and at Easter there are fun and educational paths for children to follow. The National Trust also offers education for children during the holidays when a ranger leads opportunities to learn about wildlife and nature. Lynton and Lynmouth are known as Little Switzerland and are linked by the steepest water-run funicular train in the world. Boat trips are available from Lynmouth where you can view the North Devon coast from the sea – you may be lucky enough to spot a porpoise or two. Other fun activities are sea kayaking from Combe Martin, where you are guided through caves to secluded beaches. Seals have been known to put in an appearance too! Horse riding is available in abundance and beaches are in walking distance with Heddon's Mouth, Woody Bay and Lee Bay.



The community spirit is impressive. There are around 100 houses in the parish, and the majority of the parish live here full time. We are fortunate to have many farmers in the parish who are all valued members of the community. While we do not have a shop in the parish, there is a fabulous community shop in nearby Parracombe, which is well-stocked, friendly, and also has a tearoom where you can enjoy cakes and good conversation. Lynton is the closest town and offers a substantial medical centre, two

small super-markets and a variety of places to eat or takeaway.

Despite being a small community, we have a broad range of age groups in Martinhoe, from young families to an older generation. Everyone looks out for each other. Thanks to the influx of young families, the parish has schools close by in Parracombe, Lynton and Kentisbury. There is an excellent transport arrangement in place for ferrying children safely to school and back.

St Martin's is the only church in the parish. It is a Norman church with graceful oolitic limestone details and a graveyard carpeted with the short, native daffodils in spring. Opposite stands our village hall, where the community gathers at fund raising events and national celebrations. We host an annual harvest festival with members of the community providing a hearty supper for around 60 members of the parish. This also serves as a fundraiser, where an auction is held, to raise money for the church. The village hall goes under the name of Bishop Hannington Memorial Hall. Hannington was a former curate of Martinhoe and became a bishop in East Africa. It's a sorry tale, as he met an untimely end at the hands of tribal chiefs (East Africa) in 1885.



We subscribe to the view that the church has an important role to play in people's lives. We feel that it is up to individuals to get from the church those things that they are looking for. We also feel that as well as spiritual mission, the church has a continuing social function in binding together a small community like ours (113 on the Government voting register, 13 on electoral role (2019). We try to give new people moving into the area a feeling that they are welcome and included whether they are church goers or not. We strive to combat rural loneliness – a hidden problem. It is of

course up to our generation to keep the church open for those who come after us. Being situated in a tourist area with many visitors, we feel that part of the church's function is to remain open so that visitors to the church can enjoy the peace and tranquillity it offers (many of them clearly do.)

Hymns are accompanied by our violist and the organ/piano when possible. As well as these services, we like to 'start the Christmas season' with our carol service (first Sunday in December). We make this as inclusive as possible with contributions from local musicians and young readers, and unlimited quantities of mulled wine. We have enjoyed hosting Lammas service and want these often-forgotten agricultural church calendar items to continue to be celebrated in the mission community.



The parish is solvent. Fund raising for specific outgoings such as church building repair and maintenance is carried out as and when needed. We have managed to pay our share of Common Fund in full over the last few years (except for 2 covid years). A considerable amount has been spent this year on roof repair and work to the bell tower is planned as our next major project. Fund raising is by a variety of auctions, suppers, and coffee mornings, as well as the local village event, QuarryFest (Parracombe and Martinhoe).



## **PARRACOMBE**



Parracombe is a small unspoilt village astride the River Heddon some 3 miles from the sea in North Devon and is approached from the main A39 Barnstaple to Lynton road. It is a very tranquil village which attracts a lot of summer visitors. Our parish comprises steeply undulating pastoral land on the northwestern edge of Exmoor National Park. The population of the parish is approximately 293 (Census 2011) with half living in the village and the rest in the surrounding area, many in farms. The village has a Church of England primary school which is run as part of a Federation including Lynton and Kentisbury schools. A

member of the clergy takes a regular collective worship in the school and holds a position on the Governing Board. There is a village hall, a large recreation field with a community shop and café. The public house (Fox and Goose) incorporates the Post Office on a weekly basis. The village is on a regular bus route between Lynton and Barnstaple.

Christ Church was consecrated in October 1878. The church is in early decorated style and seats about 100 in the nave and north aisle and 20 in the choir stalls. The church is in the Parracombe conservation area. It has a small Hele pipe organ.

A scheme to increase the size of the graveyard with the aid of a grant from the local authority was initiated in 1996 by purchasing a strip of glebe land next to the churchyard. Development of this strip of land will take place in the next few years when all available space in the present graveyard has been used up and funds allow. Thanks to a recent major repair programme supported by the English Heritage-Heritage Lottery Fund, other charities and our parishioners Christ Church is in excellent condition.



Parracombe is fortunate to have a second church: St Petrock which is of Saxon origin, now in the care of the Churches Conservation Trust. It is to the east of the village in Churchtown and by the 1870's St Petrock had become less suitable for worship, so Christ Church was built on part of the parish glebe nearer to the centre of the village. St Petrock is open to the public all year and we would hope to hold at least one service there each year.





There is great willingness to help with fundraising and to take part in church cleaning, flower arranging and gardening. The clock is wound regularly by a parishioner. Our church is opened during the day throughout the year. All of these activities are undertaken on a voluntary rotational basis.

Pastoral care is mostly carried out on an 'unofficial' basis although our clergy are kept informed and visit when appropriate.

Fundraising is fun and has seen a variety of different events over the years: bangers and mash, skittles evening, strawberry fair, a display of model railway memorabilia and a quiz night. However, Covid has had a negative impact on these activities, but we hope they will resume soon.

Our Harvest supper is provided by our young farmers and fills the village hall.

Parracombe School holds services in the church. The children take part in several services which include Harvest, Christingle, Nativity, and Leaver's Celebration.

Christ Church Parracombe has an annual turnover of approximately £5,500 and is able to pay 50% of its Diocesan share of £3000.

Services are held in Christchurch on all major festivals and on two Sundays each month: Holy Communion is held on the first Sunday of each month and a family friendly self-led service is held on the third Sunday of each month.

Children are warmly welcomed and regularly contribute within the services.

We have close links with the Lynton & Barnstaple Heritage Railway who host an annual remembrance service where KS2 pupils take part, and a Christmas Carol Service.

## TRENTISHOE



The church of St Peter is in a remote area surrounded by farmsteads and countryside. The coastal path is nearby which brings visitors into the area with local accommodation in the Heddon Valley.

St Peter's was built in the 15<sup>th</sup> century, with various alterations and restoration work over the years. The present chancel was built in 1861.

Inside the church there is a musicians' gallery with a hole in the parapet for a double bass. The tower holds one bell. There is also an American pipeless organ which was presented to the church in 1966 after it had finished its working life aboard the Cunard liner SS Mauritania. Stepping into the Church is like stepping back into the past. There is a colony of bats within the Church that are protected.

The Church is listed on the National Heritage List for England and was first listed in 1965. Services at present are twice a year at Easter and Christmas.

# TO CONCLUDE

Compiling this Parish Profile has been a journey we have travelled together. Initially it felt overwhelming and has certainly been a challenge. In truth it has encouraged us to work together, to listen and consider ideas and contributions from others both positive and negative and to truly communicate with one another in the best possible of ways. There have of course been challenges along the way, but we hope those reading this will sense a little of who we are and what is in our hearts as well as the practical details. For us, putting this document together has been an experience which has given an unexpected richness of friendship and mutual co-operation.

*The Lyn Valley Mission Community.*

