



The Axe Valley Mission Community

Profile

for recruitment of a new Priest in Charge at Uplyme and Axmouth and Team Vicar across the Axe Valley Mission Community.

November 2019

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DIOCESE
OF EXETER



THE CHURCH
OF ENGLAND
IN DEVON



pray

grow

serve
with joy

*Growing in prayer
Making new disciples
Serving the people of Devon with joy*

The Archdeacon's Foreword

The Ven. Andrew Beane, Archdeacon of Exeter

e. archdeacon.of.exeter@exeter.anglican.org
t. 01392 425577

Thank You

Thank you for your interest in the role of Priest-in-Charge at Uplyme and Axmouth (Team Vicar Designate in the Axe Valley Mission Community). This is a new collaborative post as we explore an enhanced team ministry centered around the historic market town of Axminster. The person appointed will have pastoral responsibility for the parishes of Uplyme and Axmouth, and a wider leadership brief across the Mission Community for work with children, youth and families.

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 at:
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 21st century: **mission-orientated, community-focussed, 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 the vision and challenges of the Axe Valley Mission Community. I commend it to your study and prayer as you seek to discern your next step in ministry.

Deanery & Diocese

The Mission Community falls within the Archdeaconry of Exeter, and so under the care of the Bishop of Crediton (The Rt Rev’d Jackie Searle) and the Archdeacon of Exeter (The Venerable Andrew Beane). The Mission Community is in the Honiton Deanery whose Rural Dean is The Canon Cate Edmonds. There are seven Mission Communities (34 parishes) in the Deanery with ten licensed clergy (plus curates, four Licensed Readers, and PTO clergy). Attendance at Synod and Chapter is an expectation and all diocesan clergy are encouraged to give some part of their time and energies to the wider Diocese.

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 to be a part of. We look forward to welcoming you to the family.

The Venerable Andrew Beane
Archdeacon of Exeter



share the vision



Introduction

The Axe Valley Mission Community (AVMC) is looking to recruit to a new position following the bringing together of two previously separate benefices. The change involves eight cooperative parishes and was initiated from the bottom up with the full support of all the PCCs.

The new role will be both challenging and exciting with the potential to develop new activities and concepts. This position would suit someone who wants to make their mark on an area which is ready for guidance and leadership.

An overview of the Axe Valley Mission Community:

- The ministry team is the Rector, the new Priest in Charge / Team Vicar, one Ordinand in Training, one Youth worker, 6 Readers and several trained lay leaders. We are also fortunate in having a significant number of retired clergy who live in the area and operate as PTOs and one SSM.
- Two part-time administrators, one based in Uplyme and one in Axminster.
- 3 Church schools – Chardstock, All Saints, Uplyme. In addition, there are other schools with whom we have good working relationships.
- Several Home Groups led by lay people with clergy input as required.
- 8 Churches spread over 24 square miles. The churches are: St Mary the Virgin Axminster, Holy Cross Woodbury Lane, Axminster, St Peter and St Paul Uplyme, St Michael's Axmouth, All Saints in All Saints Village, St Andrew's Chardstock, St John Baptist Membury, and St Mary the Virgin Combpyne and Rousdon.
- An average of 12 church-based services each week. Some of these services are clergy led and some lay led.
- Different service types are offered including family services, Messy Church, Together @ 10 and at the other end of the spectrum a fully accessible service for people with dementia.
- Good working relationships with other religious denominations in the area.

The post holder will live in a beautiful part of the country with the benefit of both the World Heritage Coastline and the rolling hills and farmlands of the inner part of the Mission Community. Whilst rural in many aspects farming has declined in the area and the rapidly growing town of Axminster has many of the problems and opportunities of any urban area.

There is a regular hourly train service to London and Exeter from Axminster and there is an active bus service linking the major towns in the area. There are several highly rated schools and this is a great part of the country to bring up a family.

The church wardens from all the churches are committed to the new Axe Valley Mission Community structure and looking forward to working with the new Priest in Charge / Team Vicar and the current Rector to move the Christian Mission forward in this lovely part of east Devon.

Vision of the Axe Valley Mission Community

The AVMC is within the Exeter Diocese and thus operates within the Diocesan principles of:

- Growing in prayer
- Making new disciples
- Serving the people of Devon with joy

In addition, the AVMC has set itself the specific mission of “*Reaching out to all in our communities, proclaiming the gospel and encouraging growth*”.

In all activities we aim to be outward facing and inwardly nurturing.

The churches within the AVMC are all different and each church retains its own identity but working as a team is a major focus.

The Priest in Charge / Team Vicar Role

1. To lead the churches in Axmouth and Uplyme - continuing their growth and development
2. To be an active committed member of the full ministry team and participate in the rotas and development of the AVMC vision
3. To develop and manage all the work with youth, children and families across the AVMC. This will include:
 - To enthusiastically develop the work with schools both the church schools and others within the AVMC
 - To line manage the Youth worker currently in post
 - To develop outreach projects with families
4. To be liturgically creative and work with the whole team to develop different styles of service and worship
5. To work with the whole team to ensure pastoral care for all living across the AVMC

This is a new Mission Community and the Priest in Charge / Team Vicar, who will have incumbent status, will be pivotal in its development and growth working alongside the Team Rector and the Ministry Team. Development reviews will be undertaken by the Rural Dean or Archdeacon.

Person specification

Qualifications:

- A priest of the Church of England or a church in full communion with the Church of England
- DBS accreditation and willing to undertake Diocesan Safeguarding Training
- A full driving licence, as there is limited public transport in some areas of the AVMC

The Priest in Charge / Team Vicar must be able to demonstrate their abilities in the following areas:

- An active, creative team player who can demonstrate leadership and collaboration within a team
- Previous experience of working in schools and with young people and families
- A good communicator in both the spoken and written word
- A good listener who has a genuine interest in all people, and is kind and sensitive to their needs
- An approachable, sociable and welcoming person with a sense of humour
- An energetic person with the ability to demonstrate initiative and drive projects to completion
- Comprehensive IT skills especially with social media
- Sound liturgical knowledge with an ability to work with, and contribute to, a range of church or worship styles
- An outward facing personality with a commitment for rural mission in a mixed rural community.

Accommodation:

An exceptional Rectory is situated in Uplyme some 400 metres from the church. It is an ideal family home consisting downstairs of an entrance hall, kitchen, utility room, breakfast room, dining room, study and lounge. On the first floor there are five bedrooms, one bathroom, and an en-suite shower room. There are four WCs. Outside there are two garages and a spacious garden with ample car parking. The house is centrally heated and double glazed



The churches within the AVMC

As stated in the Introduction there are 8 churches within the AVMC.

They are varied and each has its own individual identity. On the following pages there is a one-page summary from each church which aims to give an over view but not an exhaustive profile. Any applicant selected for interview will have the chance to visit all the churches and meet with members of the individual PCCs who can provide a fuller account of the activities, as well as the opportunities and challenges of each Parish.

Some of the churches have special links with other countries or other charitable activities. In all cases the churches are outward focused and working with their local communities.

There is no significance to the order in which the profiles of the churches are laid out.

Communication across the AVMC

Currently there are 3 websites containing information on the AVMC churches and this is an area where further work is needed to align website activity to the new structure. The current sites are:

<https://www.axevmc.com>

<https://www.axmouthcommunity.org>

<https://www.uplymechurch.org.uk>

In addition, there are various Parish Magazines and weekly news sheets. Again, this is an area that requires review given the new structure. Where ever possible electronic communication is used but we have to recognise that this is not appropriate for all.

St Michael's Church, Axmouth



Axmouth is a small village located on the Axe estuary, with its wealth of birds and other wildlife. It is a World Heritage site being part of the Jurassic coast; within an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and including sites of Special Scientific Interest. It has a harbour and beach at the mouth of the river a mile away.

Axmouth is a quiet, rural community with a population of 520 comprising some 215 dwellings of which 37 are listed.

The village has the church, two pubs, a village hall and a seasonal caravan site with a small shop. There is no school so village children are educated outside the parish. The congregation therefore tends to be older.

The Church Building

The Church of St Michael is essentially Norman with 13th, 14th and 15th century additions. There are some attractive stained-glass windows of the Arts and Crafts era, depicting local rural scenes, and also some important medieval wall paintings.

The last Quinquennial Review identified essential repairs to the masonry and the rainwater disposal system of the tower. This work has now been completed thanks to the Friends of the Church.

The Life of the Church

We are a welcoming, outward-looking Church, very much connected to the community:

- 1) Worship.** We hold intimate, inclusive, Bible-themed services every Sunday morning and on special weekdays, with Communion twice a month. There's coffee after each service. We also offer a weekly Bible and Prayer Group and a monthly traditional Communion.
- 2) Music.** We worship with organ, piano, other instruments or recorded accompaniment. We also have a small community choir who gather to sing in the Church on special occasions.
- 3) Wednesday Get-Together.** This is a social opportunity every week in the village hall with coffee, tea, biscuits and chat. It's run by the Church with helpers from the wider community.
- 4) Friendship Lunches.** These give a chance for single people of retirement age to share a meal and companionship at the village's Ship Inn on the first Monday of the month.
- 5) The Friends of Axmouth Church** was set up among the wider community in 2011 to raise funds for the fabric of the Church, which it achieves through frequent social events.
- 6) Communication.** We produce a quarterly magazine which aims to reflect the life of the village. We also have an informative church website and a community Facebook page.
- 7) Links with the wider world.** We run regular events to raise funds for charities at home and abroad. We have strong links with SEAN (Study by Extension for All Nations).



A Community of Prayer and Peace

The Church of St Peter and St Paul, Uplyme

Church Buildings

The exceptionally attractive medieval church building was heavily restored in Victorian times and has recently been refurbished with new flooring, seating, lighting, an audio-visual system and new electronic organ. The normal capacity is 120 and this can be stretched to 200 by use of the gallery. The church is open during the daytime and there is disabled access.



Parish and village

Uplyme parish is a semi-rural parish based upon the village of Uplyme. The ecclesiastical parish of St Peter and St Paul, Uplyme coincides with the civil parish of Uplyme and has a population of 1700.

Primary School

There is a highly successful voluntary aided church primary school (Mrs. Ethelston's) situated next door to the church. The current roll is 160 pupils and the school is very much part of church family and village life. Approximately 90% of the children will transfer to the Woodroffe School in Lyme Regis.

Worship

Sunday Worship

Sunday Worship at Uplyme takes place at 10am and 6pm. The 10am worship is contemporary using on-screen liturgy. Children are welcome at communion. Average attendance at 10am is 60 adults and 8 children and in the evening 30 adults. The 6pm worship uses a seasonal worship booklet and is in a more traditional, contemplative style. The Electoral Roll for 2019 stands at 104.



Worship and Ministry Team

With the Bishop's approval, the previous incumbent established a large lay team which provides Worship and Ministry for non-Communion Worship.

Youth Work

Thanks to a very generous donation in 2018 we were able to employ on a 3-year term, a part time Youth Worker

Missional activities

Pastoral/Charities

We support 2 Uganda Charities – one with the help of Tear Fund for water storage and the other for a special needs school.

All Saints' Church, All Saints



Approximately 450 people live in the parish of All Saints which comprises several small, rural communities two miles from Axminster on the road to Chard. There is a strong and active community spirit typified by the Annual Summer Show, Christmas Concert and Pantomime! The centre is undoubtedly the Church, School and Village Hall, all of which are located together.

Notable features of our Victorian Church include two tablets engraved with the Ten Commandments, the eagle lectern and the pulpit. The entry glass doors, designed locally for the Millennium, represent the beauty of modern design. The back of the Church was re-ordered some time ago to create a more flexible use of the space.

Worship and the life of the Church

All Saints is committed to continuing to:

- place the church at the heart of the community we seek to serve
- be a warm, welcoming, peaceful place
- offer a variety of services which includes 8.00am Holy Communion, Parish Communion, Lay led Family Service 'Together @ 10' and Morning Prayer
- host quarterly 'Dementia friendly' services for the AVMC
- host annual festivals such as extra communion services during Lent, Dawn service at Easter, Rogation walk, Harvest festival, Carol service and carol singing around the village



Mission

Outreach is through a variety of methods including a monthly Parish Newsletter, produced by the Church for the community being distributed free of charge to every household in the Parish. The Church also holds a popular monthly 'Village Breakfast' in the Village Hall. In addition, a small team visits three local primary schools monthly in term time including All Saints to deliver dramatised Bible stories through the national 'Open the Book' scheme.

Finances

Currently the PCC is able to meet its annual obligation to the Common Fund and pay for all running costs and expenses. Last year, the PCC decided to join the national Parish Giving Scheme. One main benefit of this decision is the ease of reclaiming the 'Gift Aid'. This has helped us stabilise our finances and assist in funding the recent building projects. A separate Churchyard Fund helps to keep our Churchyard tidy. The PCC is also mindful of its obligations to others less fortunate than ourselves so recent donations have been given to local and national charities.

Areas of strength

- strong support of the local community
- monthly 'Junior Church'
- one Lay Reader and one Ordinand in training
- active 'Friends' group helping fund raising & refurbishments

Areas of development

- to continue and expand 'Junior Church'
- to consolidate and expand numbers of participants
- completion of Church restoration work (due for completion next year)

Holy Cross Church, Woodbury



Holy Cross Church is a licensed chapel in Woodbury Lane on the southern outskirts of Axminster. Because the church was built outside of Bishop's Rules it is a "Peculiar" and the congregation retain the right to maintain the building as they see fit.

Presently we hold a weekly Sunday Eucharist Service with an average congregation of 20-25 and the atmosphere is always warm and welcoming. Music is provided by a rota of excellent Organists and we have recently acquired a licence to hold wedding services.

Holy Cross is authorised by Axminster PCC to act independently in matters of worship, outreach and finance and we contribute proportionally to the Parish Common Fund and have always managed to raise adequate funds to run and maintain the Church.



St Andrew's Church, Chardstock

Chardstock is a thriving village (population just under 1000) with a Church, School, Pub, Post Office/Shop, a well-used Community Hall and many local interest groups. Apart from the village of Chardstock itself, the parish includes several smaller communities.

Standing in a picturesque setting, the church is a large building in the Victorian Decorated style — the building having been rebuilt in 1864. It is home to a faithful and friendly congregation happy to welcome newcomers and visitors alike. We have recently completed replacement of the chancel and transept roofs with the help of a Listed Places of Worship Grant and were 'highly valued' in the CPRE "Devon's best kept churchyard" 2019 competition. We have a small group of "Friends" to support fund raising for the fabric of the church, recently organising a very successful summer concert attended by 90+ villagers and friends.

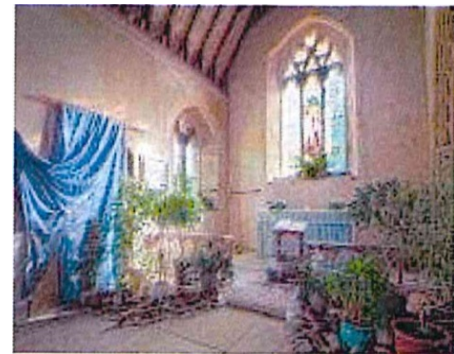


Worship and the life of the Church

We cater for a variety of liturgical tastes; with weekly services including a sung morning communion service, BCP evensong and a more informal monthly lay led ten o'clock service.

Church attendance is typically about 15 for a communion service, rising to 100 for Christmas and other special services and for significant village events, can be much higher.

We try and encourage prayer to be central to the life of the church with a prayer focussed "Garden of Gethsemane" and overnight vigil at Easter and we have participated in the National Weekend of Prayer in previous years.



The church is open every day and we are always searching for ways to encourage more of the villagers to come into the church on a regular basis. We have a well-used 'bring & buy' 2nd hand bookstall selling 12 books/week into the community, supplementing the limited mobile library service. Our monthly coffee mornings regularly attract 15-20 people, usually less than half of these are church members. We have revived the open Harvest supper for the village, this year's event attracting 60 villagers. The church is also one of the key venues for the annual Street Fayre.



We have strong ties with St. Andrew's C of E Primary School, which is at the other end of the village. Clergy from the Axe Valley Mission Community occasionally lead services at the school and the children come to church for particular festivals. We are currently looking to involve the school in the upkeep and development of the churchyard as a natural haven as well as a place of peace and quiet. Church members are involved in all the various groups that run in the village, including the voluntary driver help service and we make a significant contribution to the

Village Newsletter. We raise funds via a 'milk bottle' collection for two main charities throughout the year; usually a local one and an international one and have 4 special offerings per year for other charities.

St John Baptist, Membury

Membury itself is a long village lying in a steep valley, with a population of around 500. The Parish has two hamlets with a widespread rural community.

The church, which is always open during the day, is situated at one end of the village, alongside the primary school and the Village Hall. It is a well maintained Grade 1 listed building, dating from around AD 1100, which has developed and grown over the years. It is much loved and seats around 200 people. The tower houses six bells, five of which were re-furbished in 2009 and the old organ was replaced in 2007 by a larger reconditioned one.



Worship and the life of the Church

We offer a range of Sunday services usually at 11am. These include Holy Communion, Morning Prayer (BCP or modern version) and a monthly informal/all age service aimed at families.



We typically have a weekly congregation of about 14 adults and there are 26 people on the Electoral Roll.

Although not a church school, we have a good working relationship with the village community primary school, part of the Acorn Multi Academy Trust. A member of the clergy team regularly takes Assembly, and the school children come to the church for educational visits and seasonal services. They also have a Nativity

Service in the church just before Christmas and a Leavers' Service at the end of the summer term.

Members of the congregation recognise the need for worship and mission to evolve in order that the church can grow and the church is well supported by villagers especially at services such as Easter, Remembrance and Harvest. The Christmas services are also very well attended.

Activities

We occasionally host flower festivals, lunches and various other events, including an annual spring concert which is enjoyed by many of the villagers.

Church members are widely known and respected for their commitment to visiting the sick and contributing to what is known to be a neighbourly village.

Finance

The church is committed to charitable giving and donates 10% of its income to charity; at the same time we continue to meet our Common Fund contribution in full. Our latest Quinquennial Inspection identified a number of points for attention. A major requirement was the repointing of the church tower, which was carried out earlier this year. Several smaller items have been rectified by members of the congregation.

The new organ was provided as a generous gift and the bell restoration was financed by fund raising, grants and drawing on reserves. A new boiler for heating the church was installed nine years ago and was also paid for out of reserves.

The Church of St Mary the Virgin, Combyrne and Rousdon

Combyrne and Rousdon were originally separate parishes, but effectively formed a joint parish early last century. At present the total population is about 300. Combyrne has a well-documented history: its 'combe' was once the property of the Pyne family. Rousdon is of more recent origins and has increased in size with the housing development on the Rousdon Estate.

This is a farming community with a village hall and social club, a bakery, two garages, hotel and bed and breakfast hospitality, as well as other holiday accommodation.

The Church is a 13th Century (possibly Saxon foundation) Grade I Listed Building. Notable historic features include the unusual saddle back roof to the tower, two bells which are among the oldest in the Diocese and wall paintings — on which extensive conservation work was completed a few years ago, followed by re-decoration of the interior.



St. Mary the Virgin, Combyrne, Devon

Worship and the life of the church

Congregations are normally (but not always!) in single figures. There are six on the PCC and eight on the Electoral Roll. Special services can attract a larger congregation and for the annual Carol Service the church is usually full (60 or so). It is hoped to re-introduce a monthly all age Family Service and, with an increase in the number of children and young families in the parish, this is a priority.

Successful and well attended concerts have been held in the church — it is hoped that these can be repeated. There is usually a harvest supper in the village hall in October, in conjunction with the Harvest Festival, attracting people from all parts of the parish.

Schools

Young children can attend the C of E Primary School at nearby Uplyme and the Community Primary School in nearby Musbury; secondary education is available at Colyton Grammar School, the Woodroffe School in Lyme Regis and the Axe Valley Community College in Axminster.

Finance

Like many parishes, it is difficult to meet routine running costs without investment income and, when necessary, some use of reserves.

We join in the annual house to house collections in Christian Aid Week and make donations to a number of charities both local and further afield. We also respond, on occasion, to appeals from the DEC.

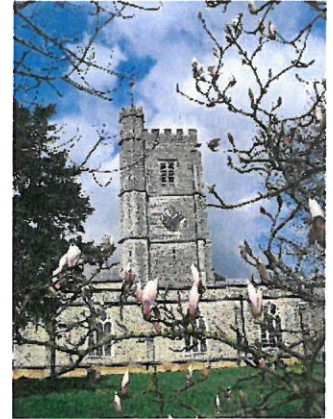
The Minster Church of St Mary the Virgin Axminster

The Minster is a medieval building, with some Saxon remains, at the heart of the community of Axminster, a small town in East Devon and is open every day. Whilst the Minster provides a large space for worship and activities both inside and out the heating, lighting and facilities are all in need of some updating, which we are hoping to undertake in 2020.

There is a Church Room, which provides usable space to the community year-round and a Parish Office both located within the grounds of The Minster and Rectory.

There are four regular services at the Minster each week, all Communion based, with an overall congregation of 70 per week. Bi-month we hold a popular Evensong with our wonderful benefice choir which has over 30 members. The choir is formed by other members of the Mission Community and those who just love to sing! In the New Year we are hoping to introduce more varied services on a Sunday. Additional services are held on Festival days, Easter and Christmas, with our Crib Service and Midnight Mass proving particularly popular with local residents.

The Minster meets its Common Fund contribution in full and supports various charities. It is actively involved with Axminster Churches Together.



The Friends of the Minster provide invaluable support to the church through its fundraising efforts.

We aim to encourage worship and friendship within the Church and the wider community.

Local schools use the church for services.

We hold a free lunchtime concert every Thursday between April and October followed by lunch @1.05.

Local organisations use the church for their fundraising events such as the Annual Axminster Allotment Association Flower and Vegetable show and the Light up Axminster Big Dinner.

Last year we launched our first annual Christmas Tree Festival which proved a huge success. The Minster is a wonderful venue for music and both the Axminster Chamber Choir and the Choral Society use the space for weekly rehearsals. Each organisation puts on at least one concert per year to wide acclaim.