*Clergy Role Description*

**Diocese of Durham**

*Role description signed off by:* Archdeacon of Durham Date: April 2025

To be reviewed 6 months after commencement of the appointment, and at Ministerial Development Review, alongside the setting of objectives.

**Details of Post**

*Role Title:* Assistant Curate (known as Associate Minister)

*Name of parish:* Holy Trinity, Darlington (part of the Darlington West Group)

*Deanery:* Darlington

*Archdeaconry:* Auckland

*Initial point of contact on terms of service:* Diocesan Secretary

1. **Role Purpose**

The vision of the Diocese is 'Blessing our communities in Jesus' name for the transformation of us all'. Within this the four core priorities are:

* Energising Growth
* Engaging with Children, Youth and Young People
* Challenging Poverty
* Caring for God’s Creation

In addition to the priorities, the Diocese is working to a Transformation strategy, and the expectation is that all our clergy will participate in this. Diocesan Transformation is designed to enable a future that leads to missional growth and financial sustainability for our churches and diocese.

**Safeguarding:** The Diocese of Durham is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults. All post holders and volunteers are expected to share this commitment.

**General**

* To share with the Bishop in the cure of souls in this parish in line with the Diocesan Vision, Priorities and Transformation Strategy described above.
* To be the Associate Minister for this parish (part of the Darlington West Group), having regard to the calling and responsibilities of the clergy of the Church of England as described in the Ordinal, the Canons, national safeguarding policies, and all other relevant legislation, and in accordance with the *Guidelines for the Professional Conduct of the Clergy 2015.* Specifically, the parish priest must give due regard to safeguarding policy and practice.
* To work with the Priest in Charge and PCC towards the development of the local church (both people and building) so that it is sustainable, and effective, in mission.
* To ensure that a high standard of worship, preaching and pastoral care is provided so that people are more able to live as disciples of Christ.
* To nurture discipleship and develop the ministry of all God's people, through training, cooperation, delegation, support and example, so that they take more responsibility for the mission and ministry of the parish; and seeking to identify potential future leaders and ministers.

* To encourage all church members to participate in generous giving for the mutual support of one another across the diocese, and the wider Church of England.
* To collaborate within the deanery in mission and ministry, and to participate in the shaping of ministry as resources and opportunities may require.
* To be proactive and persistent in seeking ecumenical cooperation wherever possible.

**Specific Context**

* This is a time-limited appointment of 5 years, working under the oversight of the Priest in Charge of St Cuthbert’s and Holy Trinity Darlington. The post is under Common Tenure and the funding comes from the Diocese of Durham Transformation grant from the Church Commissioners.
* The Associate Minister will be dedicated to ministry at Holy Trinity but will also be part of the staff team across the benefice and play their part in working across both churches where there are existing joint ministries.
* The Associate Minister will oversee the day-to-day running of Holy Trinity, reviewing and refreshing vision, leading the church in new avenues of discipleship and mission, developing leadership within the church and acting as the primary and focal minister at Holy Trinity.
* Holy Trinity Church has a thriving Sunday service, committed laity to enable the church to operate and a willingness to embrace change.
* The Associate Minister will live within the parish of Holy Trinity, work from home and have access to the office facilities in St Cuthbert’s.
* Under the Associate Minister there is an expectation that Holy Trinity will grow in number, discipleship, finance and its ministry to children and families. To support the latter there is a Children’s and Families worker at Holy Trinity who spearheads work with children and young people.
* Holy Trinity is a separate parish to St Cuthbert’s, with its own make up and vision. However, over the past 3 years, there has been an increase in joint working between the two churches, especially in small groups and work with children, young people and families. This has been very fruitful and a positive experience for all involved, and this is expected to continue with the appointment of an Associate Minister.

**Specific Roles**

In addition to everyday parish clergy leadership roles (e.g. prayer, leading Sunday services, preaching, occasional offices, being the face of the church), the key duties and responsibilities specific to this post focus around:

**Vision and processes**

* To help the PCC and the congregation to review and develop their current vision and adapt current mission and ministry structures to facilitate growth.
* To develop effective processes ensuring the PCC and the congregation have a dynamic relationship to their vision.
* To improve processes ensuring maximum engagement and collaboration from PCC members and the congregation for the discipleship and mission of the church.

**Discipleship**

* To enable people to grow as disciples, nurturing new and established Christians.
* To develop a mixed ecology pathway of faith development, including nurturing and developing existing small groups.
* To optimise the gifts and talents of the congregation through discerning, developing and using their gifts both within the church and in our mission to the community.
* To ensure the discipleship pathways for adults and children and families are intertwined and regularly reviewed and re-shaped.
* To foster a culture of generous giving both by the congregation and from the congregation, resulting in increased giving, increased income and increased opportunities.

**Mission**

* To establish strong relationships in the community, including identifying People of Peace (key people in the community who can enable our mission).
* To promote and encourage a missional mindset and to see the whole of church life through this lens.
* To support and enable the congregation and their relationships in the community as tools for mission.
* To help the congregation to discern new missional opportunities and enable them to develop new sustainable ministries or worshipping communities.
* To work with children and families to discern their missional opportunities and support them in it.
* To review Holy Trinity’s community assets (Walkington House and Pierremont Youth centre) through a lens of church mission and community.

**Growth**

* To grow the size of the congregation through missional growth: an accessible and welcoming culture, people coming to faith, harnessing those on the fringe and vibrant worship services (including potential new worshipping communities).
* To champion ministry among children, young people and families ensuring as a church we are growing younger.
* To support the work of the Children’s and Families Worker in facilitating inter-generational relationships and embedding children and families at the centre of the worship life of Holy Trinity.
* To monitor and report the relevant growth data to the Diocese.

**Leadership**

* To provide spiritual leadership at Holy Trinity, developing a culture of lay ministry rooted in discipleship.
* To develop strong pastoral relationships so that Holy Trinity can develop and implement processes for pastoral care and growing new leaders.
* To develop a ministry pattern which is sustainable for Holy Trinity’s ongoing future.
* To take a leadership role within the work of discipleship and children and young people across both Holy Trinity and St Cuthbert’s (these are already joint church ministries).

**2. Key Contacts**

* Priest-in-Charge of St Cuthbert and Holy Trinity
* Colleagues in the ministry team, including Pioneer Priest, Curate, Children and Families Worker
* Holy Trinity Churchwardens, Officers and PCC
* Archdeacon of Auckland, Area Dean, Lay Chair and Deanery Chapter
* Civic leaders in Darlington, including active and supportive local councillors.
* Heads of local schools, including The Federation of Abbey Schools, Reid Street Primary School and Queen Elizabeth Sixth Form College
* Churches Together Forum Darlington

**3. Person Specification**

A - Application Form. I – Interview. A & I - Application Form & Interview

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| **Ref:** | **Criteria** | **Essential /**  **Desirable** | **A / I** |
|  | **QUALIFICATIONS** |  |  |
| 1 | The successful candidate should be an ordained member of clergy within the Church of England at Incumbent level. | Essential | A |
|  | **EXPERIENCE** |  |  |
| 2 | Experience of leading a church/worshipping community into growth | Essential | A & I |
| 3 | Experience of making and nurturing disciples | Essential | A & I |
| 4 | Able to demonstrate both pastoral ability and strategic thinking. | Essential | A |
| 5 | Experience of effective ministry with children and young people | Desirable | A |
| 6 | Experience in strategic implementation of systems and processes to position a church for discipleship and growth. | Desirable | A & I |
|  | **KNOWLEDGE** |  |  |
| 7 | Familiarity with church growth models including mission and discipleship | Desirable | I |
| 8 | A clear and developed understanding of safeguarding policies and procedures and their implementation | Essential | A |
|  | **SKILLS & ABILITIES** |  |  |
| 9 | A deep commitment to a personal Christian faith, faithful in prayer and passionate to see that grow in others. | Essential | A & I |
| 10 | An effective preacher of the Gospel and a passion for mission | Essential | A & I |
| 11 | Strong independent organisational and time management skills, the  ability to adapt to a challenging workload and able to work independently, yet be a critical part of a team. | Essential | A |
| 12 | Ability to lead, inspire and gain trust, encouraging others to use and develop their gifts and flourish as a result. | Essential | A |
| 13 | Excellent communication and interpersonal skills being self-aware, honest and open. | Essential | A & I |
| 14 | Confident IT and social media skills with good knowledge of various presentation tools. | Desirable | A |
|  | **PERSONAL ATTRIBUTES & COMPETENCIES** |  |  |
| 15 | Motivated self-starter with a flexible attitude, demonstrating enthusiasm, resilience and tenacity. Embody a healthy sense of fun. | Essential | A & I |
| 16 | Able to work flexible day, weekend and evening hours. | Essential | A |
| 17 | Access to own transport, to support travel across the Diocese. | Desirable | A |

**4. Role Context**

Holy Trinity and St Cuthbert’s first shared a minister in 2018, within the allocation of stipends agreed in the Deanery Plan. However, in 2022 it was agreed to make St Cuthbert a Resourcing Church. This has enabled the church to receive the benefit of resources – including staff – for a time while funded by the SDF. With this support, with the leadership of James Harvey, and working together, both churches are seeing growth.

However, it is unusual for a Resourcing Church leader to have more than one church to serve, and the demands of St Cuthbert’s (especially its complicated reordering project) and of the leadership of the expanded team mean that growth at both churches will be inhibited unless there is focal clerical leadership at Holy Trinity. Working with the Diocesan Team, and drawing on resources within the Dioceses successful “Called to Fruitfulness” application to the SMMIB, the present post has been agreed to provide that.

The Associate Minister will provide focal leadership at Holy Trinity, releasing James Harvey to continue leading St Cuthbert’s. James remains Priest-in-Charge of both churches, and the sharing of missional work by the two churches in evangelism, youth-work and discipleship will continue. The Associate Minster joins the ministry team which serves both churches, but with the clear brief to effectively lead Holy Trinity day by day, and seek its growth, under the overall leadership of the Priest-in-Charge.

Holy Trinity is growing, and willing to embrace the challenge to grow further: this role has been agreed on the basis that this is pursued intentionally. The post has the following basis: half of the resources to fund this come from the Called to Fruitfulness / Transformation fund; the DBF provides the other half. This funding is agreed for five years; there will be a review of the role in the fifth year.

If there has been measurable growth (including an increased Parish Share), it is possible that the post will continue permanently (with the DBF then funding it fully). However, the post is unlikely to be continued if there has not been clear growth. So, applicants must be clear that there is no guarantee of the post continuing beyond this initial 5-year period.