

*PLYMPTON*  
*TEAM MINISTRY*  
*PROFILE*



St Mary's

[www.plymptonchurch.co.uk](http://www.plymptonchurch.co.uk)



St Maurice

[www.plymptonstmauricechurch.co.uk](http://www.plymptonstmauricechurch.co.uk)



*St. Mary the Blessed Virgin,  
Plympton, Plymouth.  
Parish Profile*



[www.plymptonchurch.co.uk](http://www.plymptonchurch.co.uk)



## Introduction

The two Anglican parishes of Plympton St Mary and Plympton St Maurice are about to enter a new and challenging period of their history and their journey in Christ. The parishes have had their own Vicars for many years but are now both vacant. The time is right for even closer working together so that we can represent to the people of Plympton, as a whole, the message of Christ and his kingdom.

Both PCCs have agreed to the formation of a Team Ministry. The Team Ministry will be responsible for both parishes. There will be a Team Rector (designate) based at St Mary's with overall responsibility for both parishes. A Team Vicar (designate) will be based at St Maurice, with .5 for both parishes. The two parishes of St Mary's and St Maurice are therefore seeking to appoint a Team Rector (designate). Once the Team Rector (designate) has been appointed the present curate of St Mary's will become Team Vicar (designate) at St Maurice. He will be in a rare position of having a good understanding of both parishes. Traditionally St Mary's has had a curate.

The approximate population Plympton is 31,000, St. Mary's is the larger with an estimated population of 26,000.

There is a summary relating to the parish of St Maurice on pages 2 and 3. The full profile for St Maurice can be found at [www.plymptonstmauricechurch.co.uk/vacancy.html](http://www.plymptonstmauricechurch.co.uk/vacancy.html). The pages that follow then relate to St Mary's.

## Where are we?

Plympton is a suburb on the eastern side of the Plymouth unitary authority, some 6 miles from the city centre with its good range of shops. We are perfectly situated to enjoy the beautiful area of Devon and Cornwall with its holiday attractions, coastal areas, beaches and moorland. We nestle close to the south west corner of Dartmoor where the old tungsten mine of Hemerdon is being re-opened. Within 15 minutes of the parish we can be walking on Dartmoor or enjoying the delights of the South Devon coast. There is easy access to Cornwall across the Tamar toll bridge or Torpoint ferry. There is a good road link to Exeter and other parts of Devon.



Plymouth Hoe overlooks the Sound and is a superb viewpoint from which Sir Francis Drake is said to have set sail. Plymouth Sound, where the Rivers Plym and Tamar meet is an area used by naval ships, the cross-channel ferry and fishing boats. It attracts events such as Powerboat racing and the Fastnet Race. The national annual fireworks championship takes place here. Plymouth features a number of good restaurants and attractions such as The

National Aquarium and theatres. There are two universities both with growing reputations. The University of St Mark and St John has a Christian foundation and a good reputation for teacher training. The largest is the University of Plymouth with over 30,000 students. The Plymouth College of Art, is a higher education establishment heading towards university status.

Historically Plympton St Mary has been a largely residential area and had its origins as a series of three villages quite distinct from the city of Plymouth into which it has been subsumed. In Plympton there are supermarkets, butchers, greengrocers, banks and post offices. There are some small light industrial areas with a larger one on the city boundary where a gas fired power station has recently been built. Within the parish there are also distinct residential areas: Chaddlewood, Woodford, Underwood and Colebrook. There are 10 nursing and residential homes which are visited regularly.

## **Plympton St Maurice**

Our Vision - We are seeking to know God better and to make God better known through the teaching and example.

Our PCC is passionate and pro-active in developing the vision of a place where all are welcome and the good news of the gospel is for sharing. The PCC members need to be prayerful and open to God's will and not simply wanting to maintain the status quo or the concept of an exclusive club; it must not be afraid of change which if it comes, should be worked through prayerfully and sensitively.

In terms of worship and church life we are open to the idea of ministering to all. We aim to reflect our surrounding community, and therefore all need to grow together, being aware of each other's strengths and weaknesses, encouraging one another in the growth of gifts and allowing all to flourish.

As a PCC we are very clear about the Church existing for the benefit of its non-members. It is committed to constantly reflecting on how the church looks through the eyes of a non-member and how we can minister effectively in the light of that reflection.

Overall, we as a church continue to rise to the challenge of creating, continuing, and strengthening bonds with other groups we work alongside. We know that we must be prepared to find common ground, and widen it with care and love, following the example of Christ

## **Our Community**



St Maurice Church is involved in many of the local community activities and the Church Hall provides a venue for some of these.

Here are some of the groups we have both within the Church and the community that make up our "patchwork".

## **The Parish Needs of St Mary's**

The parish of Plympton St Mary is a positive community that works well together. Newcomers are made welcome and at home, but we need to be more active in making the church organisations available to newcomers. The parish looks forward to a new Team Rector (designate) who will take it forward having been able to take a fresh look, evaluate our effectiveness and inspire individual and community growth.

A four-baby baptism produces a congregation of 150+ on a Sunday. The yearly memorial service similarly fills the church. How do we build links with those who come to the church for the occasional offices?

The development of links with Plympton St Maurice is an exciting prospect and will require some new ideas to make the two parishes a successful Team Ministry for all the people of Plympton; strong persuasive leadership that enables cooperative and collaborative working is needed. The result is expected to be an attractive church acting as a beacon within Plympton and in which the wider community recognises the difference our faith makes.

Our new Team Rector (designate) will have an interest in education and a particular commitment to the development of our voluntary aided infant school.

We are looking for somebody who will form good working relationships, who will inspire confidence and deepen our relationship with Christ. The ideal person would be:

### **A Teacher**

- A priest with vision, wide horizons who will challenge, provoke and support our Christian belief and practice and who will make time for his/her own prayer, CME, study, retreat and re-creation.

### **A Leader**

- One who will be able to identify the strengths and talents of members of the congregation and who will have good organisational skills. In order to develop a proactive ministry, we need a person able to delegate effectively. This will require support from the congregations through prayer and physical resources. A person who will work to make a strong partnership with the Plympton St Maurice colleague so that both support each other in the mission to Plympton as a whole

### **A Pastor**

- With the help and support of an active congregation, one who is concerned to meet the needs of all we encounter

### **A Role within the Wider Community**

- Many Plymptonians feel that St. Mary's is their church but need to be encouraged to participate. It is



- important to have a presence in the Community Council and to provide opportunities for civic leaders to join in worship.

### **One with a Sense of Liturgy**

- We use mostly Common Worship but retain the Book of Common Prayer for Sunday Evensong.

### **What is our mission and vision?**

We summarize our work as “Serving Christ in the heart of Plympton and beyond” and in 2013 we set out on a project, ‘Growing the Church’. Initially we set our priorities and drew up an action plan. Our understanding of the project may be summarised as “growth within, growth among and growth beyond”

Our aims are:

- a) to build up the confidence of members of the congregations – nurture, understanding of the faith and ability to live an effective Christian life. It is not necessarily about increasing numbers, it is about strengthening our relationship with Christ.
- b) to develop support and pastoral care within the congregations
- c) to reach beyond the existing members to the needs of the wider community and ensure our life is known by the wider community

The PCC has considered the current resolutions regarding women priests and has made no change. The parish has been served by several women priests (the latest of which was the incumbent.)

### **Plympton St. Mary's Church of England Voluntary Aided Infants School**

We are well served with good schools in the parish, all of whom visit the church as part of their curriculum and most use the church for their Christmas Carol Services. There are two secondary schools, five primary schools and one infants’ school.

An important part of our parish is a voluntary aided infants’ school; the parish priest takes a leading role serving as a governor and leading worship.

The Ofsted report of 2013 described Plympton St Mary (C/E) Infant School as a good school in which pupils’ attainment at the end of Year 2 is above average in reading, writing and mathematics. Pupils make good progress because they are well taught and have positive attitudes towards learning and working together. There are currently seven classes; the school having taken a bulge year group that will leave in the summer of 2015 when there is expected to be six classes.



**Open the Book**

The recent SIAMS report (2014) described the school as satisfactory and identified strengths as the Christian values that permeate the school and these are reflected in relationships and the curriculum. Governors and staff promote these values through the work of a Governors’ sub-committee,

which has been praised by the Diocese for its work. Behaviour of pupils is also good. An area for development that was identified and teachers now have as a part of performance management is more involvement of the children in planning and leading worship. As from the spring term on one day a week worship will take place in year groups in order to target the different age children more appropriately.

There is a good understanding of the nature and purpose of a church school and we seek to promote its distinctive character. It is an inclusive school in which its Christian foundation is acknowledged within the context of a school serving the whole community. We are working hard to maintain close links between church and school; school worship takes place in the church once every half term and clergy lead an act of worship in the school each week (which is also attended by the children's families); regular reports from the school are given to the PCC. Within school there is a prayer tree that the children are encouraged to use to record their prayers and thoughts. These are offered in church at the half termly church service. It will be vital for our new priest to build on this situation and support the school in making further improvements."

There is a group with members from both Plympton St Mary and Plympton St Maurice that visit schools for occasional acts of collective worship based on "Open the Book."

### **Hall and Parish Centre**

Next to the infants school there is a modern hall and parish centre (built 1990), including the parish office. It is well-used by church groups and the wider community and is a source of income.

Across the road is the parish church, a large medieval building (1311 A.D.), surrounded by a six acre churchyard and with a tower of 8 bells. In recent times several major building projects have been completed including internal lighting which has accentuated the features of the building. Some external masonry restoration has been completed with more to be done. Internally redecoration will be needed when the masonry has dried out. The organ has also refurbished during the summer of 2014. The parish has managed to finance this work through careful budgeting. In addition funds were raised for the necessary restoration of the bells. This work should be completed early in this year.

In part of the grounds stand the remains of the Augustinian Plympton Priory. These are managed on a voluntary basis by the Plympton Civic Society.

At present on the staff there is the curate assisted by an experienced reader, three retired clergy who worship with us and who also have permission to officiate and a retired reader.

### **What sort of worshipping community are we?**

Within the parish there is a strong sense of worship and recognition of its importance. Worship is eucharistically centered and vestments are worn. The daily offices are said in church and Holy Communion celebrated 4 times a week so there is a wide range of formal liturgical experiences.

There are currently 191 on the electoral roll, average Sunday attendance is 165 and the worshipping community is recorded as 195. The figures for occasional offices vary from year to year. In 2014 there were 60 baptisms, 76 funerals and 41 weddings and five adults came forward for confirmation.

Sunday services with typical attendances.  
8 am: Holy Communion 20 – 25  
(Common Worship Order 1, traditional)  
9.30 am: Morning Prayer (said in the choir)  
10.00 am: Parish Communion 100 – 130  
(CW Order 1)  
6.30 pm: Evensong (BCP) 30

Baptisms are held on the 2nd and 4th Sundays  
of the month at 11.45

#### Weekday services

Monday: Morning Prayer, Evening Prayer  
Tuesday: Morning Prayer, Holy Communion 11.00 am (BCP), Evening Prayer  
Wednesday: Morning Prayer with Holy Communion  
Thursday: Morning Prayer, Evening Prayer with Holy Communion  
Friday: Morning Prayer with Holy Communion, Evening Prayer  
Saturday: Morning Prayer, Evening Prayer

Weekday communicants average 27

We reserve the sacrament for distribution at residential homes and for communion of the sick.

#### Music

We have a Director of Music and a deputy organist. They share the playing for services. The Choir, which is affiliated to the RSCM, attends Parish Communion and Evensong. A music group plays once a month. Our organ has recently been refurbished.

#### Chaddlewood

Chaddlewood is a large residential area within Plympton St Mary built in the seventies. There are various community centres within Plympton St Mary, and the church has put a great deal into establishing one in particular - Chaddlewood Farm Community Centre. The church has been instrumental in helping it to be established with strong foundations. In the 25 yrs. since its inception, the Church at Chaddlewood has learnt about the advantages of having no building of its own, but also the insecurities of being dependent on the goodwill and co-operation of the Centre trustees. One of the Trustees is a church member.

Originally it was considered important as a parish that we should develop a particular ministry in that area using local buildings. When there were two stipendiary curates on the staff, one had responsibility for this project and we developed a joint venture with Methodists in establishing Chaddlewood United Church. At one time the possibility of establishing a Local Ecumenical Project (LEP) was considered. At present worship is conducted in the Community Centre on 2 Sundays each month led by St Mary's staff. On the third Sunday the congregation comes to St Mary's for the Parish Eucharist.



## Chaddlewood Pattern of Worship

1st Sunday of the month Methodist Service at Colebrook Methodist Church  
2nd Sunday Morning Prayer at Chaddlewood Community Centre led by a Reader  
3rd Sunday Parish Communion at St Mary's  
4th Sunday Holy Communion at Chaddlewood Community Centre  
5th Sunday Lay led service at Chaddlewood

## Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Challenges of Plympton St Mary's

This is a parish that is able to provide committed teams of volunteers with practical skills, but at the same time has found it difficult to develop sufficient house group leaders. It is financially committed to meeting its Common Fund contributions. Visitors and newcomers receive a warm and friendly welcome from the sides-people and the congregation as a whole.

It is a parish that is realistic and recognises that there are challenges that have to be faced. The parish does tend to be rather insular; few members of our congregation attend ecumenical events held in the various neighbouring churches.

The ethos often feels one of maintenance rather than of mission. This is hindered by the lack of sufficient administrative support. If the successful candidate is to be proactive within the parish then he/she will have to be able to rely on an administrator as well as more lay leaders to take responsibility for example for some pastoral visiting, leadership of house groups. Although a start has been made, it has been a challenge and more needs to be done.

There are opportunities and indicators of the desire to move forward. For instance, "Café Praise" is a fresh expression of church which is lay led and a joint venture with Plympton St Maurice. It meets once a month and sometimes attracts up to 20 children. They meet in the church hall where they usually begin with a craft activity related to the chosen theme, have an informal act of worship followed by something to eat and drink. They lead occasional acts of worship in church such as at Christmas and on Good Friday. There is a group, drawn from both parishes, trained in the use of "Open the Book" and they visit schools in the parish.



**Café Praise**

Although the number of weddings has fallen in recent years, occasional offices continue to attract reasonable numbers and often provide opportunities to welcome people who do not regularly attend church. All baptism families and couples to be married come for preparation meetings. Each of these meetings is supported by members of our congregations. There is a bereavement group for the recently bereaved. We have an annual Memorial Service, to which we invite all the families, who have had funerals over the past year.

There are opportunities for a new incumbent to take us forward.

## Churches in Plympton

Churches Together in Plympton hold regular meetings and plan some joint undertakings at key points in the year. Other churches in Plympton are; Our Lady of Lourdes, (Roman Catholic), there are three Methodist churches at Woodford, Colebrook and The Ridgeway. Also there is the Chaddlewood Baptist Community Church, The Living Well Church, St Peter's Lutheran Church and the Brethren who meet at the Underwood Chapel.

## What support is available for the new incumbent?

### Vicarage



The vicarage is a short distance from the church and has recently undergone some refurbishment work, including the kitchen and en suite bathroom. The property comprises a sitting room and large dining room to the front of the ground floor and a kitchen, dining area, utility and store to the rear. There is a ground floor WC. The dining room has a small room annexed to it. There is an option, should the next occupant wish this, to sub-divide the front dining room to create a study. On the first floor there are four bedrooms, one en suite and one family bathroom.

There is another room in the roof space, although with winding steps and low door height access is slightly compromised.

There is a medium large garden to the rear, with access only through the house. There is no garage but parking for two –three cars on the front drive.

### Parish Organisations

The PCC receives the Annual Report and Financial statement at the Annual Parish Meeting held in April each year. This gives details of the various activities within the church as well as the financial statement. These reports can be found at Parish Web site, <http://plymptonchurch.co.uk/annual-reports/>. The reports for years 2012 and 2013 are very comprehensive containing articles on the complete range of our activities. They may well give your ideas for us to take the parish forward together as we embark on a new phase in the 700 years of its history.

There are many of the familiar groups associated with traditional parish life: choir, servers, acolytes, sidespersons, bell ringers, handbell ringers, Mothers Union, Sunday Club, prayer groups and study groups. There are practical groups, connected with churchyard maintenance, care of the interior of the church, church watch (which keeps the church open during the Summer months by stewarding), and there are those who assist schools, when they make a church visit for work in religious education, art and local history.

The pre-school and parent and toddler group use the hall during the term-time. There is an initiative called Melting Pot, set-up originally for the bereaved, unattached, divorced and separated; this now serves a wide social need and one does not have to fit the specification to join in the activities.

We have a Sunday Club that meets during the Parish Eucharist and follows a programme that is based on the Sunday readings. They join the service at the Offertory and usually give a report of their morning activity to the whole congregation before the blessing.

### **Lay initiatives**

Many of the organisations listed were started by lay members of the congregation in response to perceived need. A feature of the parish is the large number of people able to take responsibility for our wide range of practical activities. For example, the sacristan can be relied upon to prepare everything needed for worship, the vergers can be relied upon to be present whenever needed, the churchyard is well managed, and the churchwardens fulfil their roles effectively and with commendable responsibility.

### **Parish Administration**

There is a Parish Office in the Hall building where the Vicar has an Office and volunteers are present each morning of the week. There are telephones, IT and printing equipment as well as some storage space.

The PCC is well served by an efficient secretary, and a treasurer who works tirelessly to ensure that finances are well managed and produces an annual budget for PCC consideration. The Parish finances demonstrate that to date we have always been able to meet Common Fund responsibilities.

Christian Stewardship renewal programmes have been undertaken for about the last 35 years, once every four years. The latest renewal was in the year 2013. Every time the renewal programme has taken place it has increased the time, talents and money offered for God's work. All clergy expenses are reimbursed in full.

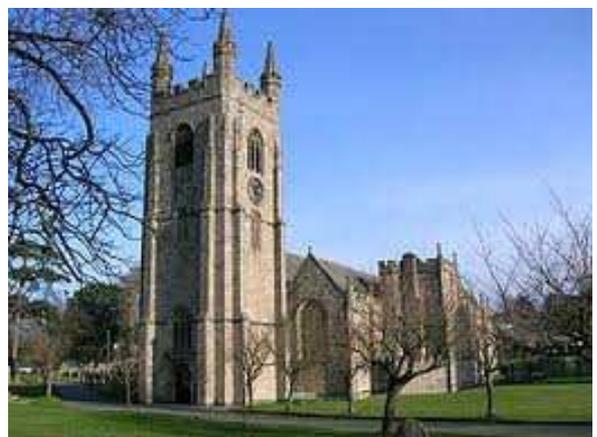
### **The Plympton Community**

There is still very much sense of being within a local community. The population of Plympton has been growing for many years. There are large areas owned by organizations such as Woodland Trust and The National Trust (the stately home Saltram House is in the parish.)

For the whole of the Plympton area there are two secondary comprehensive schools with academy status, seven primaries, one infants and one special school. The children from these schools come to the church for various project work and some of them come to the parish church for seasonal worship and events. There are links with both comprehensives.

There is a number of nursing and residential homes care for the elderly. We visit these and take Holy Communion to them as requested.

There is great affection for the beautiful church and churchyard within the wider community. In 2011-12 we celebrated 700th anniversary of the parish. The local flower arrangers organized a flower festival and raised £7263 for the church. Local trades' people are employed to do most of the church's maintenance work.



There is a Community Council in the area, designed to co-ordinate local activities and to organize the May Fair and other community events.

As an ancient stannary town we have our own elected Stannator - an individual elected annually from one of the major community organizations; the Vicars of St. Mary's have been elected Stannators on two occasions. The office is non-political, but provides a contact with the wide variety of organizations in the community. We have a good relationship with the uniformed organizations – Scouts and Guides attend special services such as St Georges Day Parade, Remembrance Sunday Parade.

In recent years two Lord Mayors of Plymouth have chosen clergy from this parish as their Chaplains.

### **In conclusion**

We hope that you have found our description of the parish interesting and that it offers an exciting prospect. If so we pray that you will answer our call for a new Rector (designate). We have tried to present a flavour of the parish and look forward to the next stage in our quest. We hope to meet you to show you around, discuss possibilities and answer all your questions.