

*The Diocese of Monmouth*

# NETHERWENT MINISTRY AREA



**PROFILE FOR THE POST  
MINISTRY AREA TEAM LEADER  
(Rector/ Area Dean)**



## Introduction from the Bishop of Monmouth

Dear Friend in Christ,

Welcome to the profile outlining the role of Ministry Area Leader in the Netherwent Ministry Area (MA). I am delighted that you are considering this significant post in our diocese and hope that the potential and possibilities for ministry here excites you as much as it excites us.

In the pages of this profile you will catch a glimpse of the wonderful things that God is already doing in the churches of the MA and the signs of hope that are there to be nurtured and built on for the future. The MA was formed two years ago and, thanks to the hard work of many, solid foundations have been laid in terms of the governance and

financial operations of this group of churches. The congregations are now looking for a priest who will work with them to build on these foundations and develop further their worship and witness, mission and ministry in the local communities.

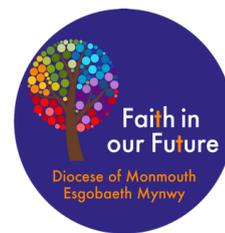
We are intent on developing a culture of openness, honesty and transparency here in the diocese, mindful that everyone works best when there is mutual support, trust and respect. We place great importance on good teamwork at every level of our diocesan life where people share leadership and responsibility and everyone is encouraged and supported in being able to flourish in the ministries that God has entrusted to them. We seek to demonstrate this in the Bishop's Staff Team and the Diocesan Office as well as in our Ministry Areas.

One of the branches of our diocesan vision is stewardship and we are clear that this is not just about money, time and talents but about looking after and using well everything that God has given to us. For us, this includes paying attention to our own wellbeing and the wellbeing of others as well as providing opportunities for each child of God to grow as a disciple of Jesus and to offer all that they are in his service.

Foundational to all of this is our life of prayer and worship together. We are looking to develop opportunities for people to deepen their life of prayer at local and diocesan level and to encourage acts of worship and praise that connect with people's deepest needs and desires and lifts their hearts and minds to the One who creates, loves and redeems all that is.

If this sounds to be the kind of place where you would like to live and minister, then please do explore this post further. May God bless and guide you as you discern his call on your life.

# NEW OPPORTUNITIES



## Ministry Areas

The Diocese of Monmouth, along with the rest of the Church in Wales, has established 16 Ministry Areas. These are organised as Rectorial Benefices and each Ministry Area benefits from one ministry team working collaboratively with each other and local congregations. The Ministry Area has a Ministry Area Council with licensed clergy and a good representation of people from our local churches. Each church (or small group of churches) is encouraged to hold regular congregational meetings to which much of the day-to-day responsibility for the local churches can be delegated by the Ministry Area Council. The Ministry Areas have also been adopted as the Deaneries in the Diocese so the Team leader is the Area Dean.

**The Netherwent Ministry Area** was formed on February 22<sup>nd</sup> 2022 as an amalgamation of three existing ministry areas/groups of churches (the Caldicot Benefice, the Magor Ministry Area and most of the Wentwood Ministry Area). Two years on from the inauguration, and with a change in clergy personnel approaching, it was decided to conduct a review to see what lessons could be learnt from the experiences as a Ministry Area so far. A questionnaire was sent to Ministry Area Council members, Churchwardens, Treasurers and members of the congregations. Respondents were asked what has gone well in the last 2 years and what improvements could be made. There

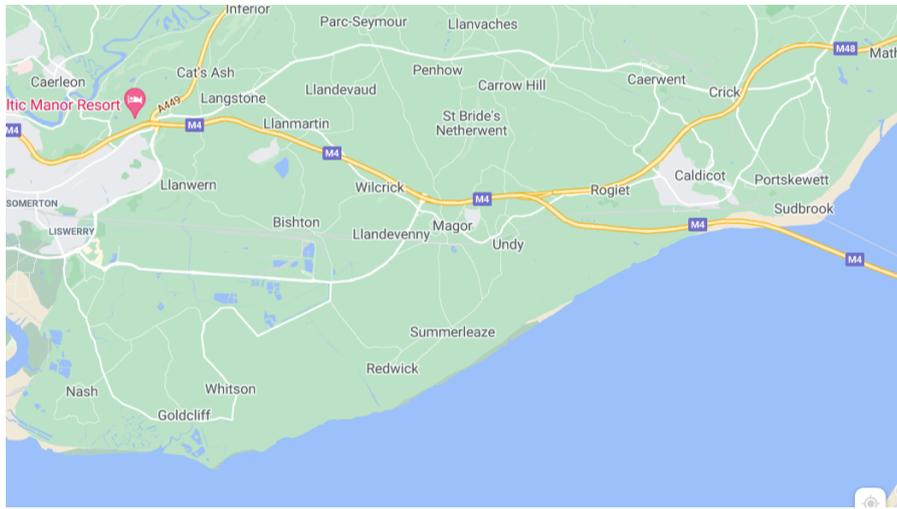


was an excellent response to the questionnaire and there were positive thoughts about some changes that would be beneficial in the structure within the Ministry Area and the Ministry Area Council.

There are some ideas around how this might happen which have been suggested in the review and we are looking and praying for a Ministry Area Leader who will be excited about working closely with the Ministry Area Council to consider thoughts from this review as well as offering some creative thinking to build on the good foundations which have been laid.

There is also a vacancy for another stipendiary priest and the new Team Leader will have the opportunity to shape that appointment.

We think this offers really exciting possibilities and look forward to sharing the vision of a new creative and energetic Team Leader.



## OUR MINISTRY AREA

**Netherwent** (a name dating back to Norman times and meaning 'Gwent beneath the wood') is situated in the South-east corner of Wales and covers an area that stretches from Wentwood Forest and Sudbrook in the east in the County of Monmouthshire to Nash, Glan Llyn and Langstone in the west in the City of Newport. The population is approximately 30,500 and from east to west the ministry area is 15 miles long.

The Ministry Area is made up of several large areas of population together with many smaller villages and hamlets. The M4 motorway passes through the Ministry Area and the Severn Estuary and Wales Coastal Path runs along the most southerly border. The area contains several areas of outstanding natural beauty; the cities of Newport, Cardiff and Bristol are within easy travelling distance and there are excellent transport links to the rest of Wales, London and the Southeast, the Midlands, the Northwest and Northeast. There are several very good schools both at primary and secondary levels, including two Church in Wales Primary Schools and a Welsh Language Primary School. There is also good healthcare provision, an excellent variety of retail outlets and plenty of opportunities to pursue leisure activities.

The population is made up of some who have always lived here, those working in local businesses, commuters working in Bristol, Newport, Cardiff and further afield and those who have decided to retire here. The building of new housing has dramatically increased the population over the past few decades and further developments are either already underway or planned to commence in the coming years.

Despite the population growth the village 'feel' has been largely maintained and people say they feel welcomed and settle here readily. Strong supportive communities are a feature of this area, and you would be sure of an enthusiastic welcome!

The Netherwent Ministry Area is comprised of eighteen churches and each of our congregations were invited to provide a short introduction to themselves – please see appendix 1. Further details of each of our church buildings and congregations can also be found on our websites.

The Revd Canon Jeremy Harris has been the Ministry Area Leader and will retire at the end of May. The clergy team will then consist of 3 stipendiary priests (including the Team leader), 2 house for duty priests and 2 non-stipendiary associate priests. In addition, there are several

priests living locally who hold permission to officiate, many of whom lead a service once or twice a month. We also have eight Licensed Lay Ministers (Readers) and a team of commissioned pastoral visitors and lay worship leaders.

**Our vision** is to equip each of our local churches to be warm and welcoming faith communities, reaching out and connecting with the wider population and manifesting God's love for all. Each church has begun to engage with the Diocesan 'Faith in our Future' initiative and held local sessions to set out its vision for worship, outreach, mission and work with young families. We look forward to engaging with the new Ministry Area Leader, the ministry team and also the Diocesan Director of Ministry, to integrate this work into a programme for the whole Ministry Area.

**Together** we want to be a united and strong Ministry Area; nurturing the local identities, fellowship and pastoral support of our church communities and at the same time realising the opportunities of working together to share resources in order to undertake mission activities as we grow in faith, love and outreach.



**Our buildings** are much loved and well cared for. We have a strong property group in the Ministry Area who do invaluable work in helping to look after them. However, we recognise the high cost of maintenance and repair of many historic buildings and we look forward to developing a long term strategy for our buildings, particularly for our village churches with small congregations.

**The church is the focus of community activity** in many of our communities and a wide number and variety of spiritual and secular events are organised throughout the year. Average Sunday attendance figures do not tell the story of the relevance, outreach and engagement with the wider community, who may not attend services regularly, but do come to concerts, fetes, lunches, coffee mornings and teas and who feel a sense of belonging to and ownership of the local church. Groups of local churches have been working together for many years and support each other's activities and events.

**Worship** is centred upon the time when we gather together both on Sundays and other days of the week. We are also aware that a growing number of people are not able or may not wish to attend a service in person, and so we want to continue to offer online worship. There are a variety of different styles of worship in our churches and our aim is to provide worship that is vibrant and relevant with a strong emphasis on the ministry of Word and Sacrament. Services are led both by ordained clergy and licensed lay ministers and people are strongly encouraged to take part by

reading, acting as sides-people, leading intercessions, assisting in the offertory, chalice assistants, playing musical instruments, singing, bell ringing etc.

Across the new Ministry Area there are approximately fourteen services each Sunday. In 2023 the average adult attendance was approximately 210 with 20 children participating in monthly family services. We also have three mid-week services as well as numerous other groups meeting together for fellowship and study. When there is a 5<sup>th</sup> Sunday our church groupings have traditionally met together for a united service and we are keen to think further about how this might look in the future. A more detailed analysis of our service pattern can be found in appendix 2.

**Festival services and occasional offices** often draw large attendances from the local community and festival services during Christmas, Easter, Harvest, Remembrance etc are often highlights of the year. Our churches are also popular venues for weddings and funerals and many families bring their children to be baptised. We are keen to further develop our links through such opportunities.



**Children and young families** are important to us and this is an area that we want to develop further. Our work with them is currently mainly centred around our All-Age services, children's groups, Messy Church and visiting local schools.

There are eleven primary schools and one secondary school within the Ministry Area and members of our ministry team regularly visit many of them to lead collective worship/ assemblies; a licensed lay minister acts as chaplain to the secondary school in Caldicot and one of our stipendiary priests is a member of the school's Governing Body. We have two Church in Wales Primary Schools (Magor and Portskewett) and pro-actively support them. We also have good links with many of the uniformed organisations (Scouting, Guiding, Air Cadets etc).

**Change and opportunity:** several of our communities are growing substantially as a result of new housing developments, bringing younger families and young singles/couples. This provides us with a good opportunity to engage with and help to create new, more diverse and stronger communities with the church at its heart. Other communities are rising to the challenges brought by an older population, finding practical and innovative ways to support each other. Growing as disciples is a key part of our Diocesan strategy and we are keen for our new Ministry Area Leader and ministry team to encourage us in the establishment of more regular house, prayer and bible study groups and also to identify opportunities to engage with non-church goers in our communities.

**Financially** we are solvent, and our ministry share payments are up to date. We do however recognise that there is work to be done to develop a long-term strategy so that our churches are financially sustainable for the future.

**Strong ecumenical links:** numerous joint services, study groups, talks and social gatherings happen between our churches and other local faith-based groups. This is important to us and something that we hope we can build upon more.

**And...** we have several other groups that meet regularly including coffee morning & social events; craft groups; parent and toddler groups; bell ringers and a church choir. We are blessed to have three active branches of the Mothers Union and there are several social action groups with outreach activities in the Ministry Area, which have become increasingly prominent in recent years. All of these things offer valuable opportunities to engage with people who do not regularly attend church services.

We know that there are challenges to be faced as we move forward but we also recognise the many opportunities that exist. Many of our local churches have worked well together for some time and there is real determination to face up to any challenges and a growing desire for belonging and growing together. We recognise that there is much work to be done but there is a strong desire to move forward, to look outwards and to grow.



## OUR NEW MINISTRY AREA TEAM LEADER

With the introduction of Ministry Areas in the Diocese we want to ensure a sustainable model of ministry, building a team of lay and ordained ministers with different and complementary gifts, but a team who will work collaboratively together. The flourishing of all God's people is at the heart of our vision for the future as well as the recognition of the importance and uniqueness of individual churches within the Ministry Area.

All licensed clergy and lay ministers are licensed by Bishop Cherry to serve collectively across the Ministry Area and there will be a need for flexibility in responsibilities; however, we also recognise the vital importance of local '*presence*' and of building relationships with both worshippers and identifiable communities in the Ministry Area.

We are looking to recruit a new Ministry Area Leader who can develop a way of working within the ministry team that is realistic and sustainable; building on good foundations and work done so far but also learning lessons from the experiences of the first couple of years as a ministry area. In particular, we believe that the new leader will need to delegate a significant number of administrative tasks to willing volunteers throughout the Ministry Area. We see this as a real opportunity for someone who is excited about the potential of working with others, lay and ordained, and seeking to build a growing church.

We are open to all applicants, regardless of age, race, gender, sexuality, disability or relationship status.

## **We are looking for someone who: -**

- Has a strong faith and a heart for community, for mission and for nurturing disciples
- Has a heart for evangelism as we seek to reach out into our communities to share the gospel more widely. We want someone who recognises that churches can grow, and inspires others with that belief and vision.
- Has a servant-heart, who is confident, possesses good relational skills and who is prepared to be 'hands-on' whilst not losing sight of the 'bigger picture'.
- Has excellent interpersonal skills including the ability to foster vocations and to build relationships with colleagues, church members and the wider community.
- Has ability to forge, maintain and develop good relationships with people of all ages including schools, young people and their families.
- Will recognise the contribution and value of each individual church, whilst also seeking to foster a sense of unity and purpose across the Ministry Area as a whole.
- Has experience as a good leader and communicator who recognises the importance of teamwork and collaborative ministry, including the ability to delegate, motivate, inspire and effectively co-ordinate volunteers, colleagues and community partners.
- Will be open to enabling a variety of forms of worship.
- Is prepared to build relationships in the wider community and to be well known, trusted and liked in the communities that we serve.
- Has a real desire for the excitement and challenge of ensuring an effective structure helps the ministry area to grow. This will be done in conjunction with an innovative and supportive Ministry Area team of clergy and lay people.

## **In return you will: -**

- Be well supported by colleagues, church officers and our local congregations.
- Be encouraged to continue to develop your skills through our diocesan programme of continuing ministerial development and other opportunities.
- Receive the standard remuneration package of a Ministry Area Leader/ Area Dean in the Church in Wales.
- Receive expenses in accordance with the Church in Wales policy.
- Receive fees for weddings and funerals conducted.

# THE RECTORY

There is a lovely large modern four bedroomed house with a good sized lawned garden situated in the village of Llanvaches in the North of the ministry area.

Llanvaches is an attractive village situated just a mile from the A48 which provides easy access to the M4 and other main transport links. The nearest station is Severn Tunnel Junction just a few miles away. Excellent local schools; a good range of shops, food outlets, restaurants; healthcare and leisure facilities are available within easy travelling distance of the village. It provides easy access to the rest of the Ministry Area. There is also office space available in the church centre in Magor which the Ministry Area Team leader can use.



Address:	The Rectory, Llanvaches, NP26 3AY
Style:	Detached, two-storey house
Bedrooms:	Four
Bathrooms:	One bathroom and one shower room
Kitchen:	Fitted kitchen with separate utility room
Study:	Access to study and cloakroom from the porch
Date built:	2006
Heating and hot water:	Gas combi boiler, gas fire to sitting room
EPC rating:	C
Drainage:	Cesspit (maintained by the Diocesan Parsonage Board)
Garage:	Detached, single
Boundaries:	Mixture of stone and timber
Grounds:	Level to front and rear
Trees:	Ornamental
Drive and parking spaces:	Tarmacadam drive with room for four cars



## TO APPLY...

We would welcome the opportunity to chat to you further about this opportunity. For an informal conversation please contact The Venerable Ian Rees, Archdeacon of Monmouth ([ianrees@cinw.org.uk](mailto:ianrees@cinw.org.uk) or 07983 684151)

The application form and personal statement, should be returned to the Venerable Ian Rees by April 3<sup>rd</sup>.

Interviews will be held on April 29<sup>th</sup>. Please indicate if you have any additional needs with regards to taking part in the interview process, and we will make every reasonable effort to accommodate.

*And so.... might this be the right opportunity for you?*

*We look forward to hearing from you!*



## Appendix 1.

The Church isn't the building, it's the people. That being said we are fortunate to have 18 wonderful church buildings which our church communities call home. They're all very different but all of them have been used as places of Christian worship for hundreds of years, reminding us of our connection to the wider family of God.

Whether people come to one of our regular services, visit for a wedding, baptism or funeral, or just want to pop in for a look around we want to make everyone welcome.

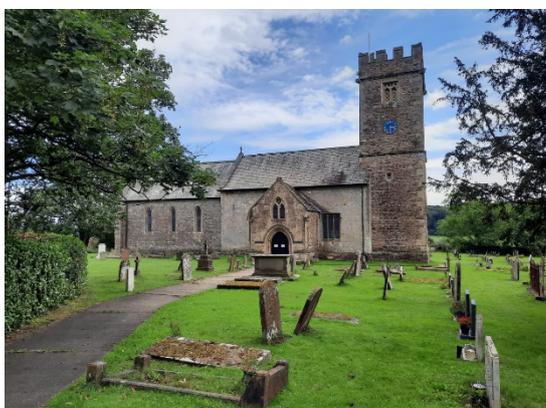
### St Brides Netherwent, St Brigid.



St Brides has a special serene atmosphere and is in a beautiful rural setting in the middle of a meadow, surrounded by fields that are scheduled ancient monuments. With a small and scattered population (circa 220 spread over a large rural area), attendances at Sunday services are nevertheless healthy. One regular service is held here once a month plus services for festivals such as Harvest Festival, Easter and Christmas, along with special events, which attract large numbers. The congregation represents a large proportion of the population of St Brides, ranging in age from 0 to 90+.

Financial and other practical support is readily given by the wider community and the building is in good order as a result. St Brides is home to one of the oldest inscribed bells in the country (circa 1290). The bell is still in use.

### Caerwent, St Stephen and St Tathan.



The church is situated on what is probably the earliest Christian site in the county, possibly even in Wales. Erected in the 13th century and surrounded by the Roman village of Caerwent, the church holds many Roman artefacts, and is open daily, so attracting visitors both locally and worldwide. The welcoming atmosphere has been enhanced over recent years with the addition of more comfortable seating, a small kitchen area and toilet facilities. Services are held each Sunday with

refreshments served after the morning service. The church has a Nicholson pipe organ - impressive for a rural parish - and there is a strong musical tradition here, the church being large enough to provide a venue for a range of musical concerts and other social events, these always

being well supported by the wider local community with whom we have very good links. Our regular activities include Mothers' Union, Village Lunches, Coffee Mornings and a Community Café on Monday mornings. We pride ourselves on being a warm and friendly church community, always keen to welcome new faces and families.

### **Caldicot, St Mary's.**



A church has stood on the current site since before 900AD with parts of the current building dating back to the thirteenth century. In recent years the church has been undergoing some re-ordering: the electronic organ has been moved down to the nave; chairs have been installed at the front; architects plans have been commissioned to integrate the south porch with glass doors, restore the original aspect of the east window, and an electronic screen, projector and the ability to livestream have recently been installed all as part of a project to make the church more accessible to a wider range of people and enhance its role as a venue for all its parishioners whether church-goers or not. There is also a church hall situated close to the church which is used for several church groups as well as events for the wider community.

### **Goldcliff, St Mary Magdalene Church.**



A 13<sup>th</sup> Century Grade II listed building in a semi-rural location. The Church is supported by a small ageing congregation who faithfully attend services on two Sundays a month alternate Thursdays and Bible studies. The church is popular and well attended for special occasions such as Harvest and Christmas.

### **Llandevaud, St. Peters.**



A warm and welcoming small Church situated just off the A48. We hold two services a month: A morning Eucharist and an afternoon All age service. We are a relatively small community, but we have a large number of people who support our fundraising events, social occasions and festival services. We have a lovely, newly refurbished Church hall situated alongside the Church and hope this will provide a vital link between the Church and the village.

### **Llanvair Discoed, St Mary's.**



We are a small semi-rural village with a population of approximately 220 where the church is an important part of the community, enjoying enthusiastic support from most members of the village at social and fund-raising events. We hold a service each Sunday and once a month serve refreshments following the service. The church is open every day and get a surprising number of world-wide visitors who leave very encouraging comments. It's important to us that the church is seen as a place for everyone our pews have

been removed so that the church can be used for social events. The Harvest Festival Service, followed by supper, and the Christmas carols are a village tradition and much enjoyed. When new people come to live in the village, they are visited by someone from the church and kept informed about what's happening.

### **Llanmartin, St Martin.**



The Church is situated in a rural location just off the A48 but only down the hill from the large population of Underwood. It's a typical village Church, seating about 50 people for special occasions and we hold a service each Sunday. We also attract the followers of Langstone Church which closed recently and hold a monthly All-Age service which is always well attended. We like to think of ourselves as a friendly and very welcoming congregation. We are planning to open the church on a daily basis from March 2024.

### **Llanvaches, St Dyfrig (Dubritius).**



The church is in the middle of this small village with the church hall bedside it. We hold 2 services a week: A Eucharist, All age service or cafe service on a Sunday and Eucharist each Wednesday. Congregations are small, 24 when everyone comes, and we average about 7. More for All age and cafe services the latter being held at 4 pm in the hall. Very helpful village people who attend all events or coffee mornings, book sales harvest suppers etc and give generously of their time and money!

### **Llanwern St Mary's.**



We are a 12th Century church located on the perimeter of the village. Whilst congregation numbers have dwindled over the years, we do have a small but very loyal congregation. We meet once a month for a Eucharist service and in recent years we have hosted a number of very successful harvest suppers and a memorial service such as celebrating 100 years of the suffragette movement. The once small village is growing rapidly with a large new build housing development (including a primary school) and we hope to welcome and engage the new community into the Church.

### **Magor, St Mary's.**



Christian worship has been offered on the site of the current church since the 7<sup>th</sup> Century. The Grade I listed building is open daily for visitors and private prayer as well as weekly Sunday and mid-week services. We have a well-equipped adjacent church centre which is well used by church and community. Our regular activities include our children's group 'Club Rock', 2 parent and toddler groups, Messy Church, Mothers Union, Ladies Circles, A 'Cake Saturday', a monthly lunch club, church choir and bell ringing. We have good relationships with our local communities and consider ourselves to be an outward focussed congregation.

### **Nash, St Mary's.**



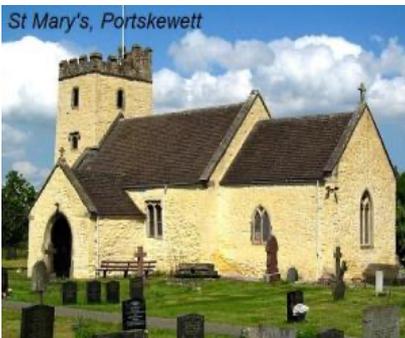
St Mary's is a large, impressive, Grade I listed church building which has served the community of Nash for hundreds of years. A major restoration of the Georgian interior has taken place and some further work is planned; we want the church to remain at the centre of village life for many years to come. We hold a weekly service, the church is open daily, and we are pleased to welcome many visitors for major festivals and other events. The church has a good relationship with the local community and the large village hall is often used for church functions.

## Penhow, St John the Baptist.



Ours is largely a rural Parish, the church building dates from 1200 and is a sacred place for quiet contemplation and focus of faith. The Church is situated about a mile from the main area of population and a large part of which are retired people but there are also families with children as well as professionals, farming and other small businesses. We are a loyal, courageous, happy and welcoming congregation and there is much work being done/planned to improve the church structure and facilities. Church members are enquiring, adaptable and make innovative ways of outreaching into the community. We hold regular Bible study groups and fund-raising projects which involve the wider community. We are keen to further develop our mission to the wider community and a prayer group has been formed to pray further about this and how we can best adapt to the changes we face.

## Portskewett, St Mary's.



Our church is rich in ancient and modern history, mainly Norman and considered to be one of the best examples of early architecture in South Wales. In close proximity to the church is a Grade II listed 17th century cottage which has been renovated to house the Portskewett Heritage Centre and provide the church with a much-needed toilet and kitchenette. We also have a well-used church hall in the village and strong links with nearby Archbishop Rowan Williams Church in Wales Primary School.

## Redwick, St Thomas the Apostle



Our church is situated at the heart of the lovely and unspoilt village of Redwick on the Gwent Levels. The Grade I building is large for a village of our size and makes a good venue for special occasions and regular concerts. We hold two services a month which attract a faithful regular congregation many of whom are part of the local farming community or have retired here. The church, village hall and local pub are all located in close vicinity to each other and strongly support one another. Pre-covid the church was open daily and attracted many people visiting the area.

## Rogiet, St Mary's



St. Mary's is a charming and unpretentious little country church dating mainly from the thirteenth century standing in the corner of its large church yard adjacent to the manor house. It's a typical small manorial church of chancel, nave and western tower, but very beautiful in its own right! It has a very faithful congregation who hold a weekly service in the church. From March 2024 we plan to open the church on a daily basis. In the village there is a church hall which has become a hub for much community activity.

### **Undy, St Mary's.**



Situated on the southern edge of the village the church dates from the 12<sup>th</sup> century and is open daily for visitors. We hold weekly services on either a Sunday morning or evening. We hold a number of social/fundraising events each year and these are well supported by our wider community.

### **Wilcrick, St Marys.**



Wilcrick is a very small rural church and a very small population. We hold a monthly Eucharist service at 8am on the first Sunday of every month with a congregation of 6 to 12. We also hold a Carol Service, Easter Sunday and a Harvest Festival, with much larger congregations, all of which end up with tea and cake.

### **St Cadwaladr, Bishton.**



Bishton is a small village nestled in the Gwent Levels and the church has been at the heart of village life for hundreds of years. Sadly the amount of work needed to maintain this building has meant that the congregation now worship in the village hall and there are plans for the church to formally close. We continue to value the community in Bishton and hope that the services in the hall can be maintained and grow.

## APPENDIX 2

### Worship Pattern (2023)

	Service Pattern	Attendance per Sunday service
Bishton – St Cadwaladr	Once a month	6
St Brides – St Bridget	Once a month	8
Caerwent – St Stephen and St Tathan	Each Sunday	27
Caldicot – St Mary	Twice each Sunday and mid-week	24 + 8
Goldcliff – St Mary Magdalene	Twice monthly	7
Langstone	Monthly service in hall	15
Llandevaud – St Peter	Twice monthly	6
Llanmartin – St Martin	Each Sunday	8
Llanvaches – St Dyfrig (Dubritius)	Each Sunday and mid-week	7
Llanvair Discoed -St Mary	Each Sunday	8
Llanwern – St Mary	Once a month	4
Magor – St Mary	Once each Sunday and mid-week	40
Nash – St Mary	Each Sunday	6
Penhow – St John the Baptist	Each Sunday	15
Portskewett – St Mary	Each Sunday	21
Redwick – St Thomas the Apostle	Twice monthly	13
Rogiet – St Mary	Each Sunday	17
Undy – St Mary	Each Sunday	11
Wilcrick – St Mary	Once a month	9

In addition the number of children attending monthly Family or All age services – 20

Baptisms – 57

Weddings – 23

Funerals (church and crematorium) – 110