

St John the Baptist
Little
Marlow



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Little Marlow**



Welcome

St John the Baptist Church, Little Marlow is praying for a committed and proactive Vicar to lead us on our journey as we maintain our strong traditional services and seek to develop informal, contemporary worship opportunities.

We are praying for you as you read this, that the Good Shepherd will find a path for you that leads to the exciting opportunities offered by serving the community linked to our church. Thank you for taking the time to read these pages. May God give you his peace in your search and guide you into the next chapter of your life whether or not it is to this rewarding role in Little Marlow.

St John the Baptist, Little Marlow is seeking to be a church which connects deeply with the local community and its C of E infants school, and worships God both through its strong traditional services and in new, contemporary and creative ways. This role offers an opportunity to lead and minister with a group of committed lay people at St John's and as part of the wider 4U Team which offers supportive, collaborative and gifted colleagues.

This is a half-time (0.5 stipend) role with a house, so it is unusual. It would be particularly suitable for a priest who has another role, interest or area of study which they wish to pursue alongside being grounded in parish ministry. Being part of a very supportive team in a proactive deanery also makes this ideal as a post of first responsibility. The village setting is ideal for a priest who enjoys being part of a community and making connections with people from all walks of life. Environmental concerns are important within the vision of the church, so EcoChurch is an area of possible development, as is growing stronger links with the local school.

A priest who enjoys working as part of a team, seeks to develop worship in both traditional and contemporary styles, and can engage with the local school and community will thrive in this role.

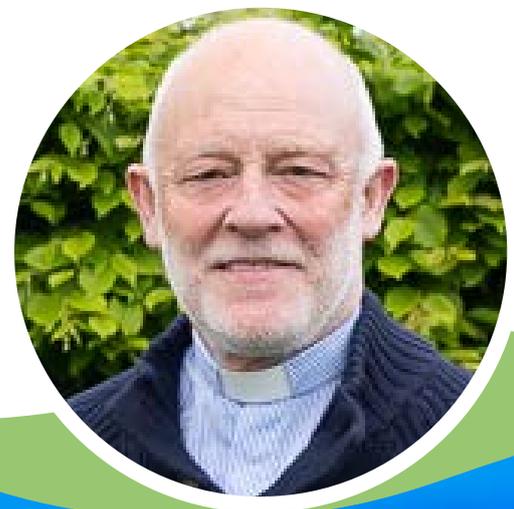
The new Team Vicar will be committed to the diocesan vision of becoming a more Christ-like Church for the sake of God's World – contemplative, compassionate and courageous – and to model and enable a flourishing ministry, for all, in line with the diocesan work in this area.

I commend this profile to you and I would welcome conversations about the role with interested candidates.

Revd Canon Chris Bull,

Associate Archdeacon of Buckingham

christopher.bull@oxford.anglican.org.uk



What can we offer you?

We are keen to make the role of part time Vicar one that is fulfilling, enjoyable and manageable through offering:

- A warm, friendly and committed congregation who will work in partnership with you to build on the many strengths of the church
- A proactive Church Council who are keen to take the church out into the community
- Membership of the 4U clergy team serving St John the Baptist and three other local churches
- Access to the Parish Office, based at All Saints Marlow with a part time Team Administrator.
- The support of the forward-looking Wycombe Deanery for which Dave Bull, 4U Team Rector, is the Area Dean
- Encouragement to have a good balance between life and work, and opportunities for collaborative working across the 4U team, retreats and continued learning.
- A six-bedroom house in Marlow

What kind of person are we looking for?

We are looking for someone who:

- loves Jesus and lives a life of prayer
- can help us see God's vision for the church and know God's direction for our future
- has a strong personal presence, is able to build relationships within the church and beyond and can be a key person in our outward looking drive to engage with and support our community;
- is outgoing, positive and enthusiastic about sharing their faith and is visible and accessible to those within the church and outside it;
- is committed to good safeguarding practices; training is available and required.
- is passionate about the environment and is willing to champion our work as an EcoChurch;
- enjoys teamwork and would like to work as a team member within the wider 4U Team and lay framework.
- has an interest in the history, architecture and daily workings of the church and those who look after it.



What would we like you to do?

We would like our new Vicar:

- to be a leader for all the congregations of St John the Baptist, them to us, discipleship and mission to the village
- to be at home with, and willing to invest in both traditional and contemporary services as we develop a blend of worship
- to develop the recently introduced monthly Informal Service, involving outdoor worship as appropriate
- to develop a profile within the village and local area as we seek to expand our community role
- to manage our Children's Worker, Organist and Verger
- to build on links with Little Marlow C of E Infant School and to be an active contributor to the life of the school;
- to take a keen interest and leading role in our pastoral work
- to be a team member for the 4U clergy team, wanting to work in a team environment and to share in the team ministry
- to be a Governor for Holy Trinity and Little Marlow Church Schools Federation and Chair of the Little Marlow Relief in Need Charity



What is the vision for the church?

We developed a vision for the church in 2017, which we are looking to revisit:



Worship, prayer and teaching that is accessible and welcoming, connects us with God, is relevant to daily lives and excites us about our faith



A thriving church community that is full of people from all generations with families and young people playing an active part in church life.



A Church building that is open and used as much as possible by the community and church

A church which plays an active part in the local community. building relationships, caring for one another and caring for the environment



What are our current priorities?

Priorities	Timescale	Actions
Extend contribution to and engagement with our community	Ongoing	Widely advertise events and services through multi-media Further develop outdoor events and services
Develop informal worship and engage new worshippers	September 2022 onwards	Monthly informal service to be offered Involve new worshippers in the service and the wider life of the church
Further enhance the environmental role of the church	Ongoing	Build on links with environmental groups Commission a churchyard survey
Expand Pastoral Support provision within the congregation and beyond	Jan 23 onwards	Work with the new vicar to further develop current support
Deepen the links with Little Marlow C of E Infant School	September 2022 onwards	Support the work of the newly appointed Children's Worker in the school Identify other opportunities for mutual engagement
Making the church building more open and accessible	October 22 onwards	Risk assessment of leaving church open at set times Review security options- eg wifi linked CCTV Review disabled access provision
Extend community use of church	October 2022 onwards	Review the facilities and space available and improve as appropriate Identify wider uses of the building and possible external users

How are we doing?

We underwent a Deanery Inspection in September 2022 and the resulting Inspection Certificate is quoted below:

What are the mission priorities of the parish?

Developing the role of the church in the community, becoming more visible and taking a more outward looking perspective. To have closer links with the school (the new Children's Worker is key here). Become a more family oriented church, and starting up a new informal family service

How is the church addressing the priorities?

Employing a new youth worker, a new service, hosting village events, listening more

What difference is the church making to the wider community?

The church is becoming more accessible to the local community- eg Harvest and other services held outside where some people are happier to attend. The Church Wardens visited Hambleton Valley to get Inspiration for this.

“ This church is in good order, and being very well cared for ”



St John the Baptist Church and the 4U Team

In 1993 St John the Baptist Church was joined together with All Saints Marlow, All Saints Bisham and what was then St Mary's - now the Lantern Church - in Marlow Bottom, to form a team of churches.

The team was then called the Marlow Area Team Ministry and renamed in 2014 as the "4U Team." Bisham and Little Marlow churches are located in villages, each with a village church school, a mile or so outside Marlow town. Marlow Bottom is a sizeable valley on the outskirts of Marlow and is home to The Lantern, a new church community planted in partnership with existing Anglican and Methodist congregations. You can read about the churches of the 4U team on our website: www.4u-team.org

[St John the Baptist Little Marlow](#)

[All Saints' Bisham](#)

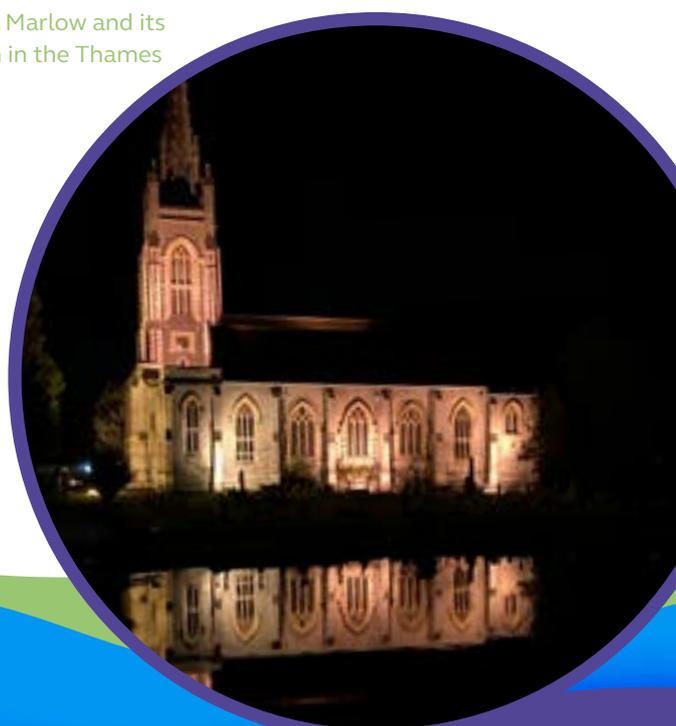
[The Lantern, Marlow Bottom](#)

[All Saints' Marlow](#)

Our four churches within the 4U Team share clergy and leadership structures and work together to see God's kingdom grow and express the strong message that, whoever you are, the church is here for you. We have four churches in our team but just one PCC, called the Team Council. Each church has its own DCC known as Church Councils.

Each of the clergy visits the other churches in the team regularly so that we benefit from the range of gifts in the team, but everyone also has their "home" church where they spend most of their time. There is a weekly Clergy Team Meeting. A common teaching programme is followed, which is planned by the team-wide Worship Planning Team. All the clergy take weddings, funerals and baptisms across the team. There is a Parish Safeguarding Officer with overall responsibility for safeguarding in the 4u Team and Church Safeguarding Officers for each of the churches.

All Saints Marlow and its reflection in the Thames



Where is Little Marlow?

Little Marlow is relatively small – around 650 dwellings and a population of around 1300 in the village and surrounding localities of Winchbottom, Well End, Fern Lane, Westhorpe and Abbotsbrook. The heart of the village- of which the church is a part- is a conservation area and has featured in TV productions such as Poirot, Miss Marple and Lewis. Little Marlow Manor is next to the church and there have always been close links between the church and the residents of the Manor. The church arranges a popular annual “Music at the Manor” event and the choir sing carols there at Christmas. The Old Vicarage is now a private residence.

The landscape is primarily rural within the Parish with some businesses and a farm shop and butcher/fishmongers at Emmett’s Farm close to the centre of the village. There are two pubs in the centre of the village and a recreation ground with a cricket pitch, play area. There is a Pavilion used as a private nursery and also the office for Little Marlow Parish Council. High Wycombe – a large town with extensive employment opportunities is 4 miles away and Marlow 1.5 miles to the West is an attractive Georgian town with extensive shops and leisure facilities. Bourne End is a thriving area, with residential and commercial communities, approximately two miles to the East.



What is special about St John the Baptist Church?

The role is primarily based at St John the Baptist Church and is a 0.5 part time position with a large house available approximately two miles from the church at 18 Oak Tree Road Marlow.

The number on the parish roll is 71

The church was founded around the latter part of the 12th Century and is Grade 2 listed with a record of the clergy from 1220 to 1995, when Little Marlow joined the Marlow Area Team Ministry.

There has been a church on this site in Little Marlow for about 1,000 years and the original stone font is still used for baptisms- just think how many have been baptised here and how many generations have worshipped here all that time in over 50,000 Sundays. Visitors to the church often speak of the powerful sense of history, calm, peace and spirituality that the little church offers. Situated close to the Thames and being part of proposed Little Marlow Country Park, the church and churchyard provide a popular stopping off point for walkers and students of history and architecture.



The Church and community

The church is highly valued within the village, including by those who are not attendees, as evident in a recent survey, and special events such as the Flower Festival are well supported by the local community. The church is an active participant in village events such as Annual Village Fete and is keen to extend its role in the community, raising its profile and its contribution to the life of the village and the wider locality. This aim is reflected in our vision statement of 2018.

An occasional Church newsletter is published for the village, and we have often been described as a “Welcoming Church”



Little Marlow School

Little Marlow CE Infant School is about 400 yards from the church and is Federated with Holy Trinity O of E Junior School. It is a priority for the church to strengthen its links with the school and deepen our involvement with it and we look to the new incumbent to take a lead in this.

Denise Brettany, Head of School writes

“Little Marlow CE is a small traditional village school that through a caring and nurturing environment promotes an expectation that every child will be celebrated as an individual and be inspired to achieve their potential. We seek to provide personalised academic, emotional, social and spiritual support for every child. We want our children to be spirited individuals who embrace challenge, think creatively, value achievement and strive to be the best they can be. We encourage each of our learners to take time to actively contribute to our community and to support others. Through our “family feel” we foster an environment where pupils, parents and staff genuinely care for each other

“ A family where we love, learn, grow & respect ”



.... We work closely with our local village Church 'St John the Baptist'. Children make regular visits to the Church to celebrate services such as Harvest, Christmas and Easter. This year we have welcomed the Church's new Children's Worker Abby Bowler. Abby spends time at the school each week and works closely with the children. Through Collective Worship, small group work in class and lunch time clubs Abby develops relationships which enable the fruitful nurturing and growth of the Christian faith in children. Through the sessions she welcomes and encourages children to actively contribute to the life of the Church. The children are then encouraged to attend a monthly Informal service and Special Services at the church."



What services are offered?

The established month service pattern has been largely traditional in character. It comprises two 8.30am BCP Communion Services- attendance 8-10, a 6pm Evensong, an 11am Matins and two 11am Common Worship Services- attendance 25-30. We are fortunate to have a very capable organist, a recently installed pipe organ and small choir to lead our singing. The Organist and Verger are managed by the vicar. We have audio streaming capability with Bluetooth available and benefit from “Tap and Pay” door collections. We are currently developing a monthly Contemporary Informal Service which we hope will appeal to families and others, and our Children’s Worker, led by the Vicar, is actively supporting the service and involving children from Little Marlow School. Having piloted the service for a few months we have committed to a year’s programme in 2023. We are looking to our new Vicar to develop this form of worship into an established and popular service throughout 2023.

The church has been used as a venue for many weddings in the past, though the numbers have declined in recent years. However baptisms have increased in number and scale to eleven so far this year and we are where possible holding them in the Informal Service. We are seeking to maintain our contact with baptism families through the Informal Service programme.





Special Services and Festivals are important in the church calendar. The Remembrance Service is well supported by local representatives and visitors. Harvest, Easter, Christingle, Crib Services and Christmas services are popular and the last afternoon Christingle service brought in many children and families. Our aim is to make the church attractive throughout the year for such visitors. We are also looking at how we can safely make the church more open and accessible.

Technology was used successfully through the pandemic to live-stream services. We are currently seeking to improve our digital projection capabilities within the church by installing an electronically operated drop-down screen. We use audio equipment for outdoor services and events in the churchyard and at community events. WhatsApp has kept people linked to the church in recent years, and we have Instagram and Facebook pages. The church has recovered well from the pandemic, having kept people in touch through social media and streaming and opening for live services as soon as was feasible.



Many of the congregation come from surrounding residential areas- such as Bourne End, Flackwell Heath, Cookham and Marlow, and half of the congregation are aged over 70 years. The congregation is loyal, committed and hugely supportive of the church and has largely continued to worship here through Covid and beyond. A priority for the church is to grow the congregation and the appointment of a part time Children's Worker and introduction of an Informal Service are key to this.

Eco Church

There is a strong environmental and eco-oriented focus to the church, recognised by the Silver Eco Church Award – one of only twelve such awards in the Diocese.

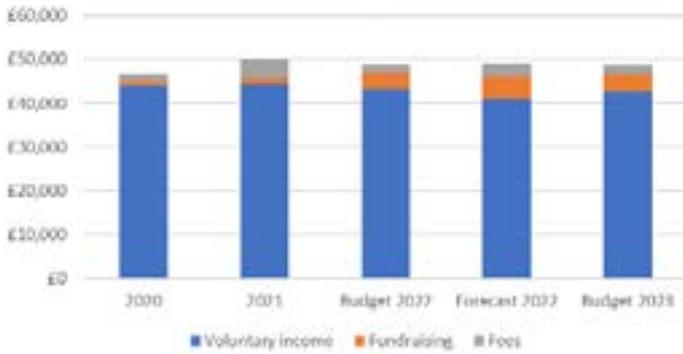
A large colony of bats resides in the roof and are the subject of frequent studies by local environmental groups with “Bat and Moth Evenings” being popular public events. A stream borders the churchyard and the grounds are home to varied wildlife, and features such as log piles, bee hotel and wild flower areas. The church is within the proposed Little Marlow Country Park and Spade Oak Lake is a nationally recognised location for birdwatching. The River Thames is a half mile away. We work closely with Wild Marlow and current projects include swift boxes and a water vole survey.





Finance

General Fund Income



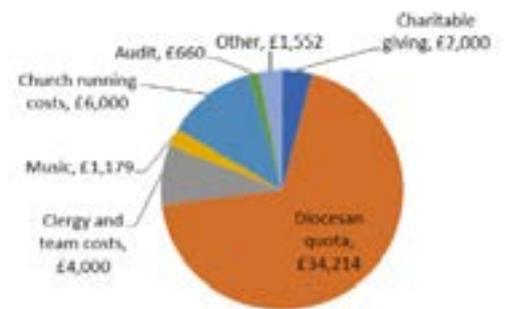
Our financial position is strong and we are in a solid position with the congregation being generous with time and money.

The church always pays its Parish Share without difficulty and the General Fund is in credit with a substantial reserve. There is a Fabric Fund to cover work on the building and a Development Fund is available for initiatives such as the Children’s Worker. £1,500 was recently received from the Deanery for improvements to digital technology. We raise funds for both the church and charities - our “Music at the Manor” at the adjoining Little Marlow Manor House raised £2,000 for church funds and £850 for Ukraine with further donations to the Red Cross in Ukraine following a recent successful “Pimms and Hymns “ service. Detailed accounts are available on request.

At end 2021 - Total Reserves £128,941



General Fund Expenditure - 2021 Total £46,501



The Vicarage

The vicarage is a spacious family home on Oak Tree Road – a popular residential street in the north-east of the town only a ten minute walk from the main High Street. The driveway offers parking for 3 or 4 cars and there is a good-sized garden to the rear. The house lies within the catchment area for two of our church schools: Marlow Church of England Infant School ('Sandygate') and Holy Trinity Junior School.

Downstairs, the house comprises an entrance hall, a large study, lounge, dining room, cloakroom, family-sized kitchen and utility room. There is also a double length garage with access from the utility room.

Upstairs, the house offers 6 bedrooms, a box-room and 2 bathrooms.

A remodelling of this Diocesan owned house in the future is possible, but this would not happen without consultation

**“ 18 Oak Tree
Road, Marlow
SL7 3ED ”**



What is it like being on the 4U Clergy team? – thoughts from a Team Vicar:

“It is really good! We genuinely like it because:

- We are not alone. Obviously God is with us but we are also part of a team. There is a team to talk to who listen, who are experienced in a whole load of different areas, who are kind and generous. We have fun and share the ups and downs.
- We are well led but are all leaders. Dave is an excellent leader who will care for you and enable you to flourish. But he is also very good at giving away authority and so you will have the freedom to be your own leader.
- We are the same but different. We are all Evangelical, but some are more Charismatic, some more Conservative, some more Open.
- We concentrate on one church but work in the others. We have one church community where we spend most of our time in the week and on 3 out of 4 Sundays a month. This is great as we can put all our focus there. But we also preach and lead at the three other churches in the team which brings a variety and refreshment to our ministry.”

Meet the team - <https://4u-team.org/about-4u/>



Other features

Two Bible Study groups comprising members of the congregation meet regularly and are currently self-supporting.

Pastoral support is provided as needed by members of the congregation with clergy support for particular needs.

The social dimension is an important feature of the church, with refreshments after every service- tea and coffee or sherry or prosecco depending on the occasion! We certainly appreciate having a kitchen and toilet.

The church supports the Churches Together in Marlow initiative which brings ten churches together for social and fundraising activities and prayer mornings- one of which was recently held at St. John the Baptist Church.

This Parish Profile was developed following a survey within the church on what would be welcomed in a new vicar appointment. The Profile and the Mission Plan incorporate outcomes of a Church and Community Survey held in 2021.



Map



Aerial map showing extent of Parish and location of the Vicarage, school and church

The Wycombe Deanery

The Wycombe Deanery is a family of 35 Anglican churches who - together with our ecumenical friends - serve the 150,000 people living in and around High Wycombe. Together the Deanery Churches comprise over 3,000 Christians living, working and playing our part in the growth of God's Kingdom here.

Our 4 core values are:

1. Serving our fellowships

By which we mean:

- Always seeking the good of each parish
- Focusing on people and right relationships, not buildings or structures
- Acting in a collaborative and mutually supportive way

2. Shaping our future

By which we mean:

- Taking responsibility for the future of the Deanery, which is in our own hands under God
- Proactive long-term planning for growth
- Bold and realistic plans for short / medium-term sustainability

3. Spurring on our friends

By which we mean:

- Exploring new ways to grow in love and in our calling
- Enabling parishes to work better together
- Learning from each other and identifying partnerships
- Supporting, encouraging, unifying and inspiring

4. Sharing the fire.

By which we mean:

- Exercise discernment to identify where the Holy Spirit is burning
- Drawing attention to where the Spirit is at work
- Going with the flow of what God is doing
- Becoming more outward focussed in mission

To enable this, our key groups are the:

Deanery Chapter - a bimonthly gathering of clergy, modelled on the Upper Room of the book of Acts, where we gather together to pray, to encourage each other and to seek the leading of the Holy Spirit together

Deanery Synod - a quarterly gathering of elected leaders from our 35 churches, where we devote at least 50% of our time to focusing on what is inspirational or missional, or both.

Deanery Leadership Teams - our Mission & Pastoral Committee and Standing Committee provide a lead on strategic, operational and financial aspects of Deanery life and consists of gifted lay and clergy representatives from the churches. We focus on achieving and growing a sustainable pattern of stipendiary ministry, and the wellbeing of our clergy and lay members.

This feels like a time of new beginnings in the Wycombe Deanery. In October 2019 we held 'Sharing the Fire', a Deanery-wide worship celebration attended by 475 people who left with a renewed sense that the fire of God's Spirit is spreading across our churches.

Our new Deanery Plan for 2021-25 includes key elements including: training young leaders for children's ministry, a new resource church at St Andrews Church in High Wycombe, a strategy for rural churches and continuing to connect with our local charity partners.

Lay Chair: Caroline Sants, Area Dean: Dave Bull, Assistant Area Dean: Keith Johnson.

www.wycombedeanery.com

The Diocese of Oxford & the Archdeaconry of Buckingham

The Diocese of Oxford serves the mission of the Church in Buckinghamshire, Berkshire and Oxfordshire. The Diocese comprises more than 600 parishes, with over 800 churches, serving a diverse population of more than 2 million people located in all types of settings.

Due to the size and complexity of the Diocese, we have three Area Bishops who exercise considerable strategic and pastoral oversight for their Areas. The Bishop of Buckingham is the Rt Rev'd Alan Wilson who has been the Area Bishop since 2003. The Archdeacon of Buckingham is Ven Guy Elmore who has been in post since 2016. In September 2020, Revd Canon Chris Bull was appointed Associate Archdeacon of Buckingham.

Through prayer, listening and discernment a common vision has emerged for the Diocese of Oxford. The vision is based on the qualities described in The Beatitudes and addresses what kind of church we are called to be:

a more Christ-like Church for the sake of God's world:

contemplative, compassionate, courageous.

Our Common Vision continues to emerge as we identify together areas of our common life where we believe God is calling to focus. The diocesan focal areas are not a description of everything we do, but these priorities are being supported centrally by resources, training, conferences, workshops, and much more. The diocese is inviting benefices and their clergy to share a vision rather than demanding a response, motivated by hope not driven by anxiety, and thereby to flourish in their ministry. It is hoped that clergy appointed into the Archdeaconry of Buckingham will want to commit to this vision and encourage their benefice to share in becoming a more Christ-like church for the sake of God's world.

In conclusion

If you are committed to both Traditional and Informal Worship styles, can lead us out in the community and work with our Children's Worker to develop our links with the school we would love to hear from you.

Should you like to know more about the post, the area or the team before applying formally, please contact the Revd Dave Bull, Team Rector on (01628) 471650 or dave.bull@4u-team.org

