

A Message from Bishop Mike, Bishop of Exeter

Our vision in this diocese is that of Jesus in His Great Commission. We aspire to appoint leaders of our Christian communities who practice the presence of our Lord and enable others to do so; leaders who witness, act and relate in ways which make disciples and enable others to do so; leaders who serve in ways which intrigue, attract and engage the wider community, and enable others to do so. In short – pray, grow and serve!



“Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always to the end of the age.”

Matthew 28:19-20

So we are looking for ministerial leaders who

- are intentionally missional, helping their Christian community to discern who God is sending them to, and who God is sending them.
- are developing missional habits and confidence in the faith for members of their congregations, enabling them to be invitational and ambassadorial
- invest in their own discipleship and well-being, and that of those in their care
- cultivate vocations, lay and ordained, actively recruiting for initiatives such as the Foundations course and the Exeter Ordination Pathway
- place children and young people at the heart of our mission, orienting churches to be ever-more welcoming spaces for young people, using existing resources and networks, but also being pioneering in outlook
- experiment with ways of being and doing church that engage the unengaged – we encourage ambitious plans such as creating two new worshipping communities in the first three years of a new ministry.

You can expect to find

- support from senior leaders committed to enabling this mission and ministry
- an outstanding diocesan team, second to none in terms of training provision and opportunities, comms understanding, finance expertise, buildings experience and care for our ministers
- opportunities for personal and professional development in alignment with the vision of the Great Commission
- a warm, relational diocese, where diversity is welcomed and honoured
- a good-humoured, joyful, energetic culture grateful for the privilege of being called into ministry and supportive of missional experimentation, risk-taking and ‘having a go’

If you’re still reading then I suspect we might be on the same page and I pray that the Holy Spirit might inform, shape and direct your discernment concerning this post.

The Archdeacon's Foreword



Welcome and thank you for your interest in this post

This post offers an exciting opportunity to minister in one of our vibrant city churches. This is a key appointment at a significant time in the life of the church and the Diocese. Co Church E, Exeter is a key partner church in delivering our 2035 Pray, Grow, Serve Vision, and we hope it will plant its third congregation in 2027/28.

We are seeking a priest who will offer senior strategic leadership and ordained ministry across the Co Church group. The Associate Vicar will expand the church's capacity by overseeing a specific Sunday congregation and providing high-level management of the midweek activities. Specifically, Alpha, Youth, and Groups. This role is designed to release the Rector for wider vision-casting while ensuring operational strength and pastoral depth across all sites.

Co-Church is currently a due parish benefice with its original church plant at St Matthew's and a more recent plant at St Andrew's, Exwick. The benefice is part of the Christianity (Exeter City) Deanery, where the Rural Dean is the Revd Ed Hodges.

We are committed to being a diverse and representative diocese and warmly welcome applications from women and those from Black and minority ethnic backgrounds. Devon is not only a beautiful place to call home, but it is also a diocese where community, creativity, and collaboration thrive.

If you would like a confidential conversation about this post, please do get in touch. We look forward to welcoming you to the Diocese of Exeter.



The Archdeacon of Exeter

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The Bishop of Crediton

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Overview

- Population: 1.2m,
- 120 Mission Communities
- 483 parishes, 594 churches
- Worshipping community of 20,000



Served By

- 3 Bishops
- 4 Archdeacons
- 188 Stipendiary clergy
- 54 SSMs, 197 LLMs,
- 134 church schools



3 Major Urban Areas

- Plymouth (population: 265,000)
- Exeter (population: 135,000)
- Torbay (population: 141,000)



Coastal & Market Towns

- Over 50 towns (population: 373,000)
- 5 large towns (population: > 20,000)
- 14 towns (population: > 10,000)
- Expected to grow by 40,000



Our Five Missional Priorities



Parish Profile

Co Church Exeter | One Church, Two Locations

Welcome from the Rector & Lead Pastor

Thank you for your interest in the role of **Associate Vicar (Associate Pastor)** at Co Church Exeter. We are a vibrant, multi-site community of people following Jesus, designated as a **Diocesan City Centre Resource Church** and a part of the **HTB Network**.

Our vision is simple. We exist **to Love Jesus and transform Exeter**. We are looking for an experienced, strategic, and spiritually grounded priest to join our Core Operating Group (COGs) and help lead us into our next season of growth as we partner with the Diocese of Exeter's "Pray Grow Serve 2035" strategy.

Our Identity and Vision

Co Church began as a renewed community planted into St Matthew's church in the Newtown area of the city. St Matt's was commissioned by the Bishop of Exeter with a mandate to reach out to the children, families, youth and students of Exeter. Our mission has been to become a "beating heart" for the city, operating through an invitational, engaging and spirit filled expression of worship and mission. In 2022, the Bishop of Crediton invited St Matt's to partner with St Andrew's, Exwick to enable similar growth and mission in a nearby area of the city. The mission community of Co Church Exeter was formed to link both parishes together to share staff, resources while retaining the local mission and identity of each church.

One Church, Many Locations

Our structural evolution reflects a strategic movement toward a centralized resource model:

- **2019:** Launched as St Matt's (SDF-funded Resource Church).
- **2023:** Expanded to include St Andrew's Exwick.
- **2025:** Unified under the **Co Church** brand to leverage shared resources for localised mission.
- **Future:** Partner with other churches within the Exeter area to join Co and build a sustainable network for resourcing the church.



The Context: Exeter & Exwick

Exeter is the regional capital of Devon—a city of ancient Roman walls, a historic Cathedral, and a globally ranked University. It is one of the fastest-growing urban centers in the South West, with a population now exceeding **138,000**. Exeter has a significant student presence (~30,000). However, it also faces a "demographic cliff edge" in traditional parishes and contains neighborhoods in the bottom deciles for health and income deprivation. While median incomes are high in clusters, areas like **Exwick (008B)** rank in the bottom 4% nationally for Health and Disability.

Our Locations

St Matt's: The City Centre Resource Church

Located on Lower Summerlands, St Matt's is our first revitalisation project. It is a large recently reordered church with space for a wide variety of activities.

Sundays: 10 AM (Multigenerational/Family focused) and 6:00 PM (Student/Young Adult focused).

St Andrew's: The Local Church

St Andrew's is a small but perfectly formed church with an interesting Tractarian history on the North West side of Exeter. In 2023, it joined the Co Church family to bring resource church energy into a suburban parish.

Sundays: 10AM

- **The Challenge:** Balancing the cherishing of the existing congregation with the reach for the unchurched.
- **The Transition:** With our previous planter moving to a new plant in 2026, the Associate Vicar will provide the stability for both churches to grow over this site's next chapter and enable the greater deployment of Co staff to St Andrew's.



Diocesan Alignment: Pray Grow Serve 2035

Co Church is a flagship for the Diocese of Exeter's ten-year strategy. We are committed to reversing the trend where 95% of Devon's population has no church connection.

The Associate Vicar's Mandate within PGS 2035:

1. **Missional Leadership:** Recruiting, training and developing the next generation of leaders via Co Church and the Diocese of Exeter.
2. **Growing Younger:** Scaling "Co Youth" and "Co Kids" to move from current levels to a city-wide reach.
3. **New Worshipping Communities:** Ensuring our multi-site model serves as a "mixed ecology" blueprint for the city.

The Role: Associate Vicar (Associate Pastor)

This is a senior ordained position for an experienced priest capable of managing complex ministry streams.

Key Responsibilities

- **Alpha Oversight:** Managing termly cycles with a "high standard of hospitality" to provide clear pathways for those exploring faith..
- **Small Groups Strategy:** Overseeing our Groups and their leaders.
- **Youth Strategy:** Providing senior oversight for the 11–18s midweek and Sunday groups.
- **COGs Leadership:** Serving as a "leader of leaders," deputising for the Rector and managing staff and volunteers.

Governance and Finance

- **Governance:** We are governed by a **Joint Council** (combined PCCs), ensuring transparency and safeguarding best practice.
- **Finance:** Supported by the **regular giving** we maintain a robust "back-end" operation including an Operations Director and Finance Manager.
- **Safeguarding:** We adhere strictly to the "Promoting a Safer Church" in both culture and practice.



Role Description: Associate Pastor (Associate Vicar)

Location: Co Church, Exeter (St Matt's, Exeter and St Andrew's Exwick)

Accountable to: The Rector (Lead Pastor)

Role Status: Core Operating Group (COGs) / Diocesan Appointment

Role Purpose

To provide senior strategic leadership and ordained ministry across the Co Church group. The Associate Vicar will expand the church's capacity by overseeing a specific Sunday congregation and providing high-level management of the midweek activities. Specifically Alpha, Youth, and Groups. This role is designed to release the Rector for wider vision-casting while ensuring operational strength and pastoral depth across all sites.

Core Responsibilities

1. Congregational Leadership & Pastoral Care

- **Sunday Oversight:** Take primary responsibility for the leadership, hosting, and spiritual life of a designated Sunday congregation within the Co group.
- **Preaching & Teaching:** Deliver high-quality, "Word and Spirit" teaching that aligns with the church's vision to "Love Jesus and Transform Exeter."
- **Pastoral Coordination:** Provide and coordinate pastoral care and oversight for the congregation, ensuring members are known, loved, and supported.
- **Life Events:** Lead and manage "Life Events" (baptisms, weddings and funerals).

2. Midweek Ministry Oversight

- **Youth Ministry Strategy:** Provide senior oversight for the Youth ministry, supporting volunteer leaders to grow the provision for 11-18s beyond its current "modest" scale.
- **Alpha:** Oversee the termly Alpha cycles, ensuring a high-standard of hospitality and a clear pathway for guests to integrate into the life of the church.
- **Groups & Discipleship:** Lead the strategy for small groups (Groups), focusing on leader recruitment, training, and the development of groups across the city.

3. Strategic Oversight & Multi-Site Cohesion

- **Senior Leadership:** Contribute to the strategic development of Co Church as a member of the Core Operating Group (COGs), deputising for the Rector as required.
- **Diocesan Integration:** Act as a key liaison with the Diocese of Exeter, ensuring Co Church contributes effectively to the "Pray Grow Serve 2035" priorities.



Person Specification

Character & Calling

- **Spiritually Grounded:** Keeps the passion burning for Jesus through a deep personal and communal prayer life. Leads out of an authentic, undefended relationship with Jesus.
- **Servant Leader:** A "leader of leaders" who empowers others by giving away ownership and intentionally mentoring the next generation to create a living legacy for the church.
- **Resilient & Adaptable:** Possesses a "holy discontent" for the status quo. Remains relentlessly outward-focused, prioritizing the "lost sheep" over personal or congregational comfort.

Theological Alignment

- **Charismatic and Evangelical:** Fully committed to the authority of Scripture and the centrality of the Gospel.
- **Resource Church DNA:** Familiar with the HTB network model and culture and comfortable with a "Word and Spirit" ministry style.
- **Unified Vision:** Passionate about the "One Church, Many Locations" model, ensuring equality of spirit between St Matt's and St Andrew's.

Competencies & Experience

Category

Category	Requirement
Ordination	Episcopally ordained Priest in the Church of England (having completed IME1-2).
Leadership	3+ years of experience in a senior leadership role within a growing church context.
Communication	Gifted and clear communicator, able to engage diverse audiences from students to young families.
Management	Proven ability to manage multiple ministry streams (e.g., Alpha, Youth, Groups) and lead staff/volunteers.
Safeguarding	Committed to the highest standards of safeguarding practice and "Safer Recruitment."