



WELCOME

## A message from Bishop Mike



*"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*

Our vision in this diocese is that of Jesus in His Great Commission. We aspire to appoint leaders of our Christian communities who practise 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!

*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.*

*Mike*

# Plymouth 2035



**James Grier, Bishop of Plymouth**

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Now is an especially good time to be considering a post in the city of Plymouth. It is a great city: in 2024, in separate studies, Plymouth was recognised as one of the most underrated travel destinations in the world and the UK's best city to live and work in. As if that weren't enough, we have just launched Plymouth 2035. This is our vision and strategy for the next decade for Anglican mission and ministry in the city.

One of the key aspects is that we want to see 2035 more new disciples belonging to our churches in the city. This will roughly double our attendance. We also want to commit to having churches across the city which offer life in all its fullness – practically, emotionally and spiritually - to every parishioner, not predominantly those who faithfully attend. We have recently received national funding to make the vision a reality. As part of this we are looking for clergy and laity to be bold and willing to step out in faith for what can be, without abandoning what has been. We are praying for greater unity and partnership across the churches and communities. And most of all we are praying that people will find faith in Jesus and that their lives will be transformed as a result.

We are excited about the appointments we have already recently made to posts in the city and in the coming months we are looking to make more significant appointments. That means, if God is calling you to this post, you will be part of a wave of new ministers joining as we begin this next chapter for the city and God's kingdom. Each one of whom has committed to our Plymouth2035 Clergy Covenant. You will also be joining with wonderful, committed lay people and priests, who have been faithfully serving and preparing the ground over the years.

Plymouth 2035 is centred on some Bible verses and a prayer. The verses are from Acts 20:32-36 – with 20:35 at the centre.

“Now I commit you to God and to the word of his grace, which can build you up and give you an inheritance among all those who are

sanctified... we must help the weak, remembering the words the Lord Jesus himself said: **'It is more blessed to give than to receive.'** When Paul had finished speaking, he knelt down with all of them and prayed."

We recognise that Plymouth 2035 is going to be costly for many of us, and so this verse offers a great reminder that we live sacrificially and helping the weak isn't an optional part of our faith. I love that these verses set this in the context of Jesus' grace offering salvation and transformation for now and eternity. Importantly, it also ends with Paul joining with all the people praying for it to happen.

Our prayer is bold and disruptive and is attributed to Sir Francis Drake, one of Plymouth's most famous people:

Disturb us, Lord, when we are too pleased with ourselves,  
When our dreams have come true because we dreamed too little,  
When we arrived safely because we sailed too close to the shore.

Disturb us, Lord, when with the abundance of things we possess  
We have lost our thirst for the waters of life;  
Having fallen in love with life, we have ceased to dream of eternity  
And in our efforts to build a new earth,  
we have allowed our vision of the new Heaven to dim.

Disturb us, Lord, to dare more boldly,  
To venture on wilder seas where storms will show Your mastery;  
Where losing sight of land, we shall find the stars.  
We ask you to push back the horizons of our hopes;  
And to push back the future in strength, courage, hope, and love.  
This we ask in the name of our Captain, who is Jesus Christ.  
Amen

Thank you for taking the time to read this profile and please do get in touch if you would like to chat to me further about this post or Plymouth 2035.

+ Jane

# Plymouth 2035 Covenant

## **Plymouth Covenant | Nov 2025**

Plymouth 2035 envisions churches that are inspired by fresh opportunities, strengthened by new members, and energised through Spirit-led innovation. Transformation begins with openness to where God is already at work and a willingness to join in. This covenant encourages clergy to take faithful risks and place mission at the heart of church life. It is a shared commitment between Plymouth clergy, the Plymouth 2035 team, and diocesan leadership. It expresses a desire to see with fresh eyes and embrace God's call to something new.

In response to the Plymouth 2035 vision, I commit myself to:

### **Pray for Plymouth 2035**

Prayer reflects the missional heart of God in our lives and communities. I will:

- pray regularly for my churches to grow,
- create intentional opportunities for prayer within my churches,
- attend Plymouth 2035 prayer gatherings,
- give everyone in my churches (and beyond) a copy of the Plymouth 2035 prayer.

### **Build Collegiality**

Plymouth 2035 builds collaboration among clergy, churches and mission communities. I will:

- engage with revitalised Chapter meetings and Plymouth 2035 termly gatherings
- work with other colleagues to bring Plymouth 2035 alive in my Mission Community,
- share stories of faith and encouragement to inspire and connect.

### **Be Intentionally Missional**

Growth happens where it is planned for. I will:

- enable my churches to develop a Plan for Growth for our Mission Community,
- encourage my churches to reorient themselves towards mission in everything we do.

### **Cultivate Missional DNA**

Growth comes when people are signposted to take their next step in faith. I will:

- ensure that every event, activity or service includes a clear next step in faith,
- plan to always have something to invite a newcomer to,
- create regular opportunities for enquirers to explore Christianity.

### **Expand our Mixed Ecology of Church**

In order to encourage a church that is more diverse and contextually relevant, I will:

- support my churches to create two new worshipping communities,
- challenge convention, entertain new ideas and try new things,
- actively listen to those outside of my church community.

### **Nurture Vocations and Leadership**

To create a culture that recognizes and nurtures vocations, I will:

1. inspire confidence in everyday disciples,
2. help people discern what God is calling them to—whatever their age or stage of
3. faith,
4. give individuals, and congregations, a chance to 'have a go' at something new,
5. develop home-grown, contextual leaders, especially in estate communities.

### **Grow Younger and More Diverse**

To focus on younger people in my Mission Community, I will:

- strive to reflect the diversity of my parishes,
- reach out to children and young people where they are and in their schools
- create welcoming spaces for young people, using existing resources and networks,
- encourage good safeguarding practices across my mission

community.

### **Inspire Generosity**

To create a culture of generosity that supports sustainable mission, I will:

- intentionally create opportunities for people to give meaningfully,
- communicate needs clearly and foster a spirit of gratitude,
- preach regularly on the theme of giving and generosity,
- encourage regular, planned giving, including the use of Parish Giving Scheme.

### **Prioritise the marginalised**

In order to be churches that reflect the breadth of our community, I will:

- cultivate a bias towards those who have experienced the least,
- preach regularly on God's heart for the poor, justice, and inclusion,
- foster understanding in my churches about issues affecting the marginalised.

### **Expect Support from Senior Leaders**

The Plymouth 2035 team, City Dean, Archdeacon, Bishops' and Diocesan Staff are committed to supporting mission in Plymouth. They will do all that they can to support you, so you should expect:

- regular meetings with the City Dean,
  - Senior Staff to support new, missional initiatives,
  - practical advice, training and support for your ministry, especially trying new things,
  - pastoral concern for your wellbeing in ministry,
  - the support of diocesan support staff,
  - an honest, open and friendly
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# Archdeacon's Foreword



Jane Bakker  
Archdeacon of  
Plymouth

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Plymouth 2035 is an ambitious and visionary project seeking to renew mission and ministry across the city, enabling churches to flourish and serve their communities in fresh, creative and joyful ways. This post offers an exciting opportunity to play a key role in reshaping the church in the west of the city.

St Mark's is at an important moment as it moves beyond the initial phase of the church plant. Relational, authentic and outward looking, the church now needs new leadership to help them mature and take deeper root. As the initial funding period comes to an end, the new minister will need to guide the church more fully into the structures of the parish system, with thoughtful attention to governance arrangements, shared leadership and a growing commitment to financial sustainability, including participation in the Common Fund. Alongside this, we are looking for someone who can hold a clear, confident Anglican identity while continuing to embody a pioneering heart, rooted in prayer, hospitality and mission.

This role would suit someone with experience of multigenerational church, who has a passion for urban mission, and the ability to build strong relationships within community and educational settings.

This is a full time, stipendiary post. We warmly welcome applications from women and candidates from black and minority ethnic backgrounds. You are encouraged to get in touch for an informal conversation about this role.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jane'.

Archdeacon of Plymouth  
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## WELCOME TO ST MARK'S, PLYMOUTH

In five years' time, we dream that St Mark's will still be a young, growing church – Christ-centred, prayerful, inclusive, and firmly rooted in the local community. As a church plant, we embrace growth that is relational rather than rushed, faithful rather than flashy.

We aspire to be a beacon of hope: a place where people feel safe to explore faith, ask questions, and experience God's love in real and practical ways. We want to be known not for having everything figured out, but for loving Jesus, loving and serving our neighbours, and welcoming people exactly as they are.

## A VISION FOR OUR NEW PIONEER MINISTER

At St Mark's, Ford, Plymouth, we are looking for a Pioneer Minister with a **living, confident faith in Jesus Christ**, rooted in Scripture and sustained by prayer. They will be an ordained minister in the Church of England.

This is a role for someone who **dreams of seeing children, young people, and families thrive in faith**. They will bring energy, creativity, and vision to an intergenerational church, shaping worship where all ages are welcomed, children are celebrated, and faith is lived out joyfully in homes, schools, and communities. They will inspire parents and carers as primary discipler and equip the whole church to share Christ's love boldly and graciously.



We seek a minister who is a **warm, relational pastor**, a compassionate listener, and a courageous leader – someone who can foster a culture of belonging, prayer, and mutual support. They will build strong connections

with the wider parish, embodying mission that is **relational, joyful, and incarnational**, showing Christ's love in word and deed.

They will lead with **collaboration and creativity**, releasing the gifts of volunteers, embracing the joyful "holy chaos" of church life, and helping St Mark's become a vibrant, Spirit-filled community where faith grows, hope flourishes, and lives are transformed.

Our new minister's ministry will be shaped by the Plymouth 2035 vision for our city, in particular the Clergy Covenant.

# ST MARK'S CHURCH - WHO WE ARE

## **Facility**

The building is a beautiful, airy space, fully accessible with a well-equipped kitchen, toilets and a side room which is used as a children's teaching room or a break out meeting room. The building, which is owned and managed by Exeter Diocesan Board of Finance, hosts the Archdeacon of Plymouth's office and staff, the Bishop of Plymouth's PA, as well as the office for local church missional charity, Transforming Plymouth Together. The diocese uses St Mark's regularly for meetings and training days.

## **History – Planting a worshipping community**

The vision to plant a new worshipping community at St Mark's came out of Plymouth Partnerships in Mission (PPiM) which had previously planted in three other churches across the city. St Mark's is also part of a Bishop's Mission Order (BMO): Lee Abbey was invited for 5 years to partner with the diocese in this venture, by hosting a Small Missional Community (SMC) within St Mark's House, located next to the church, to assist in the planting of a new worshipping community. St Mark's was pioneered and planted by the then curate, working with the SMC during the 2021 Covid pandemic – not the most ideal of times to start a new church! During that first year, the curate in charge and the SMC literally walked alongside the community, built relationships with those they encountered on the streets, while the building became a makeshift food bank for the community. Pioneering during Covid obviously had its challenges, but it meant that a lot of prayer and tilling the ground happened before anything official could take place.

A mid-week group started exploring what Christianity was, and the fragile foundations of a church community start to evolve. In August 2021, just a couple of streets away, the Keyham shooting happened, which claimed the lives of five innocent people. This shocked the local community to its core. St Mark's responded and the building became a haven for local

people and key workers to gather, mourn and support one another.



In January 2022, we started our first monthly 'REAL on Sunday' gathering (St Mark's version of Messy Church) and local people started to come along. We have built this up slowly over the years, and at its peak we saw 50+ children and adults coming each month for singing, bible story, crafts, and a meal. Sunday gatherings started in September 2022, and have grown to a core group of members over the years. We average about 30-40 people on Sunday mornings, often 50% of whom are under 16.

Twice a term we share 'Depths', our worship and prayer nights, in partnership with two other PPIM churches. This is a time of extended worship and prayer for our communities and city, allowing the Holy Spirit space to lead and speak to us.

### **Sunday church family**

Children and young people are at the heart of St Mark's. We are not a church that adds on children's work to an adult-orientated church, but one which aims to centralise everything we do around the needs of the younger generations, discipling and growing church around them. We

have a relaxed informal feel on a Sunday morning – we love creativity and don't take ourselves too seriously, while loving Jesus and aiming to worship Him wholeheartedly. Our music is contemporary and we use modern worship via video. We encourage members of the congregation to be involved by leading services and sharing talks within morning worship. Our Kids church happens in parallel to the talks, often focusing on the same themes. The whole church family are all together for the beginning and ending of our Sunday worship, and we embrace and enjoy our regular All Age Services, worshipping together as a whole family.



We love hanging out as a church family beyond a Sunday morning, and can often be found playing a game of Rounders down the local park or eating an Ice-cream on the Hoe together.

'REAL on Sunday' happens on the second Sunday each month at 4pm. We have a small number of young teens, and the hope is that we can provide separate youth discipleship for them soon.

## Mid-week church family

We currently have mid-week groups, including:

- A thriving 'On Your Marks' parent and toddler group,
- A youth Box-Fit group,
- An Afterschool Youth Drop-in,
- A bible study and prayer group, and
- Regular prayer walks in the local area.

All of these are currently facilitated by the Lee Abbey SMC members alongside other church volunteers. We also run ad-hoc social gatherings, community walks, church Christmas lunches and parties, end of school term discos, and movie and quiz nights. We have positive relationships with other churches in the local area, and have worked ecumenically on outreach projects such as Light parties and prayer walks.



## Community links

St Mark's has an official link with 1<sup>st</sup> Keyham Scout group, the leaders of which are members of the church. The wider group therefore join on occasion with church services and activities throughout the year – for example, attending the service on Remembrance Sunday.

We also hosted Ford Primary School for the first time last Christmas for their Nativity play. We hope that this is just the start of a growing relationship between the church and the school, located just a few doors away.

## A typical week at St Mark's

Our Offering	Times	Who We Serve
Informal Worship (Communion, First Sunday)	Every Sunday @ 10am	Mixture of around 40 Adults & Children
REAL on Sunday (Our version of Messy Church)	Every Second Sunday @ 4pm	Mixture of around 40 Adults & Children
Youth Box-Fit	Tuesdays @ 4pm	Around 10 Young People
St Mark's Youth Drop In	Wednesdays @ 3.45pm	Around 20 Young People
'On Your Mark's' Parent & Toddler Group	Thursdays @ 9.30am	Around 10 families
Bible Study Group	Thursdays @ 6 - 7.15pm	6 Adults
Prayer Walk	Monthly on Fridays @ 11am	3-4 Adults

# ST MARK'S COMMUNITY

## OUR HOPES & DREAMS

St Mark's is known affectionately as **"Holy Chaos"** – a church that doesn't take itself too seriously, but who takes Jesus very seriously! We laugh easily, have lots of fun, welcome openly, and care deeply about our neighbours.

We need our new minister to feel at home within this culture and help us continue to grow into it with confidence. There are many mission fields within the area including the two local primary schools; during this second phase of church planting and growth, reaching these with the love of Jesus is key to our growth and impact missionally within Ford.

In five years' time, we hope that St Mark's will still be an evolving Christ-centred, prayerful, inclusive church, firmly rooted and serving the needs of the local community in Ford in its mission and outreach. We embrace growth that is relational rather than rushed, faithful rather than formulaic – and as we enter this next phase of church life and growth, our hope is that what has been built will solidify and become a permanent joy-filled presence for the Gospel in this area of Plymouth



## ST MARK'S GOVERNANCE

St Mark's is governed by Plymouth Partnership in Mission (PPiM), and our new minister will be accountable to the board of trustees. While we are still in the initial phase of church planting, finances are currently handled by this board. Going forward, however, a plan is needed to bring St Mark's into the Parish System and for us to be financially sustainable.

Within the St Mark's Church community, we have a number of volunteer leaders. We have a fledgling shadow Parochial Church Council (PCC), including our Safeguarding Officer, Chris Morton. We also have a full Kids' Church team with three pairs of leaders on a three-week rota, and there is a wider core community who are willing to be involved and muck in where needed – for example, serving drinks before and after services, or preparing worship slides.



Rev'd Claire McIlroy, a local licensed Priest and University Chaplain is currently worshipping at St Mark's and is overseeing the vacancy. She is a trained youth worker and hopes to continue to develop the youth ministry provision within St Mark's once a new minister arrives.

The members of the Lee Abbey SMC have played key roles in pioneering

St Mark's over the last five years, without whom the church would not be where it is today. The five-year collaboration with Lee Abbey has come to an end and conversations continue about what this partnership will look like going forward.



## FORD - THE LOCAL AREA

Located to the east of Devonport Royal Dockyard, Ford is an urban residential area that grew rapidly in the early 20<sup>th</sup> Century. Ford is predominately White British in its ethnicity, with only a small percentage of people identifying as non-British, and is within the top 10% most deprived neighbourhoods for living environment within Plymouth. The area has higher than average income deprivation affecting both children and older people, indicating significant and persistent financial hardship within the community. A proudly working-class area of the city, you will meet "Janners" who can trace their family back generations in Plymouth. Although being surrounded by other residential areas, Ford is often forgotten within Plymouth.



The area has faced hardships over recent years, having witnessed the Keyham shooting, the local discovery of a WW2 bomb, and last year, sadly, the isolated, targeted murder of a Plymouth man near the church on Cambridge Road. However through these experiences, the community of Ford have become resilient and down-to-earth, gritty people.

Ford is well served with local transport – there are regular buses into the city centre, and Keyham train station is a short walk away, allowing access to the rest of Devon and into Cornwall. The area also has several lovely parks and green spaces to enjoy. There is a large Lidl and local amenities not far from St Mark's church, and there are two primary schools in the area: Ford Primary School and College Road Primary School.

# PERSON SPECIFICATION

## PIONEER MINISTER

**Role:** Pioneer Minister

**Location:** St Mark's, Plymouth

We are looking for a minister who will walk alongside us as we grow, and as we listen deeply to God, to one another, and to our community. Guided by the Holy Spirit, they will help shape a church that is rooted and based on real relationships. We value encouragement over perfection, presence over polish, and faith expressed through love in everyday life across Ford.

The new Pioneer Minister at St Mark's Ford will be a leader with vision to continue to grow and nurture the church community, whilst continuing to pioneer into the local community of Ford. They will be deeply rooted in the Church of England and be able to articulate and promote a clear Anglican identity for our church. They will be a missionary at heart, creative and flexible in their approach to worship, love intergenerational church and ministry, and be full of the Spirit and the love of God.

### **Our new minister needs to be:**

- a pioneering, mission-focussed leader, with the ability to relate to deprived and working-class communities.
- comfortable leading within a growing church plant context.
- passionate for loving Jesus and their neighbours, and committed to serving and seeing Ford transformed with the love of Jesus.
- able to embrace creativity, movement, joy, and energy as signs of life in the church, and can steer this into mission opportunities to reach the local community for Jesus.
- deeply committed to nurturing and growing an intergenerational church where children are valued and involved, growing confident, faith-filled disciples of all ages, and will hold the needs of children, families, and the wider community central to St Marks.
- authentic in character, joyful in outlook, approachable in nature, and relational in discipleship; attentive to the Holy Spirit, grounded in Jesus, prayerful, embracing of collaborative leadership, capable of inspiring vision and direction and able to equip volunteers for ministry
- an experienced pastor, emotionally intelligent, full of the grace and love of Jesus,

- natural, gracious, and accessible in their evangelism, and committed to growing a church which embraces diversity and individuals all as God's children.

In addition, we are looking for a minister who can evidence that they have experience of:

- leading Christ-centred worship that is accessible, inclusive, and faith-building.
- communicating the gospel clearly and imaginatively to all ages,
- shaping worship that reflects the diversity of the church family.
- fostering a culture of belonging.
- able building positive relationships with schools, families, and the wider Ford community.
- being resilient, flexible, and comfortable with the "holy chaos" of church life.
- managing a church within the parish system.
- leading change.
- teaching about giving, generosity and finance.



## CHURCH OVERSIGHT

The current governance of St Mark's, along with three other church plants in Plymouth, is through the trustees of PPIIM. The plants are financed through SDF and SMMIB funding, administered by the Exeter Diocesan Board of Finance. Administrative and financial support is offered to the leadership of the churches in addition to the standard support structures of the Church of England.

Part of St Mark's' future will be to bring it into the parish system. This will entail establishing more formal church governance structures, laying the grounds for churchwardens and a PCC. Currently, across the PPIIM churches, these are in an informal 'shadow' form, reporting to the PPIIM trustees.



St Mark's is currently in an economically low financial position, but we are covering current operational costs. We are however in the fortunate position of not owning our building so our overheads are relatively low, but we have little capacity for funding anything beyond our current expenditure.

Whilst no Common Fund is currently being paid, the church will be expected from 2027 to join the Common Fund system by paying 20% of their allocation. Thereafter, this will increase by 20% over 5 years, until they are paying 100%.

## HOUSING



The house is detached with 4 bedrooms, one ensuite shower room. Study and GF WC separate from family living spaces. Garage and parking for 2 cars at the front of the house. I understand there is more parking close by.