

The Benefice of Bourton on the Water with Clapton & the Rissingtons

Benefice Profile



St Lawrence
Bourton on the Water



St Peter's
Little Rissington



St James'
Clapton on the Hill



St Lawrence
Wyck Rissington



St John the Baptist
Great Rissington



Upper Rissington

Our Benefice

The benefice of Bourton on the Water with Clapton & the Rissingtons is part of the North Cotswolds Deanery of the Diocese of Gloucester.

The Benefice (which is now 12 years old) consists of 6 village communities, within which are 5 traditional Cotswold churches and a local ecumenical church plant (CUR:ve).



We have a House for Duty Associate Minister with special responsibility for the Rissingtons and a Curate in her fourth year with us. There are two Readers, active ministry teams as well as lots of enthusiastic and capable lay involvement. The North Cotswolds Deanery is also home to a vibrant and supportive clergy chapter.

Each of our villages has its own sense of community and identity, although we share the aim of making the Gospel of Jesus Christ relevant and accessible to all those who live, work and visit here.

We know we live in a beautiful part of the country and readily share it with those who travel to us from all over the world; maybe you have visited?

Bourton is the focal point of the benefice with shops, pubs, restaurants, doctors, dentist & Leisure Centre all within walking distance of the Rectory. Both Bourton and Upper Rissington are currently experiencing expansion with much new housing. There are several local primary schools (with good and outstanding OFSTED reports) and the Cotswold School in Bourton (our Secondary Academy affiliated to the Diocese) also has an outstanding OFSTED report. Its catchment area is wide, drawing students from within and some miles beyond the benefice.

Moreton-in-Marsh & Kingham stations with mainline rail links to London are both just 8 miles away, Cheltenham and Cirencester (15 miles, served by regular local bus services), Stratford and Oxford (30 miles) are all within commuting distance.

We hope this profile will give you a flavour of our life as a church family, and the vibrant communities of which we are a part. We encourage you to consider coming to share it with us!



We exist to know Jesus Christ and share His love with all

Bourton on the Water

Bourton is a vibrant village with a population of nearly 3,500. Situated in the heart of the Cotswolds it is a popular tourist destination throughout the year, but especially during the summer months.

Many inhabitants of the village are of retirement age, but certainly not all! There are lots of families with children, teenagers and a growing number of young adults with whom we have little contact as yet. There are a number of new estates in the process of being completed throughout the village where outreach is just beginning to happen.

The village has a thriving community life and is a great place to call home. Plenty of local groups meet throughout the year: History and Horticultural Societies, U3A, Pantomime Group and Rural Cinema to name but a few, alongside uniformed organisations for all ages and a wide range of sporting clubs and facilities including a Leisure Centre with swimming pool, gym and floodlit all weather pitch.



Our combined congregations at St Lawrence represent a wide churchmanship: from formal and traditional BCP to informal and varied all age worship, with most stages in between! 8am Said Holy Communion (BCP) takes place twice a month, as does 6pm Holy Communion (CW) with traditional hymns. During the vacancy our weekly midweek Holy Communion (CW) has reduced to twice a month. A few families join us occasionally for worship on a Sunday.

Non-Eucharistic services take place on the 1st and 3rd Sundays at 11am where clergy would not expect to robe. They might include drama or activities and sometimes a baptism. Eucharistic services on the 2nd and 4th Sundays at 11am are more formal in style, using Common Worship but not stuffy. Music is an important part of our worship: we project all our morning services onto a screen, so are able to use a wide range of hymns, songs and liturgy. Singing may be led from the organ or the piano, sometimes with lead singers. Members of the congregation read, lead the intercessions, assist with the distribution of Holy Communion and occasionally preach (usually at non-Eucharistic services).

Once a month on a Saturday **Breakfast Church** meets from 9-10am for breakfast and informal craft and worship. Bumblebeez for babies, toddlers and their parents meets every Thursday morning for craft, play, worship and fun! We have recently started to hold termly children's parties to meet families, and have adult fellowship groups which meet weekly. A Bereavement Course is recently established, and a new Alpha course begins in October.



Our Electoral Roll usually averages 150 with approximately 125 of those being resident in Bourton and 25 residing in Clapton on the Hill. Average weekly attendance across four services is about 80 adults (usually no children) but with significantly more at Christmas, Easter and Harvest. We would like to worship in a full church with adults, families and children on a regular basis and need help to achieve this. Our primary school is not a church school, but we are seen as the church for the school, leading Open the Book assemblies on a weekly basis and hosting class visits at other times.

We are excited about what the future holds for us in Bourton as we are just moving back into church following a significant 7 month re-ordering project – the only thing which hasn't changed is the chance! We don't know yet how this change will affect our ministries; we'd like to explore that with you, specifically our ministry to families, children and young people.



"Behold, I am making all things new"

Clapton on the Hill

Clapton is a hilltop village of some 50 homes with about 100 residents situated 3 miles from Bourton. We have a mixed population of working families and retirees, and two working farms. The church of St. James is the sole amenity and central to the village.



St. James is a Chapel of Ease to St. Lawrence in Bourton. It is a small, intimate 12th century church, conducive to prayer and quiet contemplation. At present we have two services a month: Holy Communion (BCP) with a congregation averaging 17, and Morning Worship (CW) which attracts a congregation of about 9. Music is usually provided by a CD player. However, we have recently purchased a good quality portable keyboard which is used on special occasions or whenever we can acquire an organist!

We have a nucleus of parishioners who meet regularly to consider the needs of St. James and to discuss how we can support the PCC of Bourton on the Water with Clapton, at which we have a co-opted representative. St. James operates independently, financially meeting its own costs of maintenance and repair through planned giving together with a contribution to the Bourton with Clapton Parish Share.

We have people who are able and willing to undertake the daily upkeep of the church and churchyard in which we have some space for burials with an adjacent consecrated area for the scattering of ashes.



We are keen to welcome newcomers to the village and village support for St. James is demonstrated by the fact that at least a third give some financial support through Gift Aid.

Secularly, we have an active Village Meeting to discuss matters affecting the whole village held in someone's home or in the church.



We are also fortunate in being able to use the private facilities of a local 'barn' for larger gatherings, such as Benefice services (70+) which are followed by a meal on a 'bring and share basis'. We are known in Clapton for organising and providing good food!

As in the past, when pilgrims faithfully stopped to pray on their way to Evesham Abbey, walkers from all over the world find us open today.

Together, the village of Clapton and St. James' Church offer a peaceful sanctuary.



"As we are gathered, Jesus is here"

Great Rissington

Great Rissington is a village approximately 3 miles from Bourton on the Water and a similar distance from Little and Wyck Rissington, a little closer to Upper Rissington. It has a population of some 370. The church of St John the Baptist is an attractive building with a fine square tower situated at the southern end of the village. Circa 12th century in origin (although extensively rebuilt in 1873) it has a churchyard adjacent to the Manor House.

We have an active PCC, 29 on the electoral roll and a regular congregation of about a dozen worshippers. Our services take a different format each week of the month: 9.30am Holy Communion (BCP), 11.00am Informal service, 11.00am Family Communion (in rotation with Little and Wyck Rissington) and a 6pm Sung Evensong (BCP). Although only a small regular congregation, many villagers support the church by undertaking church locking, cleaning and flower arranging, for example.



Festival services are of particular note and are very well attended, supported by an ad hoc choir of village members. We have an active and accomplished team of bell ringers and regularly hold musical concerts in the church to raise funds. We welcome a steady stream of visitors, increased by national publicity because 5 sons of a village family were killed in WW1.

The older part of the village is made up of mainly Cotswold stone cottages, originally built for farm workers but now mostly modernized whilst the former 18th century old rectory is now a private house. Although many of the villagers are retired, there is a small estate of more modern properties occupied largely by families, many with school aged children. Once primarily a farming community, residents mainly travel out of the village to work.



The village is fortunate to have a primary school (OFSTED Outstanding) now operating in Great Rissington and Upper Rissington. The Rissington School was opened in 2015. We welcome a new head teacher in September 2017, and although not a church school, we have always worked closely with the staff and pupils and hope to further this relationship with the new head. Secondary age pupils mainly attend The Cotswold School in Bourton or Burford School.

A flourishing and well-presented bi-monthly village magazine acts as an important focus point for advertising village activities. Currently the village supports two reading groups, a gardening club, 'The Rissingtons' Local History Society', fat fighters, table tennis, pilates, film suppers, and a monthly village market. The village is fortunate in having a pub 'The Lamb' which serves meals and attracts holiday makers, and The Great Rissington Club (with a membership of around 180), having a modern building with bar, meeting rooms, sports changing facilities and an excellent cricket pitch (hosting 2 senior and 3 junior teams), plus archery.



"Then sings my soul, my Saviour God to thee"

Little Rissington

Little Rissington is a very welcoming and friendly village with a population of nearly 300. The village produces a monthly newsletter, keeping everyone in touch with dates of WI Meetings, Mothers' Union, regular coffee mornings, Book Club, Knitting Circle, Carol singing and the like.

The 12th century church of St Peter is situated away from the village across a field and is accessed by footpath at the front and car park at the back. The church and churchyard are well maintained and the RAF cemetery contains war graves which brings visitors from around the world.



Worship is both traditional and contemporary, always with music. Extra services include our Patronal Festival, RAF Memorial Service, Harvest Festival and Remembrance Service. Our monthly service pattern includes Holy Communion (CW), All age informal service and Holy Communion (BCP) all averaging about 20 in the congregation, and the Joint Rissingtons Holy Communion (CW).

The church, which supports many charities and attracts outside visitors, derives its income mainly from Stewardship scheme envelopes and the monthly coffee mornings and we always cover our Parish Share contribution. We have an enthusiastic band of cleaners and flower arrangers and a team of readers for lessons and prayers every Sunday. Visiting is done on a friendly and informal basis.

Upper Rissington, although a separate civil parish, is part of the ecclesiastical parish of Little Rissington. Upper Rissington is growing, with the building of further houses currently on-going. We welcome all into the church but also support the ecumenical work of CUR:ve in Upper Rissington as they witness to Christ in that community. In particular, baptisms for CUR:ve families will sometimes take place in St Peter's.



"I lift up my eyes to the hills"

Wyck Rissington

Wyck Rissington is a small, well networked, rural community of some 48 homes (approx 85 people), a few of the houses are second homes, and we have one working farm. No new homes have been built since the 1990s. The demographics are slowly changing and a few younger families have moved to the village - though at present we have no children at our regular Sunday services.



St Laurence's Church was consecrated in 1269 so we plan to celebrate our 750th anniversary in 2019. It has the finest Early English Chancel in Gloucestershire (according to David Verey), and has Victorian additions built during refurbishment in 1879. The church is largely in sound condition having had a new roof in 2011, thanks in large part to fund raising efforts by 'The Friends of St Laurence'. Though our congregation numbers are small they do represent over 10 per cent of our inhabitants, and there is still a strong feeling of loyalty in the village for the church. We are fortunate in having the supportive group, of mainly non-churchgoers in 'The Friends of St Laurence', to help with the maintenance of the fabric of the church as needed.

Gustav Holst was organist here at the age of 18, and this brings interested visitors, choirs and walking parties - in fact the Holst Way ends at the church and the Oxfordshire Way goes through the churchyard. We keep the church open during daylight hours every day of the year.

Our four bells have recently been re-tuned, and the bell tower strengthened and renewed in part. We have an enthusiastic team of ringers learning their skills with generous guidance from an experienced ringer from Great Rissington.

There are currently 27 on the Electoral Roll.

Our regular pattern of services is :-

2nd Sunday - 9.30am Sung Holy Communion (BCP)

4th Sunday - 11am Sung Morning Prayer (BCP)

On a 3rd Sunday we join with Great and Little Rissington for a Joint Communion Service (CW). On a 5th Sunday we share a sung Benefice Holy Communion service.

Attendance varies but on average is 10 adults, with larger numbers at Christmas, Easter, Patronal Festival, Remembrance Day and other 'special' services. We have a much appreciated organist who plays for love of us and St Laurence's!

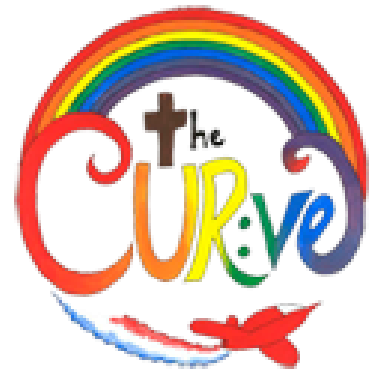
We are very happy for St Laurence's to be used for other purposes and have, in the past, had exhibitions and musical events. We are an attractive venue for country weddings and are very happy to host these in our lovely church.



"the love that stands the test"

CUR:ve in Upper Rissington

The village of Upper Rissington was created in the mid-1990s when the MOD sold the housing stock from what was for many years RAF Little Rissington. The village has grown in the last few years to a population of just over 1000. Recently, the primary school at Great Rissington has extended to include a new site in Upper Rissington and is now called The Rissington School. There is also a new village hall and a small shopping arcade of a supermarket, chemist, charity shop, café and gym. With so much new housing, many new people have moved into the village and there is a very high proportion of families with children aged 0-18 in the new community.



When the village was created it had no church. It was, and remains, part of the ecclesiastical parish of Little Rissington. Around 10 years ago, the neighbouring churches - the Methodist Chapel of Church Westcote, the Baptist Church in Bourton, with the Anglican Churches of this Benefice worked together to bring "church" to Upper Rissington, and they have worked together since to support and oversee its work. It has the acronym CUR:ve - Church in Upper Rissington: Valuing Everyone. There was a prime commitment to build community, be a Christian presence and live out "love of neighbour" - a monthly Sunday Cafe soon started to meet.

In 2012 CUR:ve registered as a charity to advance the Christian faith particularly by supporting the provision of leisure, recreation and sport. We received funding to employ a full-time Community & Sport Worker to live and work in the village. He and his successor have established Saturday morning football/sports sessions on the village playing field, a buggy run, a community boxing gym, and a holiday club, as well as involvement with the youth club and local schools. The current post-holder is leaving in September 2017, and discussions are taking place on whether/how to replace him, given limitations to funding.



As an emerging church, CUR:ve continues to evolve. Until earlier this year, its management team consisted of members and clergy from its three supporting churches. CUR:ve still maintains these strong links with the supporting churches, albeit now in an advisory capacity. Reflecting the involvement of an increasing proportion of local residents in CUR:ve, a Leadership team consisting of eight members of the regular congregation now looks after its day-to-day running. Its constitution is being revised to reflect this and other changes. The monthly Sunday Café continues. It remains predominantly outreach - bacon butties, coffee, and pastries, with a short talk or testimony and has regulars who come each month. The remainder of the Sundays are still run as a café, but include worship, Bible teaching, and children's activities and attract 20-35 people each week with a large number of children. CUR:ve also hosts regular mid-week events including bible study, men's prayer group, ladies fellowship and community coffee morning.

The Diocese has been committed to supporting CUR:ve since its early days providing input to the Advisory Group and giving HR expertise in the recruitment of the Community and Sports Worker. At Benefice level, there are strongly felt ties between the laity of Little Rissington and CUR:ve, with a report on CUR:ve as a standing agenda item at PCC meetings.

The Associate Priest's vicarage is in Upper Rissington and although most pastoral care is delivered by the CUR:ve family, he provides priestly input where necessary. Benefice clergy take weddings and funerals for village residents, usually at Little or Great Rissington. There are closer ties with CUR:ve for baptisms: residents thus far prefer their children to be baptised in a church (either Little or Great Rissington), but benefice clergy ensure that it is done with a representative from CUR:ve who is involved in the service, and, more crucially, in preparation and follow-up.



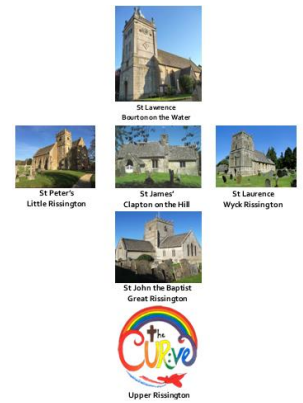
CUR:ve's leadership team "fervently hope" that our new incumbent is able to take an active interest in their activities, and invite their participation in the Advisory Group.



"Go then, to all peoples everywhere and make them my disciples"

Our new Rector

As you can see, our villages are busy places with lots of opportunities to get involved in ordinary village life as well as formal church worship. We are hoping that **you will be an encouraging and energising presence**, committed to the long-term growth of our churches, enabling us to reach out to those who need us, whilst inspiring and supporting our current congregations.



You will need to **enjoy leading worship in a variety of styles** with us; we use both Common Worship and Book of Common Prayer liturgy throughout the benefice and enjoy music in worship. We are particularly good at big one-off services (e.g. Remembrance Sunday and at Christmas) where special liturgy is normally created for the occasion.

You will need to be a **good communicator** who enjoys building relationships with all ages. We are keen to develop our pastoral ministries and our relationships with families and schools. We also appreciate good biblical teaching which is relevant to the occasion & audience.

Being **organised with good IT skills** will be a distinct advantage, as will being an effective team member and delegator. This busy benefice is looking to discern and respond to mission opportunities as well as being an effective worshipping community on a Sunday and throughout the week.

We are an enthusiastic bunch, so you will need to **be able to lead us** and help us discern a vision which enables us to respond to God faithfully.

We asked people what they were hoping for in their new Rector...

Someone who will support the spiritual development of all ages and stages

Someone who is approachable to be a 'priest' in the village

Someone who will respect and cherish our traditions whilst helping us grow

Someone with a heart to share the gospel and draw others to faith in Jesus Christ

Someone who is ready for a challenge – it's a wonderful opportunity!

A shepherd ... an even handed diplomat ... a leader ... the Lord's anointed... (Don't worry - we know you won't be perfect!)

Someone who will encourage us to use our gifts and work with us to achieve good things

Someone who is worldly wise with a sense of humour

Someone who will pray with us, help us respond to God and catch His vision for us

We seek to be an inclusive and welcoming Benefice, and also have as open a policy as permissible within the rules on baptisms, weddings & the receipt of Holy Communion for both adults and children



"All the believers continued together in close fellowship"

Our hopes for the future...

Having a newly re-ordered church in Bourton (from Sept 2017) gives us the opportunity to evaluate how we use our space: we are excited about moving back in and beginning that conversation.



Pastoral Care is something all our churches are keen to see enriched. A small group of Pastoral Assistants from across the Benefice is being commissioned in the Cathedral (in Sept 2017) & we hope you will help develop their ministry.

We would like to attract more families into church: we currently struggle to attract families & children into our worshipping community although we are continuing to make contact with them through termly parties, Breakfast Church and BumbleBeez, for example in Bourton and at Little and Great Rissington's all age services. We also believe that outreach ministry to our schools is vital: *Open the Book*, *Soul Space* and supporting the school *Christian Union* are all important areas of mission for us.



Whilst our benefice is now 12 years old, we are still learning how to work together & support each other: we have regular benefice services, are all part of Bourton Churches Together with the Baptists and Roman Catholics, but should probably work together across parish boundaries in other ways too.

Between us, we do lots of great things in our villages, and offer an open-hearted welcome to all who worship with us. We are not always very good at offering invitations for people to just 'come and see' or 'visit again'. We would like to become better at following up on baptisms, for example.



We recognise the need to grow, and attract new worshippers, but also the need to nurture and disciple our current congregations. Thinking about how we use all our gifts effectively, including stewardship and monetary giving, is important to all of us, but particularly to Great Rissington at the moment.

Benefice administration is currently undertaken by the clergy with volunteers when needed: we are happy to explore this further with you.



"Striving to place Jesus at the centre of all that we do"

Governance & Finance

The PCC in Bourton with Clapton usually meets 6 times a year with a Standing Committee meeting to oversee matters of general administration between times. Items of substance are always referred to the PCC and additional meetings scheduled as necessary. We have 2 Churchwardens, Deanery Synod members, Safeguarding representative as well as the usual officers and elected members. Clapton hold an additional Parishioners' Meeting every 3 months.



Great Rissington, Little Rissington and Wyck Rissington each have a PCC including 1 Churchwarden, Deanery Synod members, other officers and ordinary elected members.

The Benefice is staffed with a Rector and 2 Readers all of whom live in Bourton, as well as an Associate Priest (House for Duty) with special responsibility for the Rissingtons, living in Upper Rissington. Our Curate will be moving on in the next 12 months.

Our parishes have all had active local ministry teams in the recent past, and appreciate working collaboratively. There is lay involvement in service planning and presentation in all of our churches. Bourton also has a prayer ministry team, pastoral care core team, and others with key skills in music and children's work, for example.

Benefice giving inevitably reflects Church attendance and there remain some generous supporters within all our Churches, many of whom have increased their regular contributions recently. Broadly, income and expenditure balance out with a small surplus and all parishes in the Benefice have committed to meet their parish commitments for 2017. This is a total of almost £78,000. We have sometimes struggled to meet our full parish share but are working towards making full payment in years to come.

Each Parish submits its own set of accounts to the Diocese. St James, Clapton on the Hill, a chapel of ease within Bourton parish, generates its own income and manages its own finances, contributing to the parish share for Bourton. The clergy expenses are paid by Bourton on the Water, but are then shared according to size of each Parish across the Benefice.

All our historic church buildings are well cared for and maintained. At the time of writing, Bourton on the Water is drawing to the end of a major reordering programme, costing £650,000, the vast majority of which has been financed through historic investments. Some of the cost has been met by contributions from within the congregation. Bourton's quinquennial inspection has been postponed until 2018 because of these works. Wyck Rissington will have some costs ahead resulting from their recent inspection and will rely on the Friends of St Laurence to help meet those costs, but will also need to dip into reserves. In Great Rissington, the nave roof will require attention in the near future, although not immediately urgent. Their PCC has agreed to go ahead with this and a trust has been put in place to raise the necessary funds. Recent quinquennials for both Little Rissington and Clapton have not highlighted any significant issues.

Meeting our financial requirements always receives our close attention, especially as we seek to find new ways to extend our giving and outreach into the communities in which we witness.



"I will praise you Lord, with all my heart"

The Rectory

A modern rectory has been built behind the Church which enjoys the benefit of a small adjoining field which is used for events and regularly as parking for Sunday services, weddings and funerals.

The Rectory is a 4/5 bed roomed, detached family house benefiting from a good sized office, a large lounge, dining room and kitchen with adjoining utility room as well as a ground floor cloakroom. There are solar panels in addition to gas-fired central heating.

There is a double garage and paved front drive giving good parking facilities.

A good-sized garden with adjoining vegetable plot make it a spacious and comfortable family home.



"O Lord, you have always been our home"