



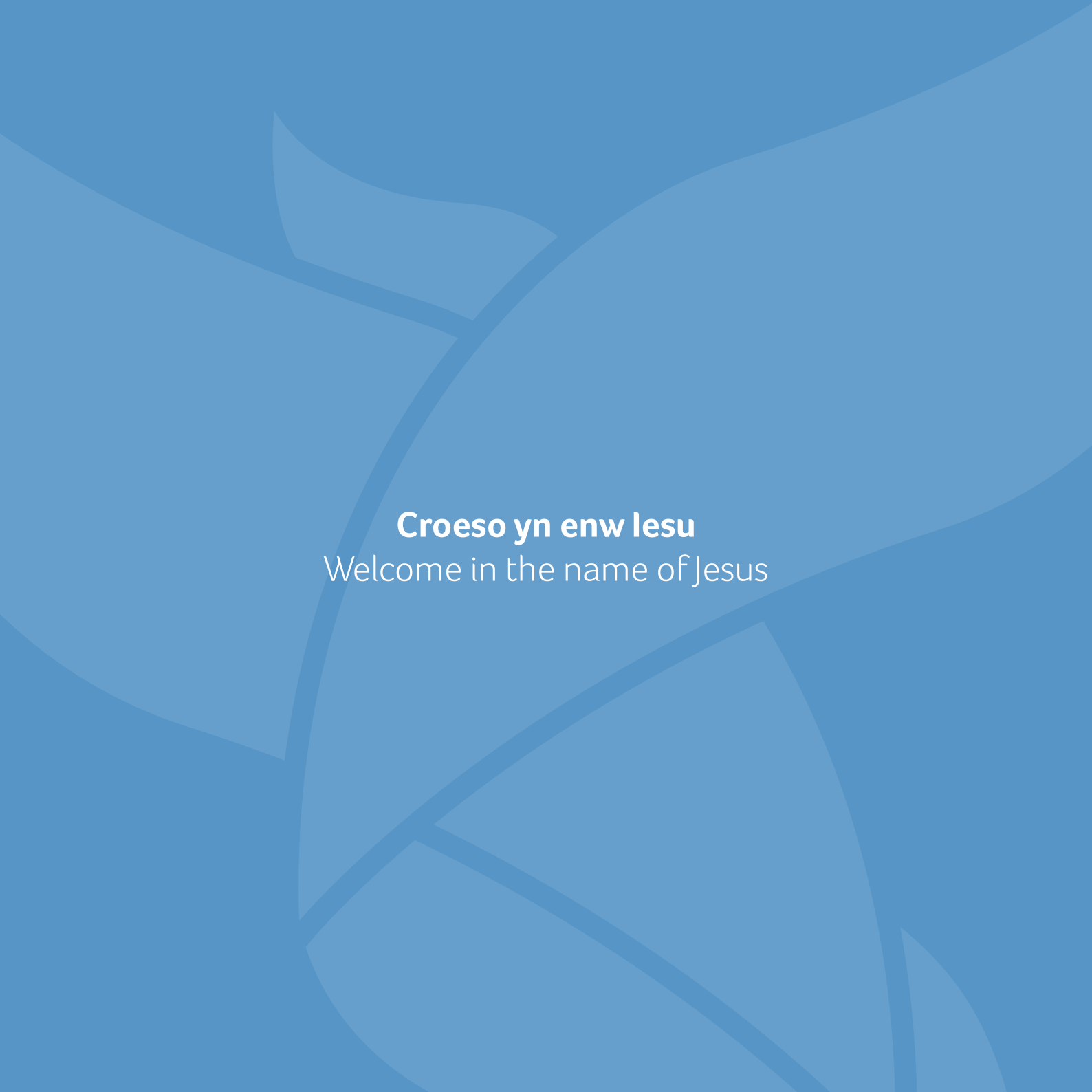
**Esgobaeth Llandaf**  
**Diocese of Llandaff**

Mae Ffydd Yn Cyfrif | Faith Matters

**Recruitment Pack** | 2024

# **Afon Nedd** Ministry Area





**Croeso yn enw Iesu**  
Welcome in the name of Jesus



## Croeso! Welcome!

**I am delighted that you are exploring this exciting opportunity to minister across the lower part of the historic Neath Valley. Its churches and other places of worship continue to have a significant importance within its towns and villages. I am praying for you as you embark on this process of discernment.**

These are exciting times in the Diocese of Llandaff. Our five-year strategic vision 'Where Faith Matters' is becoming reality. As a Diocese we are encouraging one another to tell a joyful story, grow the Kingdom and build our capacity for good. With help from the Evangelism Fund of the Church in Wales, we have launched Citizen, a new Resource Church for the diocese, which has grown rapidly and is already preparing to plant other churches. We have invested heavily in our ministry amongst young people, recruiting outreach and schools' workers in mission alongside our churches. We have accelerated the transition to Ministry Areas, which will encourage collaborative ministry and empower our congregations.


This post will integrate into the team of lay and clerical colleagues, working with the Ministry Area Leader and Lay Chair, sharing resources, playing to your strengths, and reimagining what it means to be Church in the twenty first century.

You will have the chance to forge a new way of working together across the seven churches whilst, at the same time, rooting ministry in the local community.

I hope you will find this profile helpful in discerning whether you feel called to apply.

Rt Rev'd Mary Stallard  
**Bishop of Llandaff**



A woman in a blue jacket is standing in front of a large, multi-tiered waterfall. She is holding a camera up to her eye, taking a photo. A vibrant rainbow is visible in the mist created by the waterfall. The background is a lush, green forest.

By the very nature of this profile, it can only be a snapshot of the work and life of our MA and we would encourage you to get in touch if there is anything further that you would like to know.

We are a group of seven churches based in and around the town of Neath, incorporating the former parishes of Llansawel Briton Ferry, Skewen and Neath. The MA has excellent communication links and sits within easy reach of the coast and mountains.

Our churches reflect a wide variety of worship, and this is complemented to some extent in the character of the buildings themselves which range from the Medieval to the “Noughties.”



## The Area

**N**eath is situated at the western end of industrial South Wales, 40 miles west of Cardiff, and 8 miles east of Swansea. It has excellent communications, being at the junction of the A465 with the M4 and has a main-line railway station.

There is a busy town centre with indoor market and multi-national and local shops (Including an “M&S”!). Neath has a strong sporting, musical and cultural tradition, and many leisure facilities. The population of the MA is estimated at approx. 40,000 people. 75% of housing is owner occupied, with new housing development particularly in the Cimla area.

The area also represents a contrast in terms of social demographics. There are regions of evident wealth and affluence, but at the same time three of the Wards fall into the most deprived 5% communities in Wales (using Wales Index of Multiple Deprivation statistics), and many of the other areas being in the 20% most deprived.

There is a great deal of built heritage in the town and the surrounding area comprises beautiful countryside to the north and is near the Gower peninsula and the recently developed coastal area in Aberavon.

The traditional industries of the area have generally now given way to tourism and leisure, both of which have a prominence in the locality. A proportion of residents are still employed in the nearby steelworks at Port Talbot. There has also been a great deal of new business growth in the area which, along with established businesses, employ many people from within the community.

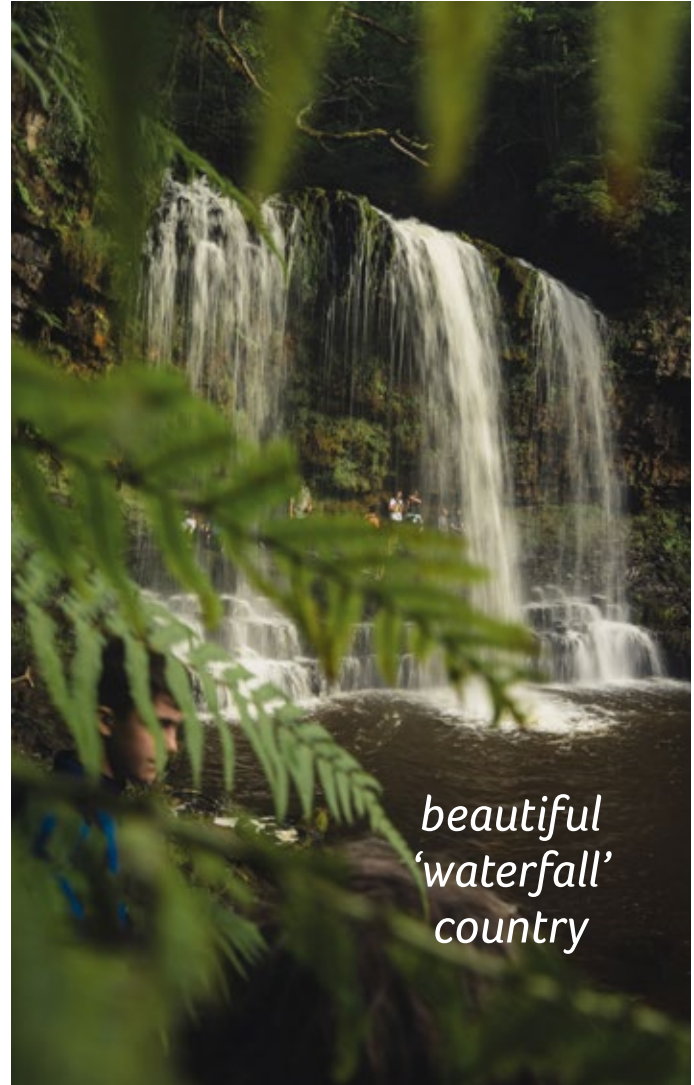


Photo © Jonny Gios on Unsplash







# The Ministry Area

The MA is seeking to develop engagement with the “unchurched” and to build on the solid foundations that are already established, as we share in the Diocesan Vision to tell a joyful story, grow God’s kingdom and to build our capacity for good. We believe we are called in our distinctive ways to:

- Be committed to the teachings of Jesus and rooted in the Gospel
- Seek to do God’s will, listening carefully to the promptings of the Holy Spirit in all our decision making
- Provide new and creative ways for people to experience Church
- Enjoy our journey of faith through our shared experiences of worship, prayer, discussion and fellowship

The new MA brings together the the former benefice of Neath, with the former parishes of Briton Ferry and Skewen, as indicated in the map above. The current ministry team comprises: the Revd Canon Lynda Newman (MA Leader), team vicars, the Revd Christopher Coles and the Revd Ali Reeves, working across the MA. We also have a curate, currently in her diaconal year. The MA employ a part-time administrator who takes care of much of the day to day administration work, freeing the clergy to concentrate on ministry, outreach and pastoral care.

The Lay Chair is Mr Mark Ritzmann, who is also organist at St David’s in Neath.

We have a Licensed Reader in the MA, Sue Andrews.

## Some of our MA Organisations

### **Alderman Davies Church in Wales School**

This Church in Wales School was opened nearly 170 years ago and flourishes to this day. The school sits next to St David’s Church in the centre of our town. It has over 300 pupils ages from 3-11years.

### **Community Shop**

The Community shop was founded by the Parish of Briton Ferry and is situated in Briton Ferry. It is run by members of the ecumenical community -Roman Catholics, Free Church, Baptists, Anglican etc. All profit is given back to community groups. It is a good hub for the community to call in to.

### **Foodbank**

We are involved in our local foodbanks with many church members volunteering each week The church community is very generous in donating items and money to the Foodbank.

### **Mothers’ Union**

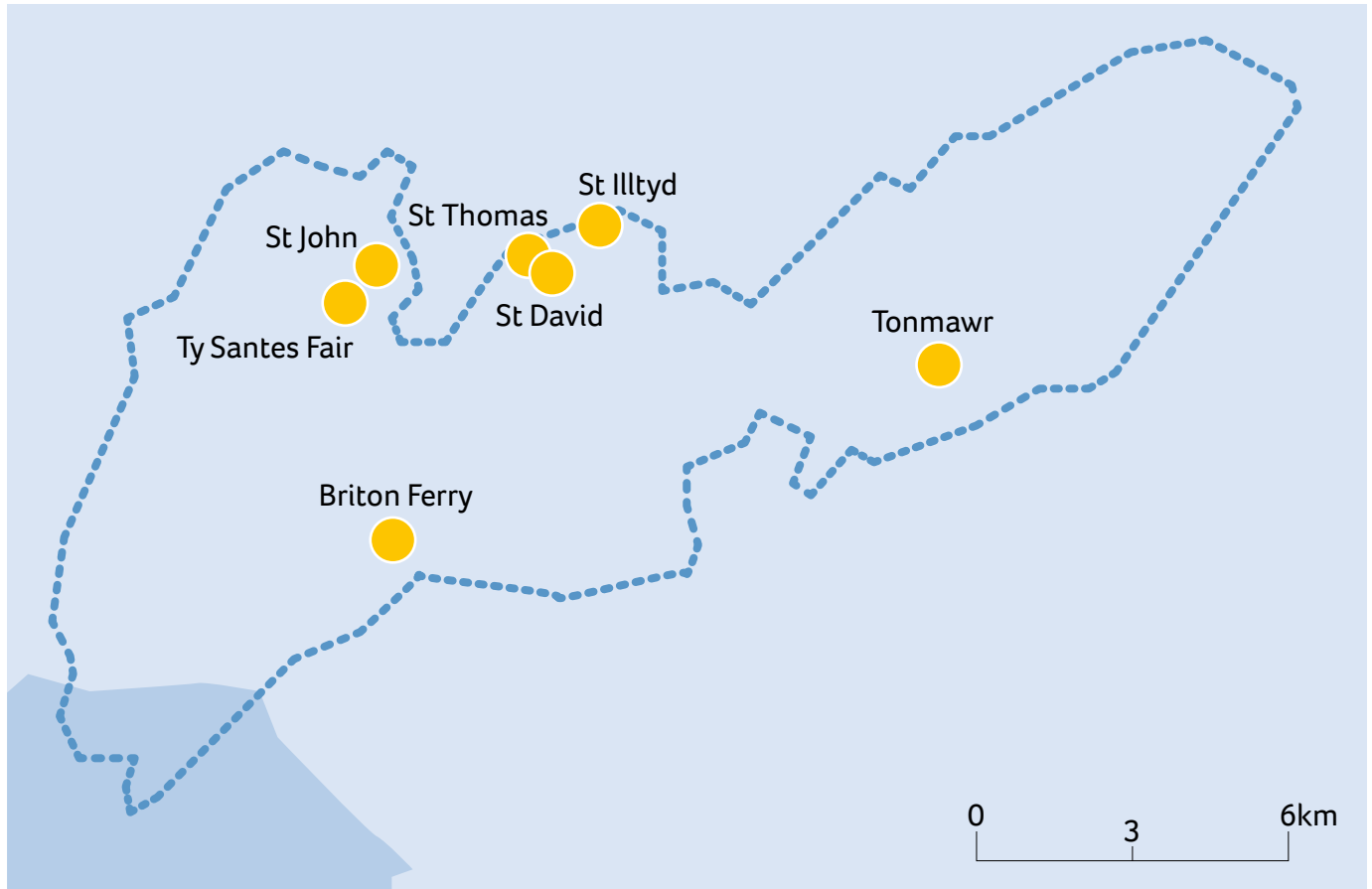
The MU has been active in all our different parts of the MA for many, many years. Recently the Neath MU has been refreshed and relaunched and now has over 30 members.

### **The Mustard Seed Project**

This is a new project which will be running its first open sessions this Spring. The Ministry Area have taken on an allotment which will be used as a community growing project with surplus produce being donated to the local Foodbank. It is hoped that people from all walks of life will become involved in growing vegetables and developing new skills whilst enjoying Christian fellowship.



## Just some of our churches...



Ty Santes Fair, Skewen



St Mary's, Briton Ferry



**St Illtyd's Church Llantwit.** This is the oldest of the churches in the MA and believed to be built on the site of the hermitage of St Illtyd itself. It is situated alongside the canal and attracts many visitors. It boasts the largest cemetery in the diocese. We are working with other agencies to promote the natural diversity of the churchyard and have begun to develop a wild area in the churchyard. In the summer months, family friendly wildlife events are held in conjunction with Neath Port Talbot wildlife team. St Illtyd's is where the children's Teddy Bear picnic takes place, and where the first service of Easter is celebrated.

**St Thomas' Church.** The former Parish Church is situated in the heart of the town and was the Garrison Church for the castle and has existed from 12th century. It is beautifully decorated and in good order. It was once considered as the 'Welsh' church, and Y Cymun Bendigaid is still celebrated once a month. It is also the church of the Showmans' Guild, having a window dedicated to them and also houses a carousel horse donated by the Guild.

**St David's Church.** This town centre is a prominent local landmark, and just 100 yards away from St Thomas' Church. Built in 1876, it underwent a major re-ordering in 2006. This has enabled it to be used by the community, both by individuals and organisations. It is the venue for Civic events, larger services and is also a popular concert venue. St David's has close links with Alderman Davies School which is situated next door. and has a good choral tradition.

**St Teilo's Church, Tonmawr.** This is a new building, consecrated in 2003 and which replaced the old church. It has retained many items from the old church. It has

a kitchen and toilet. It is ideal for community use, and has been used for daily retreats, Lenten lunches, the annual pet service, and the weekly craft club. The local farm hosts our annual open air nativity service which is becoming very popular with plenty of opportunity for children to dress as shepherds whilst they interact with the sheep and donkeys

**St Mary's, Briton Ferry.** Situated underneath the bridge which carries the A48. Evidence suggests that this was a place of Christian gathering as far back as the 6th century. The Norman Tower was restored in the 15th century, and the nave and chancel rebuilt at the end of the 19th century. The rear of the church is partitioned off to form a small meeting area with kitchen. There is an outside toilet. The church and churchyard are in good condition and are well maintained. The church hall (some distance away from the church) has been deemed surplus to requirements and is currently in the process of being marketed for sale.

**St John's Skewen.** The church of St John is located on St John's Terrace, on the north side of New Road, Skewen within a churchyard used as a cemetery. The church, built in 1850, has a devoted small worshipping community. The church building is in fair condition with some work needed.

**Ty Santes Fair.** This new building of a multipurpose building acting as a community hub and a church was built five years ago on the site of the Victorian St Mary's Church and is well used by the local community. The building was funded by Welsh Government grants.

**Ss Peter & Paul's Church, Cimla.** Sadly this church is in the redundancy process. The last service was held in November 2022.





## The Post

### We are praying for a new Vicar who:

- Is approachable and has a heart for the community
- Is creative and adaptable, someone who seeks opportunities to share the Good News of our Lord Jesus Christ
- Is a team player, with the ability to encourage and empower the laity
- Is passionate about developing our childrens, youth and family ministry & is confident to lead school assemblies, holiday clubs and Messy Church
- Is interested in taking the church outside in new forms and expressions, Forest Church, Messy Church etc.
- Has a heart for social justice and is willing to engage with organisations such as Citizens Cymru, The Wallich and the local Foodbank.

Our new priest will be someone who is thoughtful, caring and who has a good sense of humour. Our aim is to take the Church into our communities and to deepen our level of engagement with them. He or she will be a priest with a proven record of working collaboratively with others, who exercises creativity and initiative and who is also flexible and adaptable.

The Vicar will play a key role in developing our ministry to children and young people and will explore new ways of involving young families in the life of the church community. He or she will assist in the development and execution of our plan to grow the Church across all age groups and social backgrounds.

In return the Vicar will be supported and encouraged by the MA, who will provide the opportunity for him or her to develop their own skills and interests as they embark upon this new stage in their ministry.

**Housing, Expenses.** The vicar will be housed in a modern four-bedroom detached property in a cul-de sac in a quiet area of Neath. Appropriate expenses will be reimbursed in accordance with Church in Wales guidelines.





# Our Diocese

Today we are the most populous of six dioceses in the Church of Wales, with over one million inhabitants, covering much of South Wales, including the urban centres of Cardiff and Barry in the southeast, the Heritage Coast to the south, the South Wales Valleys in the north and the post-industrial regions of Neath and Port Talbot in the west.



## Further Information

For an informal conversation you are welcome to contact the Archdeacon of Margam, The Venerable Mark Preece: 07989587529

[archdeacon.margam@churchinwales.org.uk](mailto:archdeacon.margam@churchinwales.org.uk)



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