

St Mary the Virgin, Plumtree

PARISH PROFILE



WELCOME FROM OUR CHURCHWARDENS

Welcome to St Mary's! We were appointed as churchwardens to St Mary's for the first time in 2024 but have worshipped here for many years and feel privileged to be able to serve our church during the current vacancy. Although this parish profile cannot give the whole story, we hope it will give you a feel for our church; for its mission and values.

We are a 'gathered' church – i.e. many of our congregation live outside the parish, but are drawn to St. Mary's by our worship style, the welcome they receive and the friendship they find here. Although we attract a few younger families, we are at present mostly a retired community of active, professional people, with a strong, positive and outward looking attitude, united in our commitment to our church and to the service of our Lord Jesus.

We strive to remain relevant in today's society, always seeking ways to further our vision of becoming a more vibrant and growing church; filled with people of different ages and backgrounds, sharing our Christian life together; aiming to work with and for the community, in order to draw people into a knowledge of Jesus in the power of the Holy Spirit.

Earlier in 2024, five of us attended the launch of the new diocesan vision; a vision for all of its churches, compelling us all to become a 'Living Hope' within our communities. Using the videos and booklets provided by the diocese, we held a special service in June to share the Vision 2030 with our congregation, and we are already shifting our focus to become even more motivated by compassion; to grow in confidence in the Gospel through prayer and study, and to hopefully gain the courage to more readily share our faith with those around us.

Will you be the spiritual leader we are seeking? Able to take our community forward? To develop and deepen our faith? Will you value and nurture our existing congregation and help us to grow both in numbers and in spirituality?

We very much hope you will come and meet with us, recognise our potential and help us to build a stronger church together.

Ann Tyler and Mike Clark



OUR NEXT PRIEST-IN-CHARGE

We are realistic in that we readily accept that there is only so much that a part-time SSM can achieve in 2 days plus Sundays. We are therefore committed to do our part to fully support your ministry with us, undertaking both practical and administrative duties and continuing to support worship in whatever ways you decide are appropriate.

We hope and pray for a spiritual leader who will value, care for and nurture our existing congregation whilst seeking to grow our church both numerically and spiritually; someone who will take us forward and help us to fulfil our part in the Diocesan Vision 2030.

THE PERSON WE SEEK WILL:

- **Create pathways to faith** from enquirers to mature Christians
- **Develop and supervise lay leaders** (especially encouraging younger leaders) in leading enquirers groups
- Facilitate **opportunities for children and young people** to participate in the life of the church
- **Encourage the growth of leaders** by contributing to vocational conversations across all ages
- Contribute to the existing **connections with schools** in Keyworth where young people attend from our parish
- Oversee the **development of services** to complement the existing eucharistic worship
- Oversee the development and implementation of our Growing Disciples Plan.

PERSONAL SPECIFICATION:

- Proven ability to grow the church, both numerically and spiritually.
- Ability to preach and teach and to lead others.
- Ability to discern, delegate and deploy the gifts of others.
- Experience of identifying, training, developing and supervising lay leaders.
- Enjoyment of, and support for, choral and eucharistic tradition.
- Someone who enjoys and engages with a wide range of ages, including children and young people.

This post is an interim (House for Duty) Priest-in-charge post offered under Regulation 29 (1) (j) and (7D) of the Ecclesiastical Offices (Terms of service) Regulations 2009 as amended. As a result, before the end of the first three years there would be a review involving the postholder, PCC and diocese to assess progress. The post could be extended for a maximum of another three years.

OUR DIOCESE

A statement from the Rt Revd. Paul Williams and Archdeacon of Nottingham, the Ven Phil Williams

The Diocese of Southwell and Nottingham incorporates the City of Nottingham, the whole County of Nottinghamshire and five parishes in South Yorkshire. The population is 1.15 million – 51% live in the greater Nottingham conurbation, 31% in ex-mining areas and 18% in rural. There are 305 churches (252 parishes), served by 119 stipendiary clergy and 228 licensed lay ministers.

In 2024 we launched our refreshed vision of Living Hope for the city, towns, villages of Nottinghamshire and beyond. We believe the presence of thriving, growing churches across the diocese is vital for people to discover Living Hope and make the best decision anyone could ever make for their lives – to become a disciple of Jesus Christ.

To enable this vision, we are committed to our mission of growing disciples of Christ with compassion, confidence and courage. To support both parishes and the diocese in implementing our mission we have identified 7 areas of focus: inspiring worship, reaching younger, enhancing diversity, growing leaders, enabling commitment, encouraging generosity and nurturing prayer. This vision is set out in more detail on our website.

The Archdeacon writes, *'It has been my privilege to work with the PCC on their vision. There are so many strengths for the new priest in charge to build on as well as a willingness to adapt, grow and change in making and growing disciples.'*

It is my hope that each worshipping community in the diocese will develop a compelling picture of its own future in God's purposes with an expectation of growing numerically and in the scope of its mission. It is my prayer that the new Priest in charge of St Mary the Virgin, Plumtree will have the creative leadership and imagination to develop discipleship, plan for growth and reach out to the unchurched of all ages in its locality.

As you consider this role may I encourage you to take time to look over and reflect on our diocesan vision as part of your discernment as to whether God is calling you to be part of this diocese at this exciting time.

I look forward to welcoming the new Priest in charge of St Mary the Virgin, Plumtree to join us on this faith-filled journey.



Rt Revd Paul Williams, Bishop of Southwell & Nottingham

A statement from Revd. Stephen Hippisley-Cox, Area Dean & Lesley Haig, Lay Chair.

East Bingham Deanery is the largest deanery in the Nottingham Archdeaconry, having 34 open churches with parishes grouped together into 12 benefices. Save for one single-church parish, it is made up of benefices which are either multi-parish or multi-church. It has a mix of full and part-time stipendiary clergy and self-supporting, part-time, House-for-Duty incumbents or associates.

It's a deanery that fully supports the diocesan vision of Living Hope, Growing Disciples of Christ with Compassion, Confidence and Courage. It values and encourages collaboration amongst its clergy and laity and also ecumenical relationships which prosper in some of the larger benefices. We look at places and groups across the deanery where there is potential for new worshipping communities or the refreshing and revitalising of existing ones. We are receptive to new initiatives and engage fully with the laity on its response to the diocesan vision. We are on a journey of faith as we seek to follow as Jesus leads us. Although our churches are all individually different, we hold a common faith.

Giving for mission is encouraged and all parishes have the opportunity to conduct Promise Programmes every five years with assistance from the diocesan team. Oversight of the programme and regular teaching on giving is an expectation of all incumbents. All parishes are encouraged to make payment (by monthly standing order) of 100% of their deanery share.

The deanery is led by the Area Dean and Lay Chair supported by a part-time paid administrator. They in turn are supported by a Standing Committee made up of clergy and laity who together form a committed leadership team.

The Deanery Synod meets three times a year and encourages all clergy to take an active role in the affairs of the deanery. It looks to its clergy to encourage parish representatives on Synod to do likewise.

Our voice is heard through the Area Dean (who is a member of the Diocesan Finance Committee and elected member of Diocesan Synod) and the Lay Chair (a member of the Kinoulton St Luke PCC and elected member of Diocesan Synod), thereby ensuring that the challenges faced by the rural Church are addressed at diocesan level.

The Deanery Chapter meets approximately 8 times a year, normally monthly excluding Easter, July, August and Christmas. All clergy, including some of our retired colleagues living in the deanery, are invited to meetings. It holds events to include readers and each year also gives a lunch for its retired clergy and reader colleagues, by way of thanks for their help throughout the year.

We very much look forward to welcoming you to East Bingham.

Revd. Stephen Hippisley-Cox

OUR TEAM

- We have **two Lay Readers** who regularly take Evensong, Morning Prayer and All-Age services.
- We have **15 PCC members**, including the Secretary and (newly appointed) Lay Chair.
- There are **two newly appointed church wardens** and two deputies, one of whom maintains our web pages and puts out weekly communications whilst the other produces the parish magazine.
- We have **three Deanery reps**, one of which is on the Deanery Standing Committee.
- We are fortunate to have **an experienced musical director / organist**. There are also two choir members who can play the organ.
- There are **12 in our robed choir**, including the choir leader.
- St Mary's has a fine ring of eight bells, although post-Covid we now have only **5 experienced ringers**, plus one keen learner who was recruited at a Tower Open Day event that we held in 2023. We have a steady stream of visiting ringers, including those from local towers who come to join us on our practice nights.
- Seven key members form our **Liturgy Group** which meets quarterly to plan all services. Two members of this group also produce the weekly service rotas. Here, in this forum, we also discuss concerts, plus our regular 'Sing for Health' and 'Come & Sing' events.
- We have an **Eco Church team** of five committed to caring for God's Creation and working towards a Silver in the A Rocha Award Scheme.
- We have a **Safeguarding Officer** and a **Pastoral Care Lead**. Also, a small churchyard working party, which keeps key areas tidy and planted.
- 4 of us are available to take Home Communion.

LIFE EVENTS:

In 2023 visiting ministers officiated at three baptisms, five weddings and seven funerals.

The photograph opposite shows one of our visiting ministers baptising a new member of our church in 2023.



OUR VISION

OUR VISION FOR GROWING DISCIPLES WITH COMPASSION, CONFIDENCE AND COURAGE.

We are committed to moving forward in line with the Diocesan 'Vision 2030' and have therefore used their 7 areas of focus to baseline 'where we are' at present and, with the guidance of our new minister, 'where we hope to be' in the future.

INSPIRING WORSHIP

Where we are:

We currently hold three services a week. On Sundays, there are services at 10.30am and 6.00pm. The morning service is usually a Sung Eucharist using Common Worship, enhanced by music and words from 'The Mass of the Bread of Life' by Margaret Rizza (Kyrie, Gloria, Sanctus and Agnus Dei are all sung in English).

Attendance at these services is between 45-55 and is the most well supported. About once a month we have a 10.30am informal All-Age service, with a very varied and relaxed worship style. These services are written and led by lay people from the Liturgy Group.

The 6pm Sunday service is normally a BCP Sung Evensong, taken by our Readers or visiting Clergy, plus a monthly BCP Eucharist. These evening services to participate attract around 12-15 people.

On Wednesdays there is a simple Said Holy Communion, with attendance normally around ten to fifteen people. All morning services end with fellowship, coffee and biscuits.

Our robed choir (affiliated to the Royal School of Music) leads the singing, anthems and motets. Our Hymn Book is the 2008 Kevin Mayhew publication of 'Anglican Hymns Old & New' which is supplemented by the best of contemporary church music – Taize, Gospel and other chants.



All special and seasonal services are celebrated. During the interregnum we have been able to maintain all of the above services, using a strong and much valued team of retired priests. Our congregation has very much enjoyed and appreciated their involvement in our worship.

Our past priests have to date all been robed, according to their own preferences. We now also have a broadband connection in the church which could be used as another tool for inspiring worship.

Where we want to be:

During the early stages of the parish vacancy a liturgical group was established under the leadership of a retired Reader to consider our styles of worship. We have been able to 'ring the changes' more by using the skills and talents of a wonderful group of retired priests, cognizant that what may be inspiring for some is not so for others. We have endeavoured to pursue a policy of 'orthodox generosity' in our approach to worship styles during our vacancy, which we would wish to continue.

Our aim is to develop services for all ages, using a blend of worshipping styles, both traditional and more contemporary, but within one worshipping community and congregation. We would hope that the 3 services a week are maintained and that the more contemporary All-Age services continue to be regular monthly events.

NURTURING PRAYER

Where we are:

Our church is open daily, unattended between the hours of 9.30am – 5pm. This has proved to be very popular and much appreciated, both by our own congregation and the public – both locals and those from further afield.

Worship and prayer at St. Mary's encourages lay participation at every service with all readers, intercessors and servers drawn from the congregation. Our bellringers call us to prayer on Sundays and the Angelus is rung every day at noon and 6pm.

During Lent 2024 we held weekly reflections around the Stations of the Cross, as well as using the Church's 'Watch & Pray' Lent course.

Where we want to be:

We hope for more opportunities for communal prayers to support our spiritual development as a Christian community in this place.



REACHING YOUNGER

Where we are:

Our monthly church Family Services attract some younger families with various degrees of attendance. Our 2023 Christingle service, whilst always popular, last year saw an unprecedented 79 children attend with 139 adults. Wherever possible, children are invited to participate in all church activities.

Our Reader Paul creates and leads 3-4 Fellowship events each year, aimed at children and adults alike. These are held either in the church, or further afield on walks or by allotment campfires. They are popular and attract around 20 adults / children.

At Advent we have two Nativity sets which are passed daily around different homes in the parish on the POSADA journey, beginning at the church and returning to the church at the Christingle service on Christmas Eve.

During the vacancy we have increased our involvement with the two primary age schools within the parish, one of which is Plumtree School, an independent school close to the Church and the other a state-maintained secular within a multi academy trust, which is closer to the neighbouring parish Church in Keyworth. There are stronger links with the former because of its proximity which allows the Church to be used for a variety of services and activities. Assemblies are regular features in both schools.

The Keyworth Crossdale School in the Plumtree Parish is linked by the same Trust and Executive Headteacher to the Keyworth Primary in the neighbouring parish, making the Keyworth Parish of St Mary Magdalene, a more viable option.

Where we want to be:

We hope to encourage more young families to become involved in our church community and in our worship. We aim to continue to reach out to children 'where they are' by building more relationships with our schools.



ENHANCING DIVERSITY

Where we are:

Our Church is open to all regardless of gender, ethnicity etc. though we are predominantly Caucasian. Plumtree Church is a popular venue for life events and as such provides opportunities for our church community to welcome others from further afield.

Where we want to be:

We hope to encourage more young families to become involved in our church community and in our worship. We aim to continue to reach out to children 'where they are' by building more relationships with our schools.

ENABLING COMMITMENT & GROWING LEADERS

Where we are:

There are good links with the civil parishes within the Church benefice. Opportunities are taken to work collaboratively with them over national events and we encourage individuals to support our mission locally in various ways, from making regular financial donations to other initiatives, e.g. graveyard maintenance, flower arranging, Eco-Church, coffee mornings, concerts. The Church has an open-door policy allowing unmanned access for all for private prayer and reflection away from the hustle and bustle, 365 days a year. The Church maintains a library of Christian development books on loan for individuals and groups to help grow in confidence and courage in our faith development.

The congregation is encouraged to participate as readers of scripture, servers, intercessors, sides-persons, at the offertory and any other way in which they feel their talents can be used fully in our outreach service to our community.

Where we want to be:

Advent and Lent seasons are a good time for potential group reflection and the congregation are encouraged regularly to avail themselves of resources on the Diocesan Learning hub. This is an area for further development as part of our mission and calling in the Diocesan Vision 2030, to grow disciples of Christ with compassion, confidence and courage.

Any incumbent would be well supported in routine secular tasks of administration and maintenance, thus allowing maximum time to lead in the spiritual development of our church.

ENCOURAGING GENEROSITY

Where we are:

The church has traditionally paid its parish share in full, despite a blip in the last 3-4 years when we fell short due to other urgent expenditure commitments. Last year our Diocesan Parish Share of £54,828 was paid in full with the approval of the PCC and it will be again this year.

As a community we support:

- MacMillan Cancer Care: holding an annual coffee morning, with cakes donated by the congregation.
- The Friary Drop-in Centre for the Homeless: holding a Lenten Lunch donating all proceeds, plus donating our Harvest Festival gifts and cash donations.
- The charity 'Children in Distress' with cash donations from individuals.
- The Children's Society with the collection from our Christingle service
- Local RSPCA with the collection from our Animal Service.
- A collection for the Leprosy Mission.
- Water Aid with regular giving through the 'Rainy Day' bag system.
- A Refugee Centre in Derby with donations and gifts of clothing.

In addition to charitable giving, we also hold several fundraising events each year for church funds. These always involve the wider community. Last year we organised an Afternoon Tea, a Christmas Fare & Raffle and a Barn Dance and Supper. All were village events and well supported.

Where we want to be:

We are incredibly fortunate to benefit from the time given, skills and resources of all within the parish, both regular and non-Church-goers. We aim to continually build on this generosity. Once our new incumbent is in place, we hope to hold a Funding Campaign.

OUR CHURCH LIFE

In addition to fundraising and charitable events, we hold various free concerts which we consider to be outreach into the wider community, as well as for the enjoyment our own congregation. Some of these are as follows:

- Our organist and choir hold two regular (roughly two monthly) singing events, open to all and well attended by around 60 people. One is a 'Come & Sing' on a Sunday afternoon, where Choral Evensong is first practised and then after refreshments, the actual service is held.

- The other event is a 'Sing for Health' held on a Saturday morning when popular songs are projected onto a screen for all to join in and enjoy. Refreshments follow. These are both free events.
- At least twice a year we hold free music concerts in the church, open to all and very popular locally, with normally 60-70 attending. One is held in the summer and the other on the afternoon of New Year. These events include refreshments.
- We hold free monthly Morning Coffee drop-in sessions in the church; open to all and normally attracting 15-20 people.
- We join with the Parish Councils of Plumtree, Normanton on the Wolds and Clipston on the Wolds to celebrate collaboratively National events in the churchyard. The last few being the Queen's Jubilee Celebrations of 2022 when braziers were lit across the country, the King's Coronation and the 80th D-Day Anniversary in June 2024. Over 100 attend these events. The church parish is well represented by parishioners on the Civic Parish Councils.
- We also encourage interest in our church by welcoming visits and outings from local groups such as schools, WI, U3A, Photographic Societies etc.



ECO CHURCH

In 2024 we signed up to the Eco Church scheme, promoted nationwide by A Rocha. We are working towards a Silver Award and have recently been awarded a £250 grant from Southwell to progress this. We have a five-strong Eco Team, each with responsibilities as follows:

- Worship and Teaching
- How we look after our buildings and land
- How we engage with our local community and in global campaigns
- Personal lifestyles of the Congregation

In February 2024 we held a special service to explain the principles of Eco Church to our congregation and to the wider parish, many of whom regularly walk through our churchyard. We have now installed bird and bug boxes and bird feeders, planted two small fruit trees and cordoned off areas of the churchyard to be left unmown – to encourage wild flowers and wild life generally.

This is a long-term project, barely off the ground, but eventually we hope that soon there will be fruit bushes planted for all to pick from, a wild life nature trail for the school children (who already come into the churchyard on Nature Walks) and rustic picnic areas for the locals to enjoy. Our churchyard is already well used by dog walkers and ramblers and we hope to foster interest in the work of the church by showing our commitment to protecting and nurturing God's creation as Climate Change becomes an increasing threat to the planet.

Our churchyard is large and still operational; we are mindful of the sensitivities around existing graves, many of which are still visited by loved ones. We have a small maintenance group (members of the congregation and villagers) who keep the churchyard tidy throughout the year, although professional grass cutters are also employed.

Various members of the wider community take an interest in maintaining our churchyard, planting flowers and generally helping to create a peaceful environment. There are several benches where people can rest and meditate for a while and it is a very much appreciated, peaceful spot for the whole community.



OUR PARISH & RECTORY

Our parish is a single, rural benefice situated about 6 miles south of Nottingham, close to the A606 Nottingham to Melton Mowbray Rd. It lies within the Green Belt with parts of the parish within conservation areas.

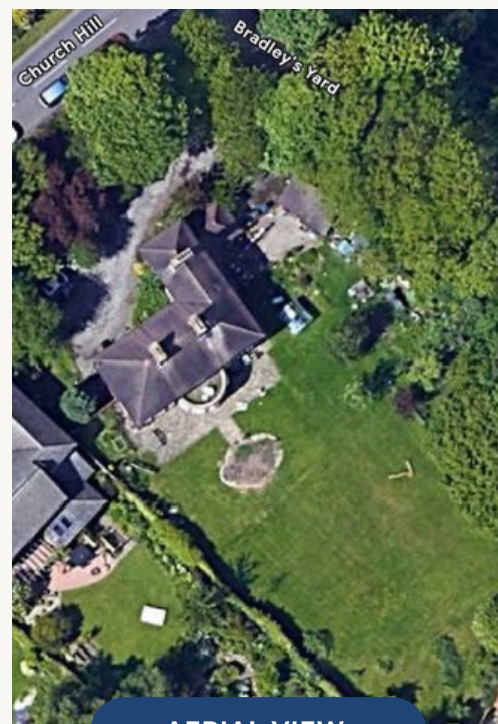
The parish includes the villages of Plumtree, Normanton on the Wolds, the hamlet of Clipston on the Wolds, plus the northern fringe of Keyworth (covering the settlements of Plumtree Park, Spinners Croft (a new housing development) and Nicker Hill (where another new housing development is being built).

The parish church is situated on Church Hill in the village of Plumtree, with the rectory close by. The rectory, built in 1937 is a good-sized, traditional, detached house, with 4 bedrooms plus a box room. It has a sizeable garden to the rear of the property. It was recently decorated and is managed, maintained and rented out by the Diocese during the vacancy.

The population within the church parish is approximately 3,800. It is largely middle class, with a fair proportion of retired people. It is a rural parish with little industry. The biggest employer is the British Geological Survey Centre, which employs a few hundred staff. There are several farms in the parish, a very good farm shop, a notable restaurant and bistro, two public houses/restaurants and a handful of small businesses.



THE RECTORY



AERIAL VIEW

There is an independent preparatory school close to the church in Plumtree village, although the pupils are drawn from a much wider area. There is also a state maintained primary school in Keyworth (within our parish boundary but its location is closer to the neighbouring parish church of Keyworth.) Our church has links with both schools.

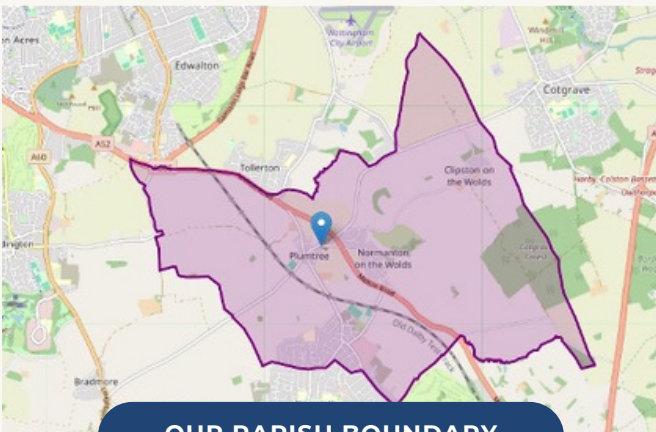
There is a good public bus service between Keyworth and Nottingham, which passes through Plumtree village. In nearby Keyworth, there are several medium sized supermarkets, garages, a Health Centre, Dentist, plus various village shops, pubs and restaurants.



A LOCAL PUB & RESTAURANT



BURNSIDE MEMORIAL HALL



OUR PARISH BOUNDARY



PLUMTREE INDEPENDENT SCHOOL

OUR CHURCH BUILDING

Plumtree has been a Centre for Christianity for well over a thousand years and our heritage and continuity of worship is of great importance both to the congregation and to non-Christians in the community.

St Mary's is a Grade 1 listed building, retaining fragments of the original Saxon and Norman elements of its medieval fabric. It was extensively and elaborately restored by the Victorians. In 1980 the interior was renovated and in 2018 the interior walls were repainted.

In 1992 a ring of six bells was purchased and in 2009 a further two bells were added. The bells are extremely fine and attract ringers from far and wide, including those from the Ancient Order of College Youths, who ring at St. Paul's Cathedral.

In May 2004 floodlights were installed and replaced with LEDs in 2021.

In February 2006, toilet and kitchen facilities were installed.

In 2004 the organ was fully restored, although further work was required in 2018.

The church is in very good condition and well maintained, but as with all Grade 1 listed buildings, there are always minor maintenance issues to be addressed. The last Quinquennial Survey was conducted in April 2022.



ST MARY THE VIRGIN, PLUMTREE



THE ORGAN IN THE CHANCEL



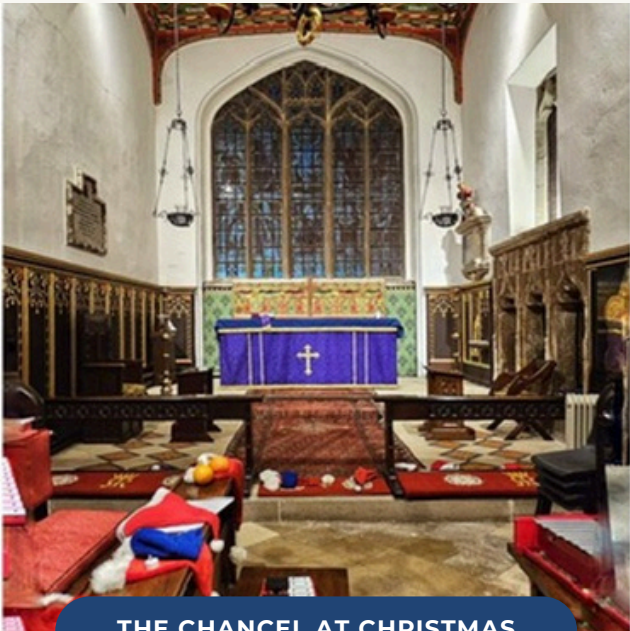
THE NAVE



CHILDREN'S CORNER



THE LADY ALTAR



THE CHANCEL AT CHRISTMAS

APPENDICES

Click the links below to view.

- **Our Finances**
 - [Financial Statements for Year Ended 31/12/23](#)
 - [Independent Examiners Reports on the accounts](#)
 - [2023 Planned Giving Profile](#)
- **[Our Quinquennial Inspection 2022](#)**
- **[Our Parish Structure](#)**
- **[Our Policies](#)** (*click to view all*).
 - Churchyard
 - Safeguarding
 - Recruitment of Ex-offenders
 - Transparency

Regarding our policy on Life Events, we have no written policy but the following statement explains:

'The PCC leaves these matters to the discretion of any incumbent appointed by the bishop, but in line with the teaching and guidelines of the Church of England.'

EASTER DAY 2024

