



# **St Mary Magdalene with St Leonard Newark**

**PARISH PROFILE**



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# WELCOME

We are delighted that you are interested in the role of Rector of St. Mary's with St. Leonard's in our wonderful town of Newark on Trent. We are praying for the right person to catch the vision for our parishes and to come and work with a motivated and supportive team. We hope you enjoy reading the profile.



# OUR DIOCESE

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 next Rector of St. Mary's with St. Leonard's will be leading the churches into a new season of growth, with the opportunity to develop and shape the vision with the support of the existing volunteer leaders and paid staff.

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.

**Rt Revd Paul Williams,**  
**Bishop of Southwell & Nottingham**





I have worked with the team at St. Mary's with St Leonard's for a number of years, and I am delighted that you are interested in leading this dedicated team in Newark. We find ourselves at a crucial moment for the church in relation to a changing culture. The good news of Jesus Christ is as important and life-giving as it has ever been.

The parishes sit within Newark and Southwell deanery, the largest of our deaneries. It is made up of 61 Parish's and 71 Churches, most of which are part of multi-parish benefices, and which are served by the market town of Newark. The River Trent runs through the deanery. The clergy working across the different contexts are supported and encouraged through deanery chapter and synod, where they share stories, learn and pray for one another.

For the new Rector of St Mary's with St. Leonard's, which is a Crown appointment, there are many opportunities to serve the people of Newark with the gospel of hope in the power of the Holy Spirit. This parish has a vision to grow the church younger and to continue to build on its kingdom work for the future. They have already seen exciting things happen among them and are hopeful that God is continuing to work in extraordinary ways in ordinary lives every day.

**Ven Tors Ramsey,**  
**Archdeacon of Newark**



# ASPIRATIONS, PRIORITIES AND PERSON SPECIFICATION

**In November 2024 the diocese received confirmation from the Church of England's Strategic Mission and Ministry Investment Board (SMMIB) of extra financial resources from 2025 to 2030. This funding, which for this parish is primarily for people resource – continued funding for Worship & Youth, increased funding for Children & Families and new funding to recruit a full time Operations Manager – is to help achieve the following outcomes by the end of 2030:**

## ATTENDANCE

- Continue to support the growth through our Sunday and mid-week congregations across the traditions in the church with an aspiration to see a total average weekly attendance of 450+ across St Mary's and St Leonard's
- Children and youth – this aspiration includes 80 new children and youth
- Build on current and develop new relationships with schools, supported by the youth and children's workers

## PLANTING AND REVITALISATION

- Revitalise St Leonard's, including reordering work to the building
- Launch another New Worshipping Community (Beacon) in a new local primary school
- Work with other parishes and church leaders to consider how future plants and revitalisations can be supported across the town

## GENEROSITY AND SUSTAINABILITY

- Increase number of regular givers
- See a total annual regular giving of £151k by the end of 2030, with a view to becoming fully sustainable by the end of 2035
- Develop a pattern of inspirational teaching, training and support around financial giving as part of whole life discipleship

# JOURNEY SO FAR

St Mary's with St Leonard's was identified as a resourcing parish, to be a beacon of hope for the people of Newark in the diocesan vision of 2016. A new leader was appointed who began work on this vision. In 2021 a change in leadership brought fresh vision and energy post the covid pandemic and since then the team has found significant missional opportunity and growth. This growth has included:

- Growth in attendance across both contemporary and traditional services
- Community Nativity and Christingle services at the end of 2023 (the last Christmas in the building) saw a combined 1100 attendees highlighting the potential for outreach which is significant
- Alpha has been building traction: it has been run in 4 distinct contexts with around 50 participants, leading to some baptisms and 10 people coming to faith

A significant project involving the re-ordering, renovation and repair work at St. Mary's Church is due to complete in December 2025. Since the beginning of this work, the two Sunday congregations of St Marys have met across two different locations in the town. Despite this disruption both congregations have experienced growth and are looking to the new season of missional opportunity when they return to the building. Information about the project (Reawakening) can be found later in the profile.

Building on the investment through Strategic Development Funding, we now have significant investment from the diocesan Church Growth Programme, funded by national Diocesan Investment Programme, to further develop the plans for the parish.





## DISCIPLESHIP

- Develop the discipleship culture established across the parish
- Invest and develop local lay leaders, including staff, interns and volunteers
- Expand the network of small groups
- Build and train the pastoral team
- Develop the teaching program to include whole life discipleship

## RESOURCING CHURCH

- Work with and develop connections with local leaders in the deanery and town
- Explore possibilities for future planting and revitalisation
- Develop the town center church offer around training and events (e.g. alpha, youth)

## PERSON SPECIFICATION

### **To this end we are seeking a man or woman:**

- With a deep love of God and a desire to draw others into relationship with Him.
- Who is confident in leading contemporary worship, prayer and outreach events and is aligned to the diocesan vision and approach.
- Who has the experience of leading a growing church and developing effective, flourishing teams.
- Who has a passion and love for the market town context and ability to engage with the church's civic duties.
- Who can engage with local schools and has a track record in growing work and ministry amongst children and young families.
- Who is able to teach, envision, inspire and communicate well.
- Who is an able staff team leader, good at supervision and line management.
- Who loves equipping and releasing lay people in ministries and teams.
- Who can appreciate all that is good from the past while creating a confident vision of 'growing to give ourselves away' as a resourcing church for Newark and the surrounding area.
- Who will embrace and develop both contemporary and traditional worship styles and traditions.

# ABOUT US

We have a fantastic team of staff and volunteers who support the mission and ministry of the parishes. Our PCC are engaged and experienced. For further information about our team, [please follow this link](#).

## ST MARY'S

St Mary Magdalene is a beautiful and significant building, one of the countries 'greater' churches' and a grade 1 listed church in the heart of Newark, adjoining the town center. Much of the building dates from 1100 to 1500 but, of course, there have been many alterations including a notable restoration by Sir George Gilbert Scott in the mid C19. It is seen by many as the Parish Church for Newark and plays an important part in the civic and social life of the town. Its situation, adjacent to the market square and its size and age make it a focus for tourists. Its links with the town council via certain civic ceremonies, Remembrance Day, Plough Sunday, Battle of Britain Day, Hercules Clay Day, etc., mean that it is viewed very much as the town's church. The incumbent is usually invited to act as chaplain to the mayor and town council. This sometimes varies according to the beliefs or denomination of the incoming Mayor. Prayers are offered at the opening of town council meetings and unless otherwise arranged the incumbent will lead worship for civic services.

## ST LEONARD'S

St Leonard's is the church specifically constructed to serve the area of the town beyond the Eastern Main Line railway which is physically divided into two by the Lincoln Road which leads out of town. Built in the 1970's it is combined with a community centre, it also has a vicarage attached. The community centre is run by a management committee. The church itself occupies a small section of the centre, but by means of a folding screen can expand into the main hall for Sunday worship. It can also use the community centre at other times by booking in advance. The team has developed good links with the parish and service users. Our vision for the next season of ministry includes an aspiration to develop the many missional opportunities in St Leonard's parish.

# VOLUNTEERS

We are extremely blessed to have some exceptional volunteers in our churches and community. We recognise that in part, the SMMIB funding will enable us to build up our teams in order to reach our ambitious visionary priorities. Our commitment is towards sustainability as a resourcing parish (financial and otherwise). Volunteers are crucial in this ambition and one of our goals is to develop leadership pipelines that share learning and experience across all areas of ministry in our churches. We have seen recent encouragements in our approach to growing younger leaders in this regard.



# CHURCH LIFE

## WORSHIP TRADITIONS, STYLES AND GATHERINGS

We are blessed as a community to enjoy beautiful and excellent worship in a variety of traditions. Music plays a significant role in the worship and mission of St Mary's. The church has a heritage of a choral tradition, while the more recently established contemporary service at St. Mary's is informal, contemporary and charismatic in style. While the building work has been going on the two congregations have met at separate locations and both have experienced growth in numbers, depth and vitality.



The youth and children's work, while separate on a Sunday morning is combined in other aspects as the choir has a number of children and young people in its membership.

St Leonard's enjoys a mix of traditional and contemporary worship, using modern media to support its Sunday services.

## MUSICAL HERITAGE

St. Mary's Church receives significant funding towards this musical ministry from the Magnus Foundation. This is thought to be England's only surviving pre-Reformation choral foundation, outside the cathedral and collegiate foundations. In 1532 Archdeacon Thomas Magnus founded a Grammar School with a Song School alongside. The Grammar School is now a Church of England Academy; the former buildings are now occupied by the National Civil War Centre.

The church employs a professional Director of Music (24 hours/week) and Assistant Organist (16 hours/week). The Director of Music is often involved in liturgical planning.

The church also employs a contemporary worship Leader who is involved in Sunday worship, leading on youth outreach and youth work, and is involved in contemporary worship leading for gatherings in Newark throughout the week, as well as more widely across the diocese.

The church hosts and promotes a series of Saturday lunchtime concerts, offered to the town free of charge. An eclectic range of music is played and sung; recently this has included a performance of Peter and the Wolf as part of the Newark Book Festival, an annual Young Performers' Platform, the Swing Band from the Magnus Academy, various choirs and assorted early career professional musicians.







## THE CHOIR AND TRADITIONAL WORSHIP

Today the choir is mixed sex and all age. There is an emphasis on training children and young people, sparking their interest in the Christian faith, developing and deepening their discipleship. We are grateful to be able to offer these young disciples opportunities not often afforded in the state education system; we are not tied to any specific school for recruitment.

Magnus money enables choristers from a wide variety of backgrounds to receive singing and instrumental lessons. Many choristers go on to become "Magnus Scholars"; these teenagers are also offered generous funding to further their musical education; at times this cohort has also included students from the various instrument-making schools in Newark. Singers trained by the church have recently gone on to train at the Royal Academy of Music and to sing in Lincoln and Chelmsford cathedral choirs; a former organ scholar is on the staff at Durham Cathedral.

During term time, the choir provides music for the liturgy at two services each week: Sunday: 9.00am Eucharist and 5.00pm Choral Evensong

The choir also sing for the assorted civic services through the year and the usual major Festivals and Holy Days. The foundation has occasionally supported a composer-in-residence and has commissioned new music. A new work has been commissioned as part of Reawakening for the opening of the restored building.

## CONTEMPORARY

In January 2023 we appointed a part time contemporary worship team leader.

Key focus/improvement areas since then have been to:

- Create more 'space' and expectancy in worship, making time to rest in God's presence as part of Sunday worship.
- Teaching from the front to encourage freedom in worship expression (singing own songs and prayers during worship).
- Recruiting teams for worship, visuals and sound desk at the contemporary service.
- Establish an evolving repertoire of newer, home-written and more well-known worship songs.
- Make use of the full functionality of the excellent sound desk we have, including pre-sets to somewhat offset the challenge presented by the short turnaround between traditional and contemporary services (when in St. Mary's building).

Over the last few years, we've seen brought together a lovely and talented group of musicians of varying experience, including a number who are able to plan and lead sung worship on Sundays. This has been a joy to see come together. They meet twice a month for full band rehearsals and for full service set rehearsals on Sunday mornings, prior to the service.

As well as Sundays, in the last few years, contemporary worship has played an increasing role in church life. To name a few: The diocese led 'Real Life' course, Wednesday morning prayers, Alpha Holy Spirit day, youth / kids groups and events, Thy Kingdom Come, Christmas and Easter services including the Churches Together Good Friday walk of witness in the town square. We've also seen traditional and contemporary joining together at our annual patronal festivals at both St. Leonard's and St. Mary's, at which the worship band has joined the choir in a blending of musical styles.

A real highlight in 2024 was the establishment of 'Awaken worship nights' which have run periodically throughout 2024/2025. These are hour-long worship sessions, open to anyone, with a particular focus on making space to encounter the Holy Spirit. We've seen strong numbers at these nights, with a fairly even mix of attendees from St. Mary's and other churches in Newark. It's been clear that there's a real hunger for this type of event in our town and it's been exciting to see this growing.





# CHILDREN AND FAMILIES WORK

Children's and families ministry is growing since the introduction of the role of children and families lead in our parish.

On Sundays, we run a session for our choristers during the sermon at the 9am traditional service; and we have a children's group that runs throughout the contemporary 11am service. We have got a growing children's ministry team who help facilitate these sessions.

There are four primary schools within the boundaries of the parish and we regularly run acts of worship in 2 of these.

We run Beacon, a monthly messy church after school on the 2nd Thursday of every month in partnership with the Methodist church. This attracts on average between 20 and 30 children with their parents/carers each time.

Our mid-week provision for babies and toddlers is Toddler Together. This is a distinctly Christian toddler group which attracts around 40 families each week. However, whilst the building has been closed, we have been running Little Roars Music, which is a music and movement session, this on average has 15 children attending. This is a great mission field as most of the families attending are not from our church.

Once a year we run a daytime Alpha session aimed at helping move those attending our toddler group and Beacon on in their discipleship journey. We hope to also run parenting courses in future to support local families.

## **YOUNG PEOPLE ENGAGEMENT**

### **NEWARK COLLEGE**

The Newark Campus of Lincoln College and its School of Musical Instrument Making lie within our parish and both sites are just a short walk from St. Mary's. We are invited to participate in a chaplaincy capacity at the college.

### **YOUTH**

In January 2023 we appointed a part time youth leader.

Key focus/improvement areas since then have been to:

- Establish regular meetings for youth, to develop community and get into the rhythm of meeting together.
- Making space for youth to encounter the Holy Spirit and grow deeper in their faith.
- Build trusted relationships with youth we interact with in all areas, to facilitate deeper conversations.
- Creating spaces to reach and invite youth who haven't yet engaged with our youth activities.
- Grow a team of volunteers

## **HANGOUTS AND IGNITE (WEEKLY YOUTH GROUPS)**

We run a Thursday night youth group which is made up of an easily invitational time; games + food (HANGOUTS) and immediately followed by a time spent in worship, accessible bible teaching and prayer (IGNITE). IGNITE is split into younger and older age groups. We currently have ~18 young people who are regular members of these groups. A majority of these youth have not been reached via Sunday services. We encourage our youth to occasionally lead the various elements of these evenings, including preaching, worship, games and hospitality. We have also seen a number of our youth serve on teams on Sunday mornings.

We run occasional socials as outreach events for youth at St. Mary's (e.g. movie night, laser tag and open mic nights). These have allowed us to connect with youth that we don't usually reach with our regular youth activities.

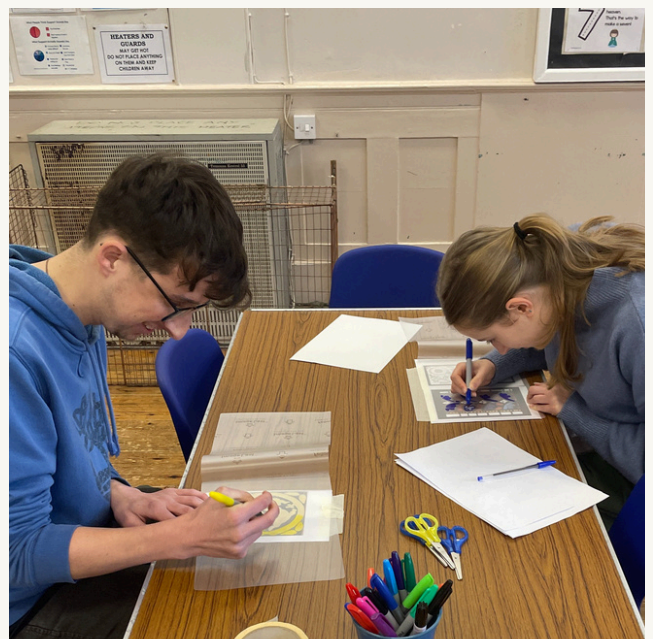
In summer 2026, we will be taking 9 of our young people to attend Dreaming the Impossible youth festival.

God has provided an incredibly talented and faithful youth leadership team which has grown in the last few years and we're so grateful for them. We couldn't run our youth activities without these amazing folks.

## **FUEL (EAST)**

From 2023 - 2024, we took our young people to a monthly youth worship night (FUEL) at Trinity Church in Nottingham, with a long-term aspiration of being able to run something similar in Newark. In June 2025, we began running an official offshoot of FUEL, called FUEL (East), at Magnus Academy, here in Newark. This is a St. Mary's event, supported by the Magnus 'Flourish' and chaplaincy team. We've seen God powerfully at work in the few gatherings we've had to date, and we are so excited to see what he has in store for the future.







## MAGNUS C OF E ACADEMY

Magnus is such an exciting place to be working, with full support from a Head Teacher who has a strong faith and passionate chaplaincy team. In 2025, the diocese appointed Magnus to be a pilot secondary school in the national 'Flourish' programme, aiming to increase the 'temperature' of worship within school and facilitate the link between school and church.

Our youth leader runs a worship band at Magnus Academy, after school each week. The group leads the school in worship at occasional whole school, Easter + Christmas assemblies (acts of worship). Worship Band has proven to be a really successful route from Magnus into our regular youth activities, with a majority of members having linked up to our regular weekly youth group.

A few members of our church, as well as our youth leader actively support HOPE, Magnus's weekly after school Christian Union, which serves as a place for those exploring faith and also as a pathway into the FUEL (East) worship nights.

Our youth team leader, clergy and interns lead regular year group assemblies at Magnus, using this as a platform to minister to the youth, whilst also advertising our youth activities at St. Mary's.



## **NEWARK COLLEGE**

Our Youth Leader leads lunchtime chaplaincy drop-ins at the Newark College canteen once a week, chatting with students and staff. We have run a youth Alpha course twice (2023 + 2024 respectively), as well as a Kintsugi Hope youth course (2025). In recent years, the college has invited us to be a part of short Remembrance and Christmas services for students and staff at the College, where we've had the opportunity to deliver a short sermon.

# **OPPORTUNITIES**

## **GROWING TOWN**

Newark town is a growing community, especially to the south, with a major housing development, potentially of some 3000 extra homes over the next ten or so years. There are plans to develop more social and private housing by the district council on the Yorke Drive estate to the east of Lincoln Road. The Church of St Leonard is ideally placed to serve this area which is bounded on the south side by the railway line and to the north by the A1.

## **CHURCHES TOGETHER IN NEWARK**

There is a thriving Churches Together within the town. We currently have two representatives who attend meetings. There is lots of potential for becoming more involved in the joint mission of the town.

## **HERITAGE EVENTS**

The Reawakening of St Mary Magdalene offers huge potential to reach out to our town with the love of Jesus. We have developed an activity plan, which lays out an ambitious programme of engagement activities with groups throughout the community, maximizing the potential of our building in its amazing location. These include workshops and outreach activities being undertaken with local schools, charities and educational organisations, as well as broader public engagement activities such as lectures and tours.



A key part of the activity plan is offering work experience and volunteering opportunities to local people and encouraging a long-term relationship with the church.

We are planning for St Mary Magdalene to re-open to the public with a revitalised visitor offering, to encourage people to engage with the Christian faith, through the history and heritage of the church, linking them to the worshipping life of the church. We are developing several heritage engagement activities to achieve this including tours, trails, family fun days, holiday clubs and school visits.



# THE RECTORY

**A detached modern 4-bedroom family house in spacious grounds only a few minutes' walk from the town centre.**







## **SAFEGUARDING**

Ensuring that children, young people and vulnerable adults are kept safe whilst in our care is an integral part of our church life. We have two Parish Safeguarding Officers (PSO) and a Lead Recruiter who meet every week to ensure all DBS checks and safeguarding training is kept up to date. We use the Parish Safeguarding Dashboard and Hub. A regular meeting is also diarised with the Rector. Safeguarding is an item on our PCC and Standing Committee agendas for each meeting. This year we have conducted our own internal safeguarding audit.

## **FINANCES**

A copy of our 2024 PCC accounts can be found [here](#):  
For more information, please visit our website: [STMNEWARK.ORG](https://www.stmnewark.org)

## **ECO CHURCH - GOING FOR GOLD**

As a parish we are committed to living and worshipping sustainably ; St Mary's and St Leonard's are both on their own Eco journey, St Leonard's having achieved their "Bronze" award and St Mary's their "Silver Award"

St Mary's are currently "Going for Gold" and have an ambitious target to have achieved this by the end of 2026. The Eco team are a small but extremely passionate team of Eco warriors working together to move our churches towards net zero carbon in 2035. Excited by all that is going on with the reawakening project we are eagerly tackling other eco projects and building links in the community.

To find out more visit our Eco Church page on our website:  
<https://www.stmnewark.org/eco-church>



