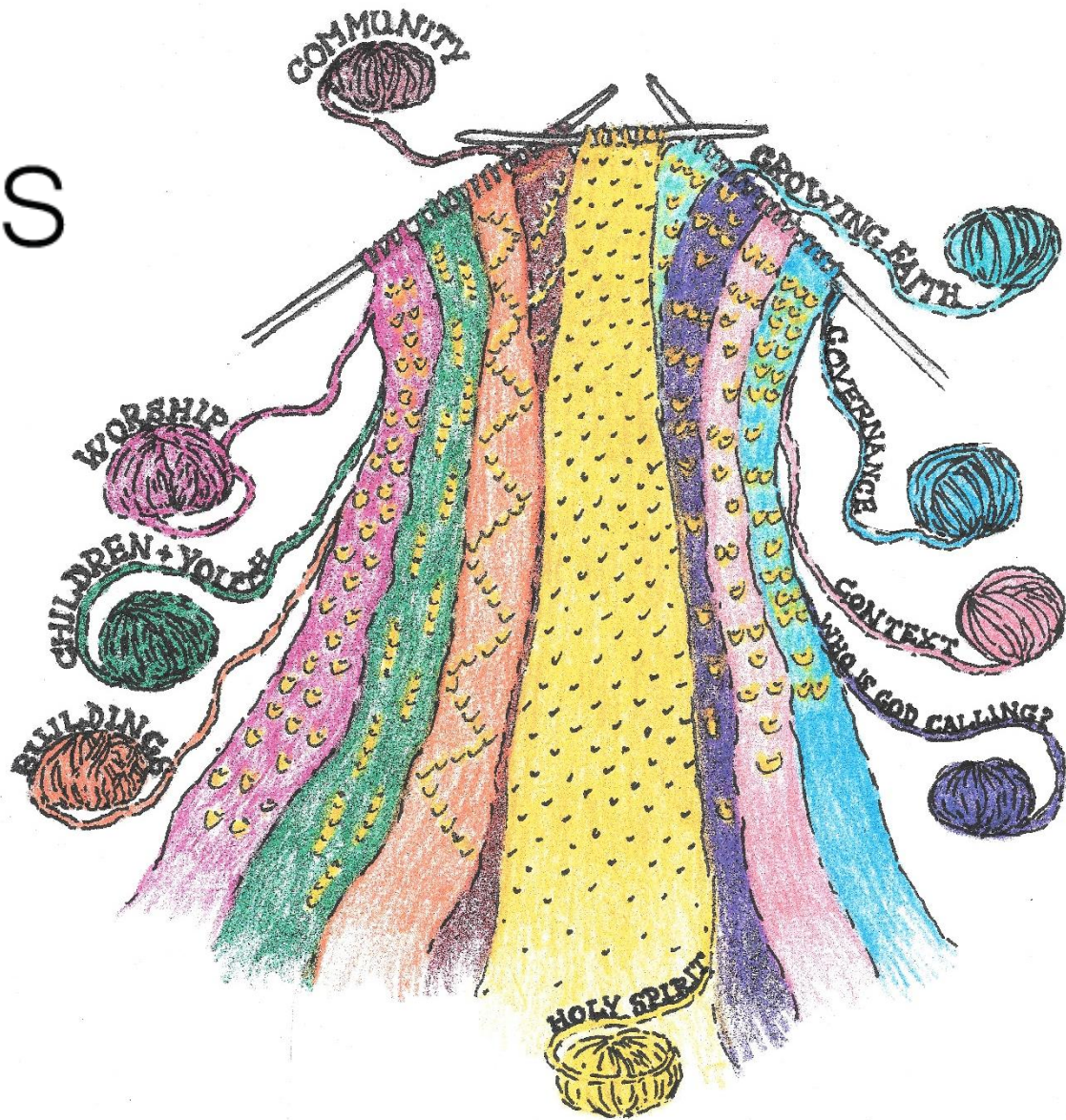




## Parish Profile 2026



# Foreword by Bishop Dave



Thank you for exploring whether God is calling you to serve as the new Rector at St Mary's Bletchley.

St Mary's is a church with a history of fruitfulness and growth. As the largest Anglican church in Milton Keynes, and the sending church for three church plants over the past decade, it has a tradition of giving generously of its prayers, leaders and finances. This has sometimes come at great cost, and it says much about the faith of the community that this profile envisages, not a time to sit back and let others take on the cost, but a renewal of that vision to press on for more of what Jesus has in store for them.

These congregations and the teams that serve them are eagerly waiting for a fresh vision, to carry the momentum of the preceding years into the 'not yet.' The depth of fellowship and discipleship present in this parish permits a new Rector to be bolder than in many other comparable positions. The invitation that this profile offers is to step out in faith, prayerfully, wisely and boldly in response to the Spirit's leading.

Located adjacent to Milton Keynes, Bletchley is both one step removed from the City, but also within its orbit of growth and vitality. This is equally reflected in the Deanery, which is brimming with missional creativity, through Missional Orders, Ecumenical Partnerships and Pioneer Ministry.

St Mary's has been at the forefront of this Missional creativity and retains a long term commitment to it. This is a marker of the biblical understanding evident at St Mary's that the timescale of God will often outlast our own – but not always.

Serving in an exceptionally gifted team, within a missional Deanery, this post will be well served by someone who can hear that still, small voice of calm in a Remembrance Service of national significance and in a Messy Church celebration.

As ever, the new Rector will be committed to the diocesan vision of becoming a more Christ-like Church for the sake of God's World – contemplative, compassionate and courageous - and to model and enable a flourishing ministry, for all, in line with the diocesan work in this area.

I am praying for you as you explore where the Lord is calling you next, and I would welcome conversations about the role with interested candidates.

+ *Jane Buckingham*

[See appendix 7 for Diocesan Vision.](#)

# Area Dean's Welcome

Welcome to the Parish Profile for St Mary's Bletchley.

This profile has been prayed over by a church which prays for its city and its mission, and so you as a reader are already prayed for too! We hope that the next few pages give you a good sense of the church and its mission to the parish and beyond. Whether you are led to apply, or feel that it is not for you, we pray that you know the clear guidance of the Holy Spirit, leading you into a place of flourishing ministry.

Milton Keynes is (in our collectively humble opinions) a wonderful and exciting place to live. As you will read in the pages to come, what began as a "new town" is now a new city, and has the ambition to continue growing and innovating into the future. Home to over 11 million trees, an unrivalled system of cycle-paths and parks, a pioneering online university, some concrete cows and a collection of old huts which were once home to some anonymous code-breakers - Milton Keynes is a welcome surprise to most people who visit...with many deciding to stay.



The mission of the Deanery in Milton Keynes is simple. We want to enable and encourage local, creative and courageous activity which is characterised by the 5 Marks of Mission. Exactly how this is done is down to the innovation and faithfulness of individual disciples and church groups operating in their context, serving their neighbours and living out the great commission.

For the size of our city, we are a relatively small Deanery Chapter. That said, we are enthusiastic and welcoming, and work collaboratively across boundaries of parish and tradition. There are some areas of the city which are served by large Ecumenical Partnerships, and there are others, such as Bletchley, which are Anglican parishes of historical significance.

As a city we have long been grateful for the mission and leadership of St Mary's. They have long held a reputation as a church where worship, preaching and the ministry of the Spirit are valued and practised. They have held a reputation, for equally as long, as a generous church which serves the poor, loves its community and seeks to encourage others who are not ministering from the same position of strength. Their ministry through debt relief, food provision and community creation are enormously important - as is their

heart for Church Planting...many of the churches in the greater Bletchley area have benefitted from a variety of plants, grafts and support which have all been sacrificially given for the greater good, even if St Mary's has sometimes paid a high price.

I personally am grateful for the ministry of St Mary's and am excited about all that the Lord has in store for the next season. While the heritage of the church is rich, their eyes are fixed on the future and the one who will guide them into it. May that same guide lead you as you discern your next steps.

Paul Oxley

Area Dean of Milton Keynes

# Wardens' Welcome

Welcome to the Parish Profile of St. Mary's Bletchley – we are so glad that you are reading this and considering joining us as our new Rector.

St. Mary's is a lively and caring church, with many opportunities to worship and serve God.

The image on our front page is a picture we believe God has shown us specifically for this Profile. It shows three knitting needles, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, knitting together all aspects of who we are. We are a work-in-progress, open to a new vision, and looking forward to a new pattern emerging.

God is already preparing the right person to join us. Could the purple ball of wool be you...?

*Oliver Hermes and Mary Nicholls*

*Church Wardens*

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Our church family were asked the following 4 questions: this is who we believe we are as St. Mary's Church:















## Question 2: What do you value about St Mary's



[illegible]

## Where God is Leading Us?

The table below is a visual representation of the responses from question 4 of our questionnaire: “What is God leading us into next?”

|   |   |   |
|---|---|---|
|  | <b>Rooted in Jesus and the Holy Spirit</b><br>Prioritising prayer, prophetic gifts and spiritual renewal  |  |
|  | <b>Deep commitment to inclusivity</b><br>Welcoming all generations and cultural backgrounds   |  |
|  | <b>Strengthening teaching and discipleship</b><br>Equipping mature Christians with robust teaching<br>Supporting new believers with foundational faith guidance |  |
|  | <b>Empowering youth and children</b><br>Nurturing young leaders<br>Building thriving youth and children’s ministries  |  |
|  | <b>Sustaining and building on existing good work</b><br>Community engagement, sustainability, and lay leadership  |  |
|  | <b>Open to God’s leading and the new Rector’s vision</b><br>Courageously embracing change while honouring tradition   |  |

It clearly shows that we are keen for and open to the creation of a fresh vision for the future.

## Our Recent Story

Jesus taught us in the Sermon on the Mount and throughout his earthly ministry that we are to seek first his kingdom and, that in doing so, we will find ourselves giving away sacrificially. We are intentional in our efforts to be obedient in this and, over the years, have sent individuals and teams to bless and benefit the work of the kingdom, both in Milton Keynes and beyond.

1. We have sent many of our people to ordination training.
2. In recent years we have sent leaders and church family members to help revitalise St. Frideswide's in Water Eaton (in 2018, an adjacent parish) and to Whaddon Way Church (in 2022, a Baptist-Anglican church set up over 50 years ago within St. Mary's Parish). Both are governed independently, with our Rector having no formal responsibilities, though there are strong connections between us. St. Frideswide's is now thriving and a Resourcing Hub in its own right. Whaddon Way is currently seeking a new minister and Conventional District status (restricted to the church building and adjacent clergy house).
3. In 2017 we planted a church in Newton Leys, a new, self-contained, housing estate within our parish. Rev. Ben Thorpe, who leads St Joseph's (St Joe's), is a highly valued member of our staff team and St Joe's currently benefits from close ties with St. Mary's, including governance, finance and admin support. A strong and supportive working relationship between our new Rector and Rev Ben Thorpe is important to us. See later in this section for more information on St Joe's.

## Resourcing Hub

In 2020 we became a Resourcing Hub, funded on a tapered basis by SDF (the Church of England's Strategic Development Fund). The funding is being used to pay for some of our Community Pastor's hours, and for the new post of Worship and Media Pastor (funded on a tapered downward basis). The project will end in December 2026, although we hope to continue to meet the original vision of serving 'Church, Community and City'.

## Local Context

St Mary's Church is in the Bletchley Conservation Area and stands adjacent to world renowned Bletchley Park. Our parish is defined by the MK3 postcode.

Bletchley grew from its origins as the small hamlet of Fenny Stratford after the arrival of the London and North Western Railway in 1845, followed shortly after by the Oxford to Cambridge Varsity Line. It has now become part of the ever-growing City of Milton Keynes.

From the map in [Appendix1](#), you can see that the parish is bordered by the main London-Manchester railway line and the A421, giving good connections to the East and West, as well as being a short drive to the M1.

Bletchley Train Station is within walking distance from the Rectory, with superb links to London Euston (38mins), Milton Keynes (5mins) and northwestern cities such as Birmingham, Manchester and Liverpool. The new East West rail link to Oxford should be open in 2026.

The population of the parish is growing and was recorded as 27,840 at the 2021 census. The parish encompasses a broad range of socio-economic groups.

Within the parish there are 4 distinct local centres (shops, community centres and other facilities), and adjacent to our parish is Bletchley High Street. MK1, a larger centre, is close by with its larger retail shops, cinema, restaurants and other leisure facilities, and all major supermarkets are within easy reach of the Rectory.

There are a number of schools within our parish:

- 8 primary schools, including Cold Harbour C of E school
- 2 special needs schools
- A large secondary, 11 to 18, school
- MK College Bletchley Campus – a 6<sup>th</sup> Form vocational and technology training college.

Wider Milton Keynes has many other schools including an 11 to 19 Catholic Comprehensive School and several independent schools.

A number of students from the parish and the city are also taken by bus to grammar schools in Buckingham or Aylesbury.

Other local churches within the parish include All Saints Catholic church, St. Andrew's Baptist and Freeman's Methodist.

Historically the Rector of St Mary's has been a trustee of The Bletchley Leys Charity, a 350-year-old charity which uses income from agricultural land it owns to assist those in need in the parish. This is a small but important role.

Milton Keynes is now over 50 years old. It was originally named after one of the villages around which it has been, and is still being, built. Although its residents have always called it a city, it achieved official city status in 2022. It is a thriving economic centre with excellent employment opportunities and will be the centre of the East West 'Golden Arc' between Oxford and Cambridge. It is known for its 6000 acres of green spaces which are cared for by the wonderful Parks Trust, which include ancient woods, lakes and parks, the 200 miles of Redways (a traffic free network of cycle paths designed to criss-cross the city), cultural attractions such as MK Theatre which has many London shows, MK (Art) Gallery, 2 multiplex cinemas, and the iconic Snozone (skiing and snowboarding on real snow).

### St Joseph's

St Joseph's (St Joe's) started 8 years ago with 7 people committed to establishing a worshipping community in Newton Leys, a new build estate on the southern edge of the parish of St. Mary's, Bletchley.

The aim has been to be "church for those who don't do church", reaching out to a heavily un-churched local demographic.

The vision is for Church to be the people where true and deep community is formed, with a passion to genuinely 'do life' together - in and out of each other's homes. We believe this creates a safe environment for people to begin exploring faith in Jesus.

St. Joseph's is now a church community of roughly 90 people (and a much larger fringe), with approximately 75% of those coming from completely unchurched backgrounds or decades long de-churched backgrounds.

The stories of God at work in the lives of these new followers of Jesus is exciting and pushing us forward on the adventure.

As a different kind of church planting, St. Joe's long-term vision is to become a financially self-sustaining Church of England church in its own right; but we are being careful not to rush this process whilst recognising the fragility in this type of missional planting work.

St. Mary's PCC, the Diocese and the Deanery have committed to this long-term process and are excited about what lies ahead, and the significant milestones already reached by this new Church within the care of St. Mary's Bletchley.



St. Joseph's meets in a school hall and in homes around Newton Leys, but there are also conversations about how St. Joe's may have a more permanent and visible presence in the estate, as we seek to be a blessing and a light to this wonderful community.

St Joe's is an important part of the Deanery's wider mission to plant and revitalise churches in the growing city of Milton Keynes.



## Challenges and Opportunities for St Mary's

We are a work in progress. Some of our day-to-day challenges include:

- We have a large number of volunteers, to whom we are incredibly grateful. We always need more, especially given the mature age of current volunteers and busy lifestyles of younger members.
- Continuing to be reliant on God's provision to fund all we do, especially as SDF funding comes to an end.
- Grow the children and youth work from the good foundations that already exist.
- Hearing youth and young adult voices. We are working strongly on, and hope to continue developing and giving space for, the involvement of young adults in leadership of St. Mary's.
- Contributing to a greater partnership in the Deanery.
- The training of curates.
- Potential opportunities in new housing areas in and adjacent to the parish.
- Our congregation is beginning to represent the ethnicity of our community, and we are keen to encourage this diversity of cultures.
- The style of our Evening Celebrations is still evolving. There is potential for growth in numbers and to move to weekly.
- Encouraging and equipping everyone in the church to discover, develop and use their God-given gifts.

## Safeguarding

At St Mary's Bletchley, safeguarding is at the heart of our church life and ministry. We are committed to creating a safe, welcoming environment where everyone, especially children, young people, and vulnerable adults, can flourish in faith and community. We recognise that safeguarding is the responsibility of the whole church and have taken active steps to ensure our policies, procedures, and culture reflect best practice and accountability. See [Appendix 2](#)

*I hope in the future ... to encourage all activities at St. Mary's to be **inclusive, safe and loving** to all.*



## Living in Love and Faith

Our growing church encompasses a wide variety of views on LLF. Any new incumbent would need to be able to flourish in such an environment, continuing to nurture our existing unity, grace and love as they do so.

## Faith Stories

It has been a privilege to talk to some of our church family members about how St. Mary's has been fundamental in the growth of their relationships with God. You can see in [Appendix 5](#) how the connectivity of ministries has encouraged faith to grow. As you can see above, we have included quotes throughout this profile from these Faith Stories.

# Worship



## Sunday Services

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I felt so much love, compassion and forgiveness, I was completely overwhelmed. I have been hooked ever since.



gather to chat before going home.

Although currently we have no LLMs or retired clergy, we are blessed with a group of experienced leaders and preachers for all our services.

A prayer meeting takes place in the upper room, open to all, before the service, where we pray and listen to God for what is on His heart for the services that day, and welcome the Holy Spirit to work amongst his church family.

‘Celebrate’ Evenings are currently held twice monthly. These are more relaxed services of worship, teaching and prayer, allowing time for the Holy Spirit to work. This has changed from once a month to twice a month, with around 35 people and room for growth.

## Wednesday 10am Communion

This is a strong community that has grown since lockdown to a congregation of around 45, mainly older people, each week. The liturgical based service is led by three lay leaders, with support from local clergy.

## The Church Year

Christmas is very special to us and our community; we always run a packed programme of services and events with something for everyone. In 2025 we had many school carol services, Community Carols Around the Firepit, two Carols by Candlelight services, two Christmas Eve Christingles services, Midnight Communion and a Christmas morning celebration.

Easter is another highlight of the year where we again create a programme which is varied and gives opportunities for different styles of worship, for example, a Maundy Thursday Taizé Service, a Good Friday morning service that is interactive and multi-sensory, a Good Friday afternoon meditation, Dawn Communion in the local park on Easter Sunday, along with our 10am Easter Celebration.

Pentecost, where in 2025 we celebrated with 10 full-immersion baptisms.

Remembrance Sunday is a very busy day, where in partnership with the Royal British Legion, we welcome many uniformed organisations who march from Bletchley Park to a service, led by St. Mary's, around the war memorial. This is attended by over 2000 members of the community, many who come into church afterwards for refreshments.

Messy Church has been running for many years for families in our community at Easter, summer, harvest and Advent together with a Light Celebration in October. All of these are led by our Community Pastor and a team of volunteers.

# Children and Youth

Children and young people, often described as the future of the church, are just as much the church of today as the adults. We are deeply committed to seeing and enabling them to develop a strong faith that will inspire them, sustain them and grow with them through all the challenges of infancy to adulthood.

We strive to provide safe spaces where young people can gather, explore life and faith together, and have fun, where they can learn alongside adults how faith fits in with the whole of life, both personal and shared. We have a dedicated full-time youth and children's worker who is working with and growing teams of volunteers in the following areas:

## Tods

Tods is a growing ministry that meets every Wednesday morning. This lively group welcomes around 18 to 25 children, from newborns to 4-year-olds, together with their parents and carers, all from the local area. They enjoy free play, craft, songs, stories, snacks, friendship and a chance to share early family life together.

## Kid's Church

Kid's Church, a group for children aged from 3 to 11, meets together during the Sunday Morning services. Here they learn more about Jesus and the stories of the Bible, developing discipleship and faith through games, crafts, worship and teaching. Although the numbers vary from week to week, this group is growing.

## Dream Factory

Encouraged by regular contact with our Community Pastor during school visits, primary school-aged children are invited to join us every Saturday in encountering God and making friends in a fun, friendly and encouraging environment. A kid's club with games, free play, social time, a bouncy castle, music, laughter and upfront Bible teaching, it is wonderfully crazy!





## Holiday Club

This is a week of fun, madness and brilliant teaching for school children in the summer holidays. In 2025 the theme was Starship Discovery. Children come every year from schools in the parish to join with our Young Leaders and adult team and, at the end of the event, join the church family on a Sunday morning for a wacky Celebration Service.

## PPP (Praise, Prayer and Pizza)



A monthly pizza get-together for 11-14 year olds, a great place where older young people are taught more about God, study the Bible and think through what it means to be a Christian in contemporary society. Our older youth also attend to help create an environment where peers can encourage one another to be open in their faith journey.

### Loft

This is a weekly fellowship group for 14-18 year olds, who meet to ask questions and explore the bible, discovering together how faith can relate to their everyday lives.

They also enjoy working together to plan and deliver youth-led evening services which are well received by the church.

I went to **Loft** and **Friday Youth** each week, so I already felt I belonged when we made the move as a family to St. Mary's.



## Friday Youth

Weekly relaxed and fun youth club for 11-18 year olds, with a short reflection time at the end of the evening. This is a thriving ministry with an average attendance of 28 young people many of whom have come through contacts at the local secondary school and through invites from friends.



## Youth Christian Festival

We have been taking our youth group to a camping Christian festival (Dream the Impossible) where they are able to further explore their faith, as well as to experience worshipping and learning to pray with thousands of their peers. A truly unique experience where we have seen some of our young people make a commitment to follow Jesus.

## Youth Alpha

In 2024, we started to run Youth Alpha, finding it to be a positive springboard for young people new to faith or who are still exploring. They are then encouraged to join the appropriate age bible study group. We ran Youth Alpha again in the Autumn of 2025.

# Community



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See [Appendix 3](#) for Community Centre timetable

St Mary's Bletchley is a place at the heart of our community, and our heart is for the people of our community. Our aim is to be like a "town built on a hill [that] cannot be hidden", caring for people in body, mind and spirit.



At Pearl's funeral, David invited me to church. We've never had a bad Sunday since; it's such an enriching start to the week.

We are active in caring for our community and are passionate about finding practical ways to serve those who live in Bletchley and in the City of Milton Keynes. Here is a summary of the ways we have sought to respond to the needs we see in the surrounding area:

## Monday Meals

Monday meals provides a weekly drop-in with a light meal where friendships can be built between families, couples and those living alone, a warm space where our guests can enjoy eating together. Once a month we provide a sit down dinner, which is always fully booked, and where conversations around the evening's faith-based theme can flow.

## Connections Café

Welcoming to all, our weekly Community Café is a place with well-being through friendship and creativity at its heart. The 40-50 guests can bring their own crafts in from home, try something new at the craft table, join in with dominoes and card games, or just enjoy each other's company over drinks and delicious homemade cakes. It is a place where people come to chat, sharing conversations that can be deep and meaningful or simply frivolous and fun! Over time a strong connection has developed with the Wednesday Communion service, with many joining that congregation, as well as coming together with friends at other church events and services.

We now both help at **Community Café**, we're on the **Tea and Coffee rota** and the **Monday Meals** team (I like to get fed) and Pat says 'the church is built on cake'.



I still carry my jigsaw piece I got at our **Ministry Fair** and say to God 'wherever you want me to go, show me, and I will follow'.

### Saturday Surplus



This starts with a Café where neighbours can get to know each other and where our Community Pastor and volunteers can listen and signpost to other support agencies as needed, alongside inviting our community to other church activities and groups. Surplus food, fresh fruit and vegetables are offered by local partnerships to anyone in the community that needs or wants it. We have enthusiastic Young Leaders volunteering alongside the community and the church, serving 30-40 local households per week.

### Open Church

Thursday afternoons during summertime. This is a quiet space for prayer and tea.

### Schools Work

Our Community Pastor has forged strong relationships with teachers at 7 local primary schools, blessing them and the children in a variety of ways. She runs half-termly assemblies in the schools with a team of volunteers and welcomes regular school visits to church. Our Children and Youth Pastor is also developing stronger links with our local secondary school, connecting pupils at the Lord Grey Academy with our youth programmes. At Christmas we work in partnership with schools to support over 100 families with presents and food. We also support many schools to run their carol services, including services tailored for local special needs schools and for home schooled families. As a result of these relationships we are delighted to see new faces becoming involved in our children's and youth groups.

## MPG (Mission Partnership Group)

This group uses tithed, regular church income to support local, national and world-wide charities, and also, on some occasions, through mission trips (Philippines and Tanzania in 2025). The aim is to keep the church informed and praying, for example, by welcoming speakers from our mission partners to speak in church. See [Appendix 4](#) for list and details of our Mission Partners

## Bletchley Carnival

St Mary's and the children from Dream Factory really enjoy being part of the West Bletchley carnival. We are pleased to have a good relationship with West Bletchley Parish Council.





# Growing Faith



## Discipleship

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People come to know about our church and faith through a variety of routes, such as through our regular community family/young people activities, through online and in-person services, through social media, life events and friends. We work hard to create connectivity, encouraging ways into key elements of church family life. Throughout this Parish Profile there are various quotes from members of our church family, and you can see more about their Faith Journeys in [Appendix 5](#).

Traditionally we run Alpha and Youth Alpha courses, and, from time to time, we run a variety of other courses to deepen our faith and equip us to serve, for example, a Diocesan-led course, open to all in the Deanery, looking at how to move from Pastoral to Spiritual Conversations.

As we write this profile, we are running a series of lectures aimed at helping Christians across the city to think through some of the issues that are currently engaging our society as a whole. The first two lectures were entitled ‘Christianity and AI’, and ‘Christianity and Assisted Dying’. We also run regular training for children and youth volunteers.

In 2023 we welcomed ReSource to lead a “Church Weekend at Home” to refresh our church family with the Holy Spirit. In autumn 2025, we opened up a similar weekend based on Ephesians 3 being Rooted in God. A deeply spiritual time attended by more than sixty people.





## Homegroups

We currently have 15 groups that run across the city throughout the week. These small groups vary in size and character, 12 people being the average number of members. In getting together, members deepen relationships within our large church family. The groups study, pray, eat cake and laugh together. Sometimes homegroups are encouraged to all study the same material such as a sermon series, but often homegroup leaders choose material and activities relevant to their group. One group was recently set up for young adults who have outgrown our youth programmes.

## Cherished

A monthly women's ministry, which provides a variety of activities, both social and spiritual, to encourage friendship and faith.

## Men's Group

Whilst the group does not meet regularly together, members communicate via a WhatsApp group. When they do meet it is often at ad-hoc curry evenings or a barbeque. Relationships are built whilst doing practical tasks the church needs, from re-arranging the chairs in church to clearing drains and chopping down hedging.

## Pastoral Support

As a church family we aim to support each other's faith and care for each other. We have a skilled Pastoral Team, who will walk with us when life is difficult and help where they can, offering prayerful, emotional and practical support. A dedicated Pastoral phone line is also available. The support they offer includes prayer, listening support, home visits, home communion, and the provision of meals.



# Buildings



See map in [Appendix 1](#)

## Church Building

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The oldest part of our grade 1 listed church building is Norman, the chancel is 13th century and there have been additions to the building itself in the 14th and 15th centuries. We currently have Howe chairs to enable more flexible use of the interior space.

The next quinquennial survey is due in mid-2026 , however, we have an ongoing programme of stonework repairs, the majority of which are grant funded.

We currently have a Bronze level award as an Eco-Church and are working towards Silver.

## Churchyard

The churchyard is a closed churchyard. Significant work has been undertaken in the last 10 years to create a beautiful and recognised Quiet Space for the community. It is well-maintained and enhanced by members of the church and is appreciated by the many who walk through on the public footpath.

### Church Hub (Hall)



This is situated in an area of conservation owned by the PCC, a short walk across the green from the church. Consisting of a variety of meeting rooms, workspaces and offices, including our main reception, it is used during the day by members of the staff team, but also hosts some homegroup meetings and occasionally training, study groups and other church activities. There are large car parks to the rear which provide parking for all our services.

### Community Centre



Purchased 20 years ago, with opportunities for development, the centre currently comprises one large hall, two smaller rooms, and a kitchen, together with outside gardens and a carpark. It is a 10-minute walk from the church building.

This facility is in almost constant use (see [Appendix 3](#) for our busy weekly timetable) and is overseen by our Community Pastor.

## Rectory



The Rectory, situated a short walk from the church, was built around 2000. It is a spacious, modern detached home with lovely, well-maintained, landscaped gardens. It has 5 bedrooms (2 with en-suite), 2 reception rooms and a study, a large kitchen and a utility room. There is a double garage, and the driveway has space for several vehicles.

## Three Other Houses

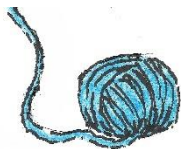
We have a house in Newton Leys, for our Associate Minister at St Joe's. This is a 10-year-old, 4 bedroomed home with garage.

Our two other houses are currently let by the Diocese to third parties. They are located in different estates in the parish and would be available for future associate ministers or curates.

See [Appendix1](#) for locations on the Parish Map...

# Governance

## Staff Team and Wardens



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|  |   |  |   |  |  |  |   |
|--|---|--|---|--|--|--|---|
|  | <b>Rector:</b>  |  | <b>Ben, Associate Minister, Vicar of St Joe's:</b><br><br>I'm Ben, Vicar of St. Joseph's Newton Leys. I'm a fan of good music, deep conversation, walks in God's creation and any board game that isn't monopoly. |  | <b>Oliver, Warden:</b> I love exploring new places and gifting my homemade marmalade.  |  | <b>Mary, Warden:</b> I love baking, walking in nature and watching funny telly.   |
|  | <b>Nicky, Finance and Office Manager:</b> I love wild swimming, reading and spending time with friends and family.  |  | <b>Maryann, Community Pastor:</b> I like to be surrounded by people; spending quality time together laughing and joking.  |  | <b>Shana, Worship and Media Pastor:</b> Having grown up in the Philippines and moved to the UK from South Africa, I have loved living in a rich range of cultures. |  | <b>Kat, Children and Youth Worker:</b> I love playing board games, spending time with the family and new experiences whilst travelling. |
|  | <b>Jac, Administrator:</b> I'm a real 'Bletchley-ite' as I've lived here all my life. I love reading, eating chocolate and my favourite colour is purple. |  | <b>Sharon, Cleaner:</b> My happy places are the beach and the dance floor.  |  | <b>Steve, Caretaker:</b> I love managing my local youth football team and I'm always up for a laugh.   |  |   |



We have regular staff meetings, including what we call our monthly “Gold” meeting where clergy, staff and key lay leaders meet for worship, support and strategy planning. The lay leaders currently attending include a Warden, the Pastoral Team Leader and a member of the Wednesday Communion Leadership Team.

In recent times we have had a part-time Associate Minister and a curate, both of whom have moved on to lead their own parishes in 2025.

The appointment of a new curate has not been possible because of our Rector’s retirement. As a large church with a track record of being an excellent training parish at the heart of our community, with our varied church services, community initiatives and ambitions, we are confident that the Diocese will want to place new curates with us in future years.

### **PCC and sub-committees**

We currently have 12 skilled PCC members who are a good representation of our church family. The PCC meet together 6 times during the year. In addition, there are 2 Wardens and 3 Deanery Synod reps, with members of the PCC being encouraged to join one of our 3 sub-committees to support staff and ministries.

A Standing Committee meets to deal with urgent business as needed between meetings.

The two Wardens are ably supported by 6 Deputy Wardens, who take it in turns to look after our church services.

### **Finances**

In recent years we have run a Faith Budget so that we can continue to do all that we feel God is calling us to do. God has been faithful each year in providing sufficient funds for us, in addition to being able to pay our Parish Share in full and on time. In both 2025 and 2026 we are seeing increases in Parish Share and other significant costs.

We actively encourage giving, promoting the Parish Giving Scheme, and have 110 households giving through it or by standing order.

We have 8 Mission Partners who we support financially and in other ways, with a commitment to give 10% of our unrestricted income. See [Appendix 4](#) for details



The PCC have recently reconfirmed their unanimous ongoing support both financially and prayerfully for the exciting work at St Joe's.

[Click here for Charity Commission accounts](#)

# Who is God Calling?



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## **We Are Looking for Someone**

1. Whose life and ministry are rooted in prayer and led by the Holy Spirit.
2. Who knows the Bible and has a deep understanding of how God speaks through it.
3. Who feels called to minister at St. Mary's and has a heart for mission for the community of Bletchley and MK.
4. Who exudes empathy in pastoral care and is experienced in bringing God's love safely to all.
5. Who is decisive and can collaboratively develop vision and strategy.
6. To be a dynamic leader of leaders with a servant heart, experienced in managing a diverse staff team and skilled lay leaders.
7. Qualified as an ordained priest within the Church of England, or of a church in communion with it, with experience of leading a parish or similar ministry.

## The Role

1. To receive God's vision for St. Mary's now and over the coming years and both inspire and enable us to follow it.
2. To help each of us to hear God's voice and be open to the Holy Spirit. Be receptive to the moving of the Holy Spirit when leading services.
3. To enable biblical teaching that challenges, encourages and deepens both knowledge and faith, and inspires us to lead a prayer-based life. To be able to speak easily about faith to people at all stages of life and their walk with God.
4. To lead us to have a missional heart that is inclusive to all in our community, with a priority towards bringing young people and families to faith.
5. To be a pastoral and safeguarding lead.
6. To identify and release giftings in others and encourage our many volunteers to follow God's calling and rely on Him.
7. To lead and line manage our members of staff, inspiring collaboration and care within the team.

## Our support

Our hope is that you will thrive here at St. Mary's, and we are already praying for you during our monthly 'Interregnum Prayers' and in our small Prophecy Team. We will be committed to supporting your well-being by:

1. Always respecting your weekly time off, as well as time for retreats, spiritual direction, conferences and missional opportunities.
2. Being a supportive PCC and church family with many skilled lay leaders who are ready to welcome you with friendship and care.
3. Having a commitment to uphold you in prayer, journey with you and cheer you on!

# Appendix 1: Map of the Parish

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## Appendix 2: Safeguarding

At St Mary's Bletchley, safeguarding is at the heart of our church life and ministry. We are committed to creating a safe, welcoming environment where everyone - especially children, young people, and vulnerable adults - can flourish in faith and community. We recognise that safeguarding is the responsibility of the whole church and have taken active steps to ensure our policies, procedures, and culture reflect best practice and accountability.

### Commitment to Safeguarding

We take safeguarding extremely seriously. Our PCC (Parochial Church Council) has adopted the House of Bishops' "Promoting a Safer Church" safeguarding policy and regularly reviews our own safeguarding measures to ensure they remain robust and fit for purpose.

Key safeguarding principles we uphold:

- Ensuring all staff and volunteers working with children and vulnerable adults are recruited safely, with appropriate DBS checks and safeguarding training.
- Maintaining clear reporting and escalation procedures.
- Promoting a culture of transparency, vigilance, and continuous improvement.
- Adoption of the Parish Dashboard and Safeguarding Hub.

### Parish Dashboard and Safeguarding Hub

To support effective safeguarding oversight, we have adopted the Parish Dashboard and Safeguarding Hub, a secure and easy-to-use online tool designed to help churches monitor and improve their safeguarding compliance. The Dashboard provides a real-time overview of our safeguarding progress, highlighting key actions required and enabling us to track the completion of essential tasks such as:

- Managing safer recruitment processes.
- Ensuring all safeguarding policies are reviewed annually.
- Confirming up-to-date training for clergy, staff and volunteers.
- Recording PCC discussions and decisions related to safeguarding.

The tool has greatly enhanced our ability to maintain high safeguarding standards and provides assurance to the PCC, congregation, and wider community.

**Working with the Oxford Diocese**

We have an excellent and supportive working relationship with the Diocese of Oxford. Their Safeguarding Team provides invaluable advice, training, and oversight to ensure that we meet diocesan and national safeguarding expectations. We are proactive in seeking guidance and regularly attend diocesan safeguarding training and briefings. We also cooperate fully with any audits, reviews, or policy updates. Our Parish Safeguarding Officer is in regular contact with the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser (DSA), and we appreciate the clarity and accessibility of the support the Diocese offers.

**Conclusion**

Safeguarding is not just a requirement—it is a core part of our Christian duty to love and protect one another. At St Mary's Bletchley, we continue to invest in our safeguarding culture, making full use of tools like the Parish Dashboard and Safeguarding Hub, and working closely with the Diocese of Oxford to ensure we uphold the highest standards.



## Appendix 3: Community Centre Timetable

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| Day   | Morning                 | Afternoon                    | Evening                   |
|-------|-------------------------|------------------------------|---------------------------|
| Mon   |                         |                              | <b>Monday Meals</b>       |
| Tues  |                         |                              | Well-Being Biodanza Dance |
| Wed   | <b>Tods</b>             | Parkinson's Fitness Class    | Slimming World            |
| Thurs | <b>Connections Cafe</b> |                              | Line Dancing              |
| Fri   | Baby Sensory            |                              | <b>Friday Youth</b>       |
| Sat   | <b>Dream Factory</b>    | <b>Saturday Surplus Cafe</b> |                           |
| Sun   | Village Ballet          | <b>Prayer, Praise, Pizza</b> |                           |

Activities in bold are ministries run by St Mary's

## Appendix 4: Mission Partnership Group (MPG) Charities

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### **Bridgebuilder Trust**

[mkbtt.org.uk](http://mkbtt.org.uk)

Bridgebuilder is a Christian charity working in over 100 primary and secondary schools across the city and surrounding villages, to support schools with pupil's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development through assemblies, RE lessons and other activities.

### **MK Money Lifeline**

[mkmoneylifeline.org.uk](http://mkmoneylifeline.org.uk)

MK Money Lifeline is a debt advice service in Milton Keynes, giving face-to-face advice, which is free of charge, impartial and confidential. Last year support was given to over 200 people. St. Mary's also financially supports a weekly drop-in within the parish.

### **Oasis Project Gambia**

[theoasisproject.org](http://theoasisproject.org)

The Oasis Project provides healthcare and education to the people of Bakau in The Gambia, West Africa. Working closely with community leaders, government and schools, their mission is to empower and transform communities to create a self-reliant and sustainable future.

### **ReSource**

[resourcingrenewal.org](http://resourcingrenewal.org)

ReSource supports local churches in spiritual renewal. With Anglican roots, it works in the Church of England and beyond, with a particular focus on 'little, local, ordinary' churches and their leaders, lay and ordained, providing regular retreats and online events.

## SOMA UK

[soma.uk.org](http://soma.uk.org)

SOMA UK facilitates mission trips, which envision and empower local leaders for evangelism, and equip and encourage development of new leaders.



My trip to Manila as part of **Streetlight Trust**, one of our **Mission Partnerships** gave me a chance to see how my choices here can affect people all the way round the world.



## Streetlight Trust

[streetlight.org.uk](http://streetlight.org.uk)

The Streetlight Trust works with the Kanlungan initiative serving the poorest and most vulnerable street children in the Philippines. Projects include day centres and residential care centres for children who work on the streets and live in urban slums.

## Tools with a Mission

[twam.uk](http://twam.uk)

Tools with a Mission (TWAM) is a Christian charity that collects unwanted usable tools and refurbishes them, sorts them into trade kits and sends them to the developing world for livelihood creation. St Mary's has a collector who travels around the city collecting tools.

## World Vision

[worldvision.org.uk](http://worldvision.org.uk)

St. Mary's Church sponsor a child in Lemo, Ethiopia who is linked to the church's 'Dream Factory' outreach.

## Appendix 5: Faith stories



**Abi:** I went to **Loft** and **Friday Youth** each week, so I already felt I belonged when we made the move as a family to St. Mary's. Friday Youth was great for making friends and I am still in touch with a lot of them. Loft really helped me learn about God and that God cared for me and loved me.

In September 2024 I started **Engage** (a volunteer gap year) with St. Mary's, focussing on **children and youth work**. I've enjoyed supporting the wide variety of Children and Youth activities at St. Mary's, recognising that **Messy Church**, **Dream Factory** and others are perfectly viable forms of church. Engage has made me a lot braver in terms of standing up in front of church and talking. It has also taught me that whatever God is asking me to do, he will help me with.

My trip to Manila as part of **Streetlight Trust**, one of our **Mission Partnerships** gave me a chance to see how my choices here can affect people all the way round the world. I want to go back to Manilla, but we also have poverty here in the UK, often behind closed doors: I want to work towards God's ideas of justice and restoration.

And my future: to continue **volunteering** with St. Mary's alongside training for a veterinary nurse. I hope in the future to become more confident in my opinion and wish to support the LGBTQ+ group I volunteered with as part of my course, and to encourage all activities at St. Mary's to be **inclusive, safe and loving** to all.



### Chris and Pat

I had never had faith, and during lockdown, we both realised something was missing and that we didn't know anyone in the community. So we went to **St. Mary's** to see what was going on and people made us welcome. The sermon that day was the lost sheep returning to the shepherd and quite literally I was blown away. I felt so much love, compassion and forgiveness, I was completely overwhelmed. I have been hooked ever since.

We are both people who like 'to be doing', so we got stuck into **volunteering** early on. One of the 1<sup>st</sup> jobs I did was clearing all the church drains out as part of the **Men's Group**: I did wonder if this whole thing was me! We now both help at **Community Café**, we're on the **Tea and Coffee rota** and the **Monday Meals** team (I like to get fed) and Pat says 'the church is built on cake'.

I am also a **Deputy Warden** and the local tool collector for **Tools With a Mission (Mission Partner)**. I get a sense of satisfaction: we forget that here, tools in B&Q can be 'cheap as chips', but in Africa, they are unaffordable.

Doing the **Alpha** course first was really meaningful, and I have since been part of the team, helping other people to express what they feel about God and come to faith.

In 2023 we were **baptised** and had our **Marriage Blessing**: they are special anniversaries for us now.



### Brian and Janie (daughter)

Brian: Pearl and I were **married in St. Mary's** in 1958: we found St. Mary's such a friendly church, giving us a good send off for married life together. I also always attended the **Remembrance Service** St. Mary's led; I was in the RAF in 1954.

At Pearl's funeral, David invited me to church We've never had a bad Sunday since it's such an enriching start to the week.

Janie: when I started coming to church, colleagues said there was a 'glow about me' When something is going on their life, they tell me and I stick them on the prayer list – their feedback later has proved that **prayer** is comforting and powerful.

I've recently joined the **Cherished** (Women's group) Leadership Team and am looking forward to volunteering on **Holiday Club**, caring for those that need a bit of extra support. I still carry my jigsaw piece I got at our **Ministry Fair** and say to God 'wherever you want me to go, show me, and I will follow'.

Brian: I've recently been diagnosed with lung cancer, but I am at ease with it. I know that God is at my right hand and has a plan which will play right through to the end of life – that is where I am now, reassured and safe. Janie: During this year's losses, we have been carried, I have a calmness and know a strength that is holding me. My life is full, I am complete. Like Dad, I know where I am going and give thanks daily along the way.

## Appendix 6: Statistics.

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|                                  | <u>Adults</u> | <u>Children</u> |
|----------------------------------|---------------|-----------------|
| <b><u>Average Attendance</u></b> |               |                 |
| April - June 2025                |               |                 |
| Sundays 10 am                    | 120           | 18              |
| Sundays 6pm                      | 35            |                 |
| Wednesdays 10am                  | 42            | 1               |

|                              |     |    |
|------------------------------|-----|----|
| <b><u>Christmas 2024</u></b> |     |    |
| Children's Nativity          | 97  | 23 |
| Carols by candlelight (1)    | 183 | 15 |
| Carols by candlelight (2)    | 124 | 6  |
| Christingle (1)              | 75  | 36 |
| Christingle (2)              | 123 | 60 |
| Midnight Communion           | 155 |    |
| Christmas Day Morning        | 87  | 6  |

|                           |     |    |
|---------------------------|-----|----|
| <b><u>Easter 2025</u></b> |     |    |
| Maundy Thursday           | 53  |    |
| Good Friday 10 am         | 56  | 22 |
| Good Friday meditation    | 56  | 1  |
| Easter Sunday             | 227 | 23 |

Adults      Children

|                              | <u>Adults</u> | <u>Children</u> |
|------------------------------|---------------|-----------------|
| <b><u>Electoral Roll</u></b> |               |                 |
| Living in the Parish         | 92            |                 |
| Living outside the Parish    | 88            |                 |

|                              |     |    |
|------------------------------|-----|----|
| <b><u>Christmas 2025</u></b> |     |    |
| Children's Nativity          | 130 | 34 |
| Carols by candlelight (1)    | 138 | 30 |
| Carols by candlelight (2)    | 104 | 0  |
| Christingle (1)              | 122 | 58 |
| Christingle (2)              | 138 | 48 |
| Midnight Communion           | 160 | 0  |
| Christmas Day Morning        | 94  | 22 |

|                         |     |    |
|-------------------------|-----|----|
| <b><u>Pentecost</u></b> |     |    |
| Sunday 10am             | 192 | 24 |

|                                  |       |     |
|----------------------------------|-------|-----|
| <b><u>Remembrance Sunday</u></b> |       |     |
| Sunday 11am - approx             | 2,000 | 200 |

Adults      Children



**Messy Church**

|                |    |    |
|----------------|----|----|
| Christmas 2024 | 32 | 41 |
| Easter 2025    | 36 | 34 |
| June 2025      | 27 | 34 |
| September 2025 | 19 | 29 |
| Advent 2025    | 32 | 38 |

**Various**

|                        |    |
|------------------------|----|
| Tods                   | 15 |
| Kids Church            | 20 |
| Dream Factory          | 20 |
| Messy Church           | 31 |
| Friday Youth           | 28 |
| Prayer, Praise & Pizza | 8  |
| Loft                   | 4  |
| Young Leaders          | 8  |
| Youth Alpha            | 7  |

**Occasional Offices**

|                           | <b><u>No.</u></b> |
|---------------------------|-------------------|
| Baptisms (Annual )        | 22                |
| Weddings 2025             | 10                |
| Funerals      Crematorium | 8                 |
| Church                    | 26                |

## Appendix 7: Diocesan Statement

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The Diocese of Oxford serves the mission of the Church in Buckinghamshire, Berkshire and Oxfordshire. The Diocese comprises more than 600 parishes, with over 800 churches, serving a diverse population of more than 2 million people located in all types of settings.

Due to the size and complexity of the Diocese, we have three Area Bishops who exercise considerable strategic and pastoral oversight for their Areas. The previous Bishop of Buckingham, the Rt Rev'd Alan Wilson sadly died in February 2024. He had been our Area Bishop since 2003. We are now served by Rt Rev'd Dave Bull who was consecrated Bishop in Lent 2025. The Archdeacon of Buckingham was Ven Guy Elsmore who had been in post since 2016. He retired in September this year, with recruitment for his successor underway. In September 2020, Revd Canon Chris Bull was appointed Associate Archdeacon of Buckingham.

Through prayer, listening and discernment a [common vision has emerged for the Diocese of Oxford](#). The vision is based on the qualities described in The Beatitudes and addresses what kind of church we are called to be:

**a more Christ-like Church for the sake of God's world:  
contemplative, compassionate, courageous.**

Our Common Vision continues to emerge as we identify together areas of our common life where we believe God is calling to focus. The [diocesan focal areas](#) are not a description of everything we do, but these priorities are being supported centrally by resources, training, conferences, workshops, and much more. The diocese is inviting benefices and their clergy to share a vision rather than demanding a response, motivated by hope not driven by anxiety, and thereby to flourish in their ministry. It is hoped that clergy appointed into the Archdeaconry of Buckingham will want to commit to this vision and encourage their benefice to share in becoming a more Christ-like church for the sake of God's world.

### **Our vision and values - Diocese of Oxford**

Diocese of Oxford

[The Diocese of Oxford is the Church of England in Berkshire, Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire. Our aim is to be a...](#)