

St. Peter's Parish Papers



Welcome

Thank you for your interest in St Peter's Church. The people of St. Peter's have written this Parish Profile to help you, us and everyone else involved in the selection process to discover who God is calling to be our new Rector. We hope you will find it helpful, informative and inspiring.

As a church we believe that our true and living God is amazing: he is beautiful, majestic, faithful, kind and generous. In fact, he's better than we could possibly imagine and the very meaning of life is to get to know him.

We are a church that loves to worship, seek God together and learn how to be more Christ-like as we live and love, day by day. We constantly aim to be a community that is safe, inclusive, welcoming and nurturing. We have a positive reputation in our area and have good relationships with other local churches as we work together to transform lives.

As is the case for many churches, our church life has been significantly impacted by the pandemic and is still recovering. We recognise that, whilst there is much to encourage us, our church is numerically smaller than it was in March 2020 and needs to grow. The last two years have been a period of transition and we are excited and ready for this new season under a new Rector. We want to build on our experience and what is working well, but we are also ready for new opportunities and new direction, whilst holding to our vision to grow in love for God, each other and the world.

Covid has acted as a catalyst for change within our Parish, Deanery and Diocese and we want to be at the forefront of the Fit For Mission discussions currently taking place about God's shape for the church, particularly for us and the Deanery of Liverpool South, in this post pandemic world.

Our diocesan vision is that 'We are asking God for a bigger church to make a bigger difference, so more people know Jesus and there is more justice in the world.' Within this context the diocese has identified four priority areas for our work in mission in this season:

- Introducing people to God through Jesus Christ.
- Deepening discipleship, especially by means of our Rule of Life.
- Developing Christian leaders in every place.
- Working for justice.

We are looking for someone who will reinvigorate the structures of our church of St Peter's, increase our love for Jesus and guide us in understanding his will for us.

We hope that this profile will help you to discern whether St. Peter's Church is the place for you and whether you feel you can lead us on our continuing journey.



Morning Worship at our 10.30 Sunday Service

Section One:

Summary of the Profile

We are a relatively large evangelical church in a suburb of south Liverpool that has, in part, retained its identity as a village. We are, to many who are not part of our congregation, the Parish Church of Woolton and this is reflected in the relatively high number of baptisms, weddings and funerals that we are privileged to provide.

It is the combination of our baptism ministry, our Minnows, Worship Through Play and other children's groups and our strong relationship with Bishop Martin Church of England Primary School that has attracted so many young families. Inevitably Covid has had a significant impact on this, but it is encouraging to see the young families that are now returning and also joining us for the first time.

However, St. Peter's isn't just for young families. One of the great joys on a Sunday morning is to look out across the congregation and see the enormous range of ages that are represented – from a few months to 90 years plus. We are an intergenerational church and, although some age groups are underrepresented, we want to be a church for all.

This includes being a church that reaches out. One way we do this is through our Hub which is based in the Simon Peter Centre. Our Hub Co-ordinator with her large band of volunteers provides an open door every weekday morning so that community and church can come together. In this way we can be salt and light in the village we are called to serve. Another way is by being God's disciples on the front lines where he has placed us whether these are at the places we work, the homes we live in or anywhere else.

These are, of course, challenging times. All of us are emerging from the Covid pandemic. We recognise that we have, over the past twelve months, focused on reinstating what was lost during Covid. We also recognise that, whilst there is much to be encouraged by, our church is numerically smaller than it was in March 2020 and needs to grow. Covid has acted as a catalyst for change within our Parish, Deanery and Diocese and we want to be at the forefront of the discussions currently taking place about God's shape for the church, particularly for us and the Deanery of Liverpool South, in this post pandemic world.

We believe that our central mission as a church will always be the same. As the Archbishop of York recently said at the Lambeth Conference

"McDonald's makes hamburgers. Cadbury's make chocolate. Starbucks makes extremely horrible coffee. Heineken makes beer. Toyota makes cars. The church of Jesus Christ makes disciples. That is our core business."



Bishop Martin School Children at St Peter's

Section Two:

The Rector we want

The people of St. Peter's want to discern and embrace God's vision for our church, whatever that may be.

Consequently, we want a Rector who shares this desire and will help us to discern, and then live out, the exciting future that God has prepared for us.

Our Rector will, first and foremost, be passionate about God and the Gospel, walking closely with God through daily prayer and bible study, fellowship with other Christians and times away on retreat.

He or she will share our passion to build God's kingdom in Woolton and beyond by nurturing our whole life discipleship, ministering to our all-age congregation, reaching out to the community through the Hub and embracing the many opportunities that we have as the parish church that stands as a beacon of hope at the top of the hill.

They will:

Have a life rooted in scripture and prayer and be able to teach and preach in a relevant way.

Lead by word and example: inspiring, motivating, encouraging, enabling and empowering those around them.

Be a team player: collaborating with others to achieve the best outcomes.

Be committed to modelling their life on Jesus, embodying our church values and supporting others to do likewise.

Be a good communicator: listening, understanding and engaging with all ages in our multi-generational church.

Be a good manager: with the business skills necessary to organise and delegate well because we are a large church with many volunteers who are, with our three paid staff, engaged in a wide range of activities.

Seek to be attentive to what God might be saying to us as a church.

Help us to further develop the vision, culture and strategy of our church.

Welcome diversity and inclusivity

Help to continue developing our ministry to children and young people.

Be a good pastor, caring, with support from others, for the church family and the many others that we are in contact with through our occasional offices, the Hub and wider ministry to the community.

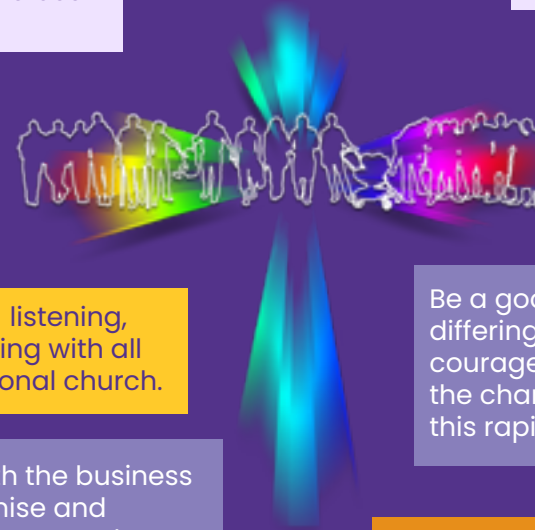
Take a full part in the life of the Clergy Chapter, Deanery and Diocesan synodical system and be involved in the discussions about Fit For Mission.

Be a good innovator: sensitive to differing views and traditions but courageous and energetic in making the changes that God may want of us in this rapidly changing world.

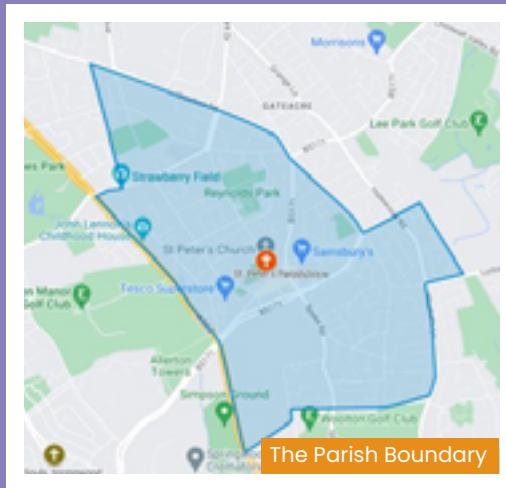
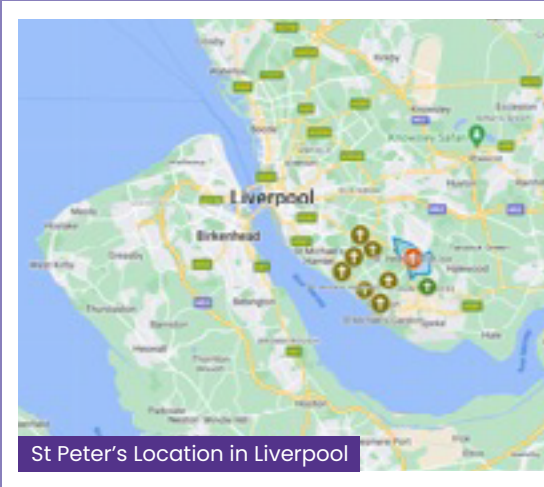
Be a 'people person': demonstrating warmth, wisdom and courage- a comment made by the PCC was "we want an encourager - like Jurgen Klopp"!

Think strategically and also have a heart for the lost and vulnerable in our society.

Encourage individuals in their discipleship and help to develop and embed a culture of discipleship.



Section Three: About the Parish



The Parish of St. Peter's Much Woolton is in the Deanery of Liverpool South, Merseyside.

Woolton was incorporated into Liverpool in 1913 but there remains a strong village identity and a sense of local civic pride and belonging. Woolton is generally considered to be a desirable place to live with many amenities for all ages.

Woolton is perceived by many as being a rich and genteel part of the City with property prices in a lot of the Parish reflecting this. This is, however, only partially true. The Liverpool City Council region is one of the five local authorities with the highest proportion of neighbourhoods that are among the most deprived in England. There is a wide spectrum of people living in the Parish with some facing significant challenges caused by debt, old age and loneliness. One of our congregation who is also a local GP responded to these challenges by setting up an organisation called "Woolton Community Life" which is actively supported by members of our congregation and reaches out to those who need companionship by offering friendship and practical support.

The population of the Council ward of Woolton is 12,900 and has been largely static for some time. The age of the population is skewed towards the range 45-74 and the least represented population age is 20-24. When asked, the population of Woolton identifies itself as Christian.

Unemployment and crime are both at lower levels than the City average and England as a whole. Housing is predominantly owner-occupied (73%) with the remainder being almost equally split between private and registered social landlords. Educationally on average Woolton residents achieve higher scores than both the City and England at both key stage 2 and GCSEs. Children in Woolton are, on average, less likely to live in relative or absolute poverty than the City or England as a whole.

There are two large supermarkets based in Woolton but there is also a good range of smaller shops (including a specialist butcher, cheese shop and Italian delicatessen) and other businesses (providing specialist services such as legal, beauty and hairdressing and including newsagents, an optician and a florist, hardware shops and estate agents) with many of these shops and businesses independent or part of small chains. The village is also a gathering point for meeting and enjoying hospitality with a broad range of cafes, restaurants and pubs. It can be quite lively at night!

For Info:
[Woolton Ward Profile 2021](#)

There are two other churches in the Parish (St. Mary's Roman Catholic Church which is next door and St. James' Methodist Church just down the road). We have good relationships with both churches. Our clergy meet on a regular basis and each year we look forward to Good Friday when we gather together in the centre of the village to witness to our shared faith in our crucified Lord.

There is a monthly "Farmers' Market" in the centre of the village, and we have, with our Christian brothers and sisters in Woolton, organised a "Churches In Woolton" stand on various occasions and also sung carols at Christmas. Members of our congregation have also helped to organise a Christian Aid stand.

There are several schools in the parish most notably Bishop Martin Primary school (Church of England) <http://www.bishopmartince.co.uk/> which is next door to the Church building and has very close links with the Church which we comment on later on. There are other primary and secondary schools in the area with some faith-based and others operated solely by the local authority. These include Woolton Primary school (known locally as 'Out Lane' School), Much Woolton Catholic Primary school, Woolton High school, St Julie's Catholic High school (Catholic Girl's secondary school), St. Francis Xavier's College (Catholic boy's secondary school) as well as the specialist Abbot's Lea school (providing education to children with autism from 3-19 years old).

The Liverpool Diocese has 3 church secondary schools all within the south Liverpool area – St Hilda's (Co-educational), Archbishop Blanch (Girl's) and St Margaret's (Boy's). All three of these schools have co-educational 6th forms.

Woolton benefits from easy access to green spaces including Reynolds Park, Woolton Woods, Camp Hill, Allerton Tower and Calderstones Park.

It has excellent transport links with regular bus services and rail stations close by. Liverpool John Lennon Airport is less than 5 miles from Woolton, and the road network locally is very good.

St Peter's Church is internationally famous because it is the place where John Lennon and Paul McCartney first met and, for this reason, is an important tourist destination. Visitors arrive by coach, taxi and car on guided and self-guided tours to see our church hall (where the first meeting between John and Paul took place) and the grave of Eleanor Rigby. We endeavour to be good stewards of our important Beatles heritage providing all of our Beatles visitors with a positive encounter whilst remaining faithful to our primary purpose as a church which is to witness to the love of God. We are seeking to develop this important ministry to our music-loving visitors.

We also enjoy a modest but increasing income for our church through the sale of reasonably priced souvenirs, but our primary purpose is, and always will be, to offer a warm welcome which witnesses to our faith in Christ.

Other local attractions include the National Trust property 'Mendips' (where John Lennon grew up) and Strawberry Fields (a Salvation Army property, previously a children's home, becoming famous from the Beatles song and now a tourist destination and training facility for young people still run by the Salvation Army).

Woolton's Monthly Farmers' Market

Section Four: About the Church

*"Growing in love for God,
each other and the world"*

St. Peter's Mission Statement

An Introduction

We aim to live out this mission following the Diocesan rule of life

*Called to pray, read and learn.
Sent to tell, serve and give.*

Our mission is enacted on four fronts.

- 1.** Mission through the church in its gathered form – assisting us when we are apart to follow Jesus and His teaching in our daily lives.
- 2.** Mission in the community – for example through the Hub providing a bridge between the church family and community, our close partnership with Bishop Martin School and our ministry to Beatles visitors from around the world.
- 3.** Mission beyond the parish – for example in our sustained giving through tithing to Christian charities.
- 4.** Mission through whole-life discipleship – encouraging every one of us to hear God's call and to be salt and light to all wherever we live and work.

The Church and its People

Who We Are:

St Peter's is a lively evangelical church. It is situated in a parish that, although located in a relatively affluent area of Liverpool, is home to people of widely differing socio-economic circumstances. It is a welcoming church with a heart to serve Woolton and currently has 350 members on its electoral roll.

Our Team:

We have been greatly blessed during our interregnum by the faithful and selfless ministry of our curate, Reverend Julia Pratt, who has organised our services and occasional offices and served us in many other ways since joining us in June 2020.

St. Peter's has a long tradition of lay reader ministry, and we currently have three lay readers (one of whom is also a churchwarden). We also have a retired minister (and previous curate) who assists with our services including communion.

The Church employs a Parish Administrator, Derek, (who works 24 hours a week) as well as a Parish Assistant, Angela, (who works 10 hours a week) and, together, they help to reduce the administrative burden on our clergy in many different ways. We also employ a Hub Co-ordinator, Jen, who we refer to in greater detail later in these papers.

We are very proud that our church has, over the years, helped some of its members discover their calling to the ordained ministry or as lay readers with several former St. Peter's

members currently serving in these roles across the Diocese.

We are particularly blessed by the many skilled and enthusiastic members of our congregation that volunteer to help in so many different aspects of our church life including our worship, children's and youth work, Hub etc.

We are a caring, supporting and encouraging church – evidenced in many different ways – some seen and others unseen – including, for example, providing lifts, meals and friendship.



Alistair & Mike Church Wardens



Derek Parish Administrator



Jen Hub Co-ordinator



Angela Parish Assistant



Rev Julia Pratt Curate

Our Church Services

St Peter's offers a range of worship services, these include:

On a Sunday

8am Holy Communion

A quieter service: the average congregation is currently 29 adults and children (pre-Covid the average congregation was 28 adults and children). Common Worship is used each week apart from the first Sunday of the month when the Book of Common Prayer is used.

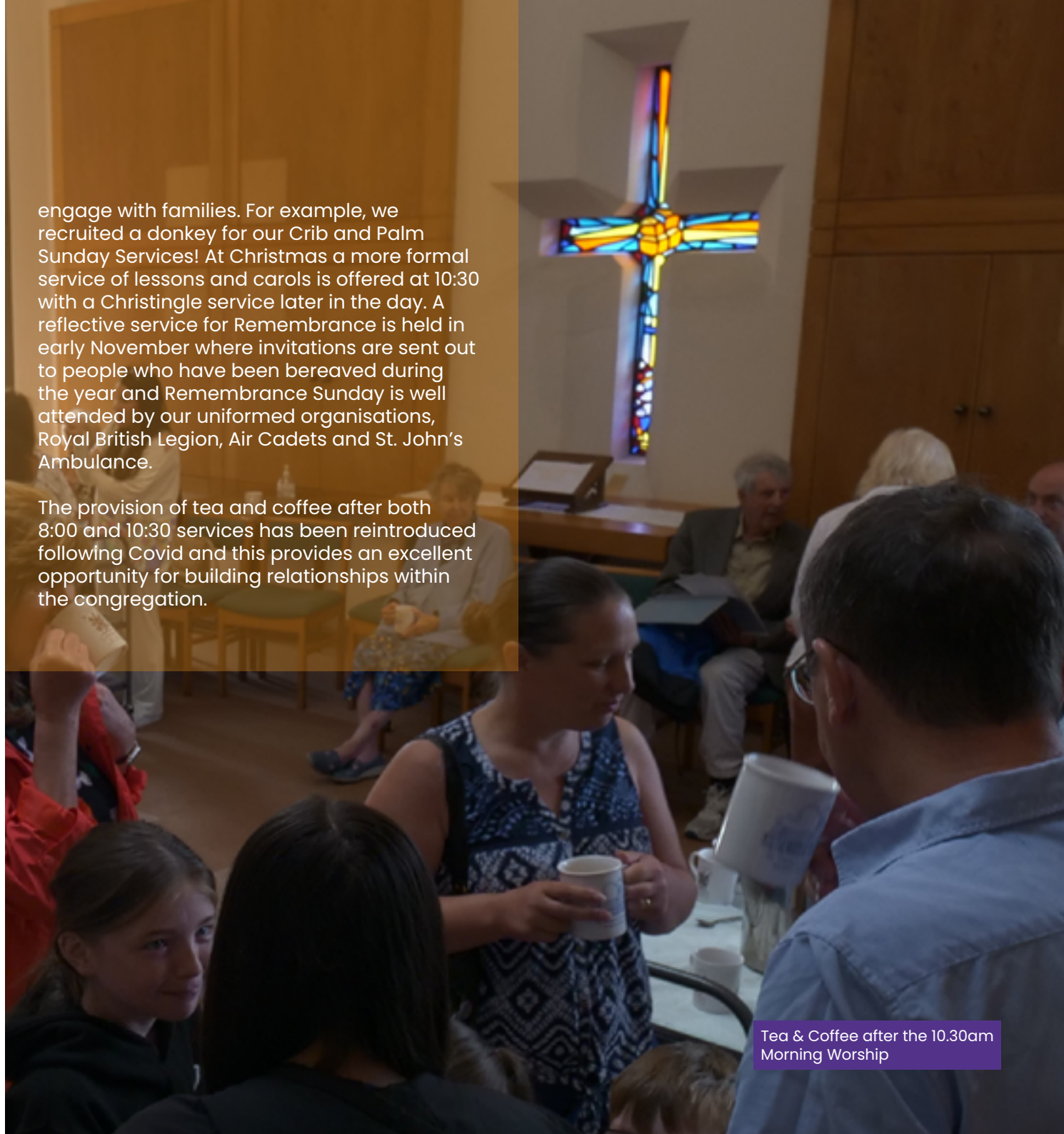
10.30am Morning Worship

The average congregation is now 150 adults & 65 children (pre-Covid the average congregation was 193 adults & 63 children). Attendance is slowly increasing, and the re-emergence of children's groups is having a positive effect on numbers. The 10:30 service is our main Sunday worship. Some of these services are suitable for all ages. In other 10:30 services, the first 20 minutes of our worship is for all ages with the children then moving to their age-appropriate groups. There is a mixture of traditional organ music and contemporary music led by our Director of Music and a well-established band during each 10:30 service. Baptisms regularly take place during our 10:30 service, although some baptisms take place in separate afternoon services due to catching up after Covid and high demand. Holy Communion is celebrated on the first Sunday of each month.

There is flexibility within the structure of the Morning Service to be more creative in how we

engage with families. For example, we recruited a donkey for our Crib and Palm Sunday Services! At Christmas a more formal service of lessons and carols is offered at 10:30 with a Christingle service later in the day. A reflective service for Remembrance is held in early November where invitations are sent out to people who have been bereaved during the year and Remembrance Sunday is well attended by our uniformed organisations, Royal British Legion, Air Cadets and St. John's Ambulance.

The provision of tea and coffee after both 8:00 and 10:30 services has been reintroduced following Covid and this provides an excellent opportunity for building relationships within the congregation.



Tea & Coffee after the 10.30am Morning Worship

4pm Worship Through Play

A monthly event that encourages families to grow together in their knowledge and love of Jesus through craft, story, and food. This is regularly attended by up to 30 families.

On a Thursday

Holy Communion Service

Holy Communion is celebrated each Thursday at 11am using the Book of Common Prayer. The average congregation numbers 13 adults (pre-Covid the average was 20 adults). This comprises some people who do not attend any other service, and others who attend one of the Sunday services. Following the service, most of the congregation gather in the Simon Peter Centre for tea/coffee or luncheon club.

Other Services

We have, historically, enjoyed worshipping together in many different ways with Taizé style and other services offered, particularly during Holy Week and at Easter. At the height of the pandemic, when we were unable to meet in person, we offered a virtual pre-recorded service which we broadcast at 10.30 each Sunday and was accessible on line after this. We hope that, in the future, we will be able to offer live streaming of our Sunday worship for the hidden congregation of those that cannot be with us in person.

Interactive play acting out the story of Jonah and the Whale

Our Ministry on our Frontline

Approximately ten years ago, St. Peter's embarked on an exciting journey with the London Institute for Contemporary Christianity (LICC). LICC challenged us to think through how God can use us on our frontlines (where we spend our time e.g., home, school, work, within the community etc.) and explore what it means to become Whole-life Disciples.

Over the years this has been explored through teaching and preaching in our services, through Life Groups (Bible Study groups) and through individuals sharing their story through 'This Time Tomorrow' (TTT). The teaching has the aim of equipping members of the congregation to live out their Christian faith in their homes, streets, schools/colleges and workplaces.

A current example is a member of our congregation who recently shared about setting up a Charity "Liverpool Zero Waste" during the Covid pandemic to help save short dated but edible food from supermarkets that would otherwise go into landfill as well as supporting the local community during a time of increased cost of living. This was recently highlighted nationally on BBC One's 'The One Show', and the organizer was awarded "A One Big Thank You" due to the positive impact it has made in the local community feeding over 1700 families each week.

Life Groups were unable to meet in person because of the Covid pandemic but the first post pandemic green shoots are now showing. We held the Bible Society's 'The Bible Course' in person in the spring of 2022 (having previously offered this on 'Zoom' during the pandemic). Following this, a small bible study group has now started up.

We provided an Alpha Course in September having previously offered Alpha on Zoom during the pandemic.

We were able to continue TTT during the Covid pandemic as part of our virtual services and therefore we were able to continue to pray for each other wherever our frontlines were. Our Whole-life Discipleship journey continues as a work in progress, creating a culture where individuals can form connections with others and then journey with each other within whatever context they find themselves. These connections have happened in all sorts of ways including WhatsApp groups (particularly helpful during the restrictions of the Covid pandemic), one to one support helping to equip and release people in the areas they are passionate about, prayer triplets as well as members of the congregation being out in the community offering pastoral care to the most vulnerable in our community.



Kathryn with Ronan Keating
on the ONE Show

Our Ministry to Children and Young People

We are passionate about supporting and encouraging families in their faith through:

Minnows is a Parent/Carer/Grandparent Baby and Toddler Group which meets on Monday and Thursday afternoons and is often seen as a lifeline to the families we work with. It provides a safe space, practical help and encouraging conversations, where parents, carers and children feel loved and supported. It is also, with Worship Through Play, our Baptism ministry, First Steps, Smiley Club and other ministries to young children and their families, the engine room for the church drawing in and nurturing new members of our church family. One of our biggest challenges is discipling those who come to us through these groups and activities and enabling them to grow in Christian maturity and commitment. These are a few comments from some of those who attend Minnows:

"Minnows is a sanctuary. It's a place where we know we will always feel welcomed and cared for. It's an amazing place run by amazing people and I can't tell you how much I needed it in those early days of parenting. We love it!"

"Minnows is a fabulous, friendly and welcoming group. The careful preparation of free-play, crafts, bible story telling and song-time is the perfect mix, entertaining the children whilst introducing them to the Christian faith."

"Minnows is our safe haven! A place where we know we can come every week and are guaranteed to see a smiling face. It's a highlight of our week as a family and we have met life-long friends through the group."

The groups below all take place during the morning worship

- **First Steps** (3-5 years old)
- **Smiley Club** (6-7 years old)
- **JAM (Jesus and Me) Club** (8-10 years old)
- **Pathfinders** (11-14 years old).

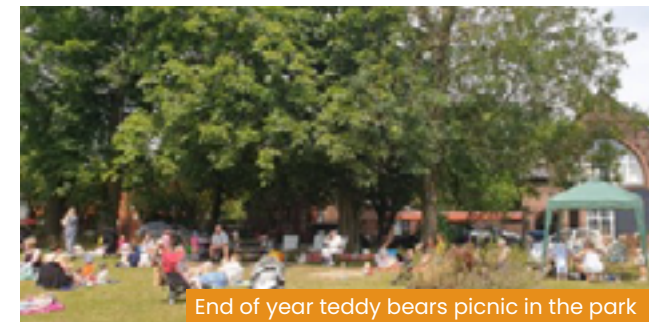
During these sessions the children learn about God in an age-related way and then apply it to their everyday lives. Smiley and Jam Clubs use the Urban Saints Energize material. There is a newly formed Pathfinders team, and they build relationships through games and use adapted material from Picture News to give young people a chance to think critically about the issues that they and others face in our ever-changing world.

The groups re-started in person in September 2021 (some operated virtually throughout Covid) and at present there are about 55 children attending, but these numbers are slowly building up.

At present we are not able to provide for our young people through a CYFA Group due to lack of leaders but hope that we will be able to address this shortly, possibly through working with other churches in the Deanery or the Diocese.



Reception teacher from Bishop Martin School sharing a story



End of year teddy bears picnic in the park



Platinum jubilee party

Those volunteers who are involved in this crucial ministry to children and young people are enthusiastic and committed, although we are always looking for more to fill the gaps. We want this ministry to move forward and seek a Rector who can help us to achieve this. We also want to expand our thinking. For example, how we can use social media more effectively to engage our young people?

As well as the Sunday groups there is also Link Club, for those aged 7-11, which draws children from the local Primary schools and provides a "link" between these children and our church. Between 20-25 children attend every Tuesday evening and engage in a range of activities from basketball, football and board games to arts and crafts and team games. The ethos is that all children are welcomed to a safe place where they can have fun, make friends and be as creative or as active as they want. Our hope is that they will be drawn into the life of the church.

Last April members of our youth groups combined with a small group from a local Methodist church for our annual trip to the Min Y Don Christian Centre in Wales. 37 youngsters and six leaders had a very special time enjoying the activities offered and growing in their Christian faith. We have a booking for April 2023 with similar numbers attending.

Uniformed organisations – St Peter's has strong links with several active Uniformed Organisations. Rainbows, Brownies and 2 Guides Groups meet in the Church Hall. The Beavers, Cubs and Scouts meet in the Scout Hall in the centre of the village. They are all served by faithful leadership teams with many leaders and members having close ties to the church. These groups attend and contribute to Parade Services during the year.



St. Peter's has a particularly strong partnership with Bishop Martin C of E Primary school, situated next door.

Prior to Covid our clergy led assemblies and services in both the school and the Church. We also welcomed the children to interactive sessions teaching the real meaning of, and celebrating, Easter and Christmas – these were attended by both Bishop Martin and Woolton Primary schools. During Covid our clergy have continued to lead assemblies and services on Zoom, and "in person" assemblies and services are now beginning again.

Many parents and children from Bishop Martin belong to the St. Peter's family with the children belonging to our church groups. Every year we have the opportunity to welcome new Bishop Martin families to our church. We look forward to building this relationship and also developing ties with other schools in the area.

Our Ministry to Adults.

Alongside our ministry to children, we seek to minister to all in our church family and beyond. Covid severely restricted what we could do but we are, as mentioned, now witnessing green shoots and are doing all that we can to nurture these.

We have already mentioned the small Bible study group which is operating alongside a small prayer group. We also offered Alpha course in September and hope that other courses and groups will quickly follow this year.

We were delighted when about twenty of our men got together for a barbeque in August and they now have a regular "men's breakfast". We are hoping that our ladies will begin preparations for our next Spring dinner when approximately 120 ladies gather for an evening meal with themed tables which are waited on by our men!

The Church and its Community

Our Hub

The Hub is based across the road to the Church in a building that is called the Simon Peter Centre and was originally part of Bishop Martin School before its present accommodation was built. For a number of years, the Simon Peter Centre was under-utilised as a church office and meeting rooms. The Hub was opened in 2011 as part of our commitment to whole-life discipleship; being church throughout the week, not just on Sundays. As a church our mission is to witness to, and love, those around us: our church is here for everyone.

The Hub is run by our Hub Co-ordinator, Jen, who works 4 days a week and is supported by our amazing team of Hub volunteers. It is open Monday to Friday, from 9 until 1 and serves our local community with a range of activities. These include knit and natter, crafts, table tennis, exploring faith, parents' coffee and prayer time, and a community sing-along.

One of the biggest problems in our local area is loneliness and social isolation, and the Hub provides a connection with people and, for some, a place to meet Jesus. The prayer room in the Hub is available for use whenever the Hub is open.

As mentioned earlier, a local GP and member of our congregation identified, a number of years ago, that one of the greatest needs for his patients was the friendship and support necessary to overcome loneliness / social isolation.

As a result of this, the charity 'Woolton Community Life' was created which aims to provide not only information on local groups that people may join but also a befriending service, partnering volunteers with people who would welcome their companionship and help. Various members of the congregation are volunteers. The Hub's activities also provide friendship and support to many in our local community.

As one Hub user has said,

"I have been so fortunate to meet such a wonderful group of people who have forged lifelong friendships, thanks to the Hub and Table Tennis. The experiences I have enjoyed at the Hub helped me throughout the black times of losing my precious wife".

We have an important presence in Woolton community, including links to schools, Marie Curie Hospice and the other churches. We have an active relationship with our Catholic and Methodist friends and, as mentioned earlier, join together at Easter for an outdoor Good Friday service in the centre of the village and also enjoy community carols at the Christmas Farmers' Market.



Easter Dawn Service



Craft Club at the Hub



Music at the Hub

Our Baptisms

St. Peter's is currently working through a backlog of Baptisms due to delays caused by Covid and a very welcome surge in demand! We are thankful that so many choose to start their Christian journey with us and endeavour to provide services that are as relevant and engaging as possible and support which will enable baptism families to grow in their faith. Our lay team keep in regular contact with our baptism families through cards, children's groups and an annual Christmas social for all parents of children baptised in the year before.

Our Weddings

We usually carry out around 15 weddings each year and hold an annual marriage preparation course. We have a wedding team that fully supports the happy couple and welcomes their guests on their special day. It is lovely to see some of these couples return with their children for baptism and often these parents and children then become more involved in the life of our church.

*It meant so much to have our son,
Joshua baptised at St Peter's.
Joshua was welcomed warmly
by the congregation!*

Hannah & David Chambers



Our Funerals

We have a very important ministry to all who are bereaved led by our clergy and one of our lay readers. We have a large open graveyard (although there are no new plots available) and a memorial garden for burial of ashes. Our clergy are supported by an experienced team of volunteers who are involved in various aspects of welcoming and assisting at each funeral. We also offer a bereavement course. Although we currently do not have a formal pastoral care team operating, we have so many willing and committed people reaching out to others including those who are bereaved.

Our Hidden Congregation

We are very aware of, and keen to include, our hidden congregation; people who may be housebound, in nursing homes and hospitals or simply lonely. Our vision is to touch the lives of those around us, to walk alongside people and serve them with kind actions and words. We keep people connected through regular phone calls and carry out regular gardening and shopping tasks. Reaching out, caring and sharing is a very important and uplifting aspect of life at St. Peter's. Our door is always open and by providing comfort, reassurance, confidence and direction our hope is to make our community feel valued. As mentioned, we want to explore the live streaming of our services so that those who cannot join us in person can still take part in our worship.

Our Giving

Our Mission Giving committee meet quarterly to prayerfully discern and recommend the distribution of our tithe (10% of our income) which we give in recognition of our calling to share in the mission of God in our community and across the world. We give approximately 80% of this tithe equally between four agencies with which we have developed active partnerships. The decision to regularly and generously support these selected Christian charities was made to encourage a relationship between St Peter's and the charities and also to provide for them a reliable and predictable income. Over 30 church members have visited our partner [Encontro Com Deus](#) in Curitiba Brazil, contributing to the community supporting street children and women facing domestic violence. Our other current partner projects are [Christian Aid's pigeon pea project](#) in Malawi, [City Hearts](#), and [Voice Choir](#).

Our Music

We are immensely blessed at St. Peter's with a very gifted band who play contemporary Christian music, a very splendid organ which provides us with beautiful traditional music and, most importantly of all, a Director of Music, Mike, who leads our band and plays our organ with equal skill and enthusiasm, always conscious that both are important vehicles for our worship together.



The Worship Band

The Church and its Buildings

The most obvious of our Church Buildings is the Church itself. The second church building on the site, it is a Grade 2* listed building and of the 'perpendicular' style. It was consecrated on 31 st December 1887 and can seat 500 within the main body.

There is a side chapel "The chapel of the Good Shepherd" offering a more intimate worship space for 30.

In preparation for the centenary of the church an extension was planned and constructed, and this opened in January 1989. This provides accommodation for approximately 30 seated or 60 standing in an area that is separated from the main body of the church by plate glass which can be covered by a curtain meaning occupants may use the room for separate activities (e.g. an 8am Holy Communion service, a crèche at a 10:30 service, an area where parents may take children to allow them to play whilst still being in touch with the service (sound can be provided to this room if required) and a very important venue for teas and coffees after our 10.30 service and social functions). The centenary rooms also provide separate male and female toilets, accessible toilets including baby-changing facilities, kitchen area, counselling room and a storage room.



There are 3 screens with projectors in the church with the majority of service material now displayed rather than forcing the congregation to juggle books and service sheets.

There is a high-quality sound system including hearing-aid loop system as well as amplification for our worship band.

As mentioned, the church has an impressive pipe organ. It also has an active bell tower which has recently been augmented to a ring of 10 bells. The bells were recently rung by the St. Paul's Cathedral Company of bellringers and broadcast on Radio 4.

There are two graveyards alongside the church; the elder (to the side of the church) is now closed with the second (at the rear) being open but with no fresh plots available.

Our Church Hall and Simon Peter Centre

The Hall and Simon Peter Centre are across the road to the church.

The Simon Peter Centre is a single-story building consisting of 2 meeting rooms, prayer room, lounge area, office, toilet and kitchenette.

The Hall is a more traditional building consisting of a large main room with a 'committee room', toilets and kitchen. The Hall is arguably the most visited Church Hall in the country due to its connection with the first meeting of Paul McCartney and John Lennon!



Our Centenary Rooms



Our Rectory



Our Simon Peter Centre

Our Rectory

The rectory is a short walk, approximately 250m, from the Church – it is a large four bed detached house built in the 1960s. There is a good-sized lounge / family room with separate dining room and kitchen and downstairs toilet. A study can be accessed internally or direct from the outside for visitors and is sufficiently separate from the living space to allow for quiet study whilst still allowing for other members of the family to live a normal life.

Externally there is a garage, ample parking space and a small, private and mature garden to the rear.

Our Curate's House

The parish has maintained a curacy for a great number of years. Our curate's house is a 4-bed semi-detached house within the parish and was extended approx. 15 years ago to accommodate a curate with a large family – an excellent example of the practical support that the congregation has provided for the important ministry of a curate and the training of future ministers.

The Fabric and Finance sub-group of the PCC work hard to ensure that our building stock is maintained in good order.

The Church and its Finances

St. Peter's has a stable financial footing. Our members provide most of our income through planned giving; we encourage members who give on a planned basis to give via the 'Parish Giving Scheme'.

The church also receives regular income from a cash collection box (The offertory plate has not been passed around since the start of the pandemic. We have not seen a reduction in plate / box collection), fees, rental of Church Hall and the sale of Beatles related items and memorabilia. We are working with the Diocese to test a contactless giving machine.

Over recent years we have benefited from very generous legacies (with the majority being unrestricted gifts), these have provided a period of financial comfort at a time of pandemic and during current national financial problems. We are grateful to those former members of our congregation who have provided for us and are conscious that the PCC will need to steward these resources carefully.

The PCC has a 'Fabric & Finance' sub-committee which deals with predominantly financial matters in great detail on behalf of the PCC

Successful giving campaigns following the 'Giving in Grace' format have been organised as well as specific campaigns for specific building funds. Household incomes and the church's costs in utilities mean that considerable strain on finances will be expected in at least the short term.

The PCC has maintained its commitment to follow the biblical teaching of giving away 10% of its income to charitable causes as detailed earlier. During the pandemic the tithe was deferred but this has been reinstated and the shortfall has been corrected.

St. Peter's has always paid its Parish Share in full. Our share is one of the largest in the Liverpool diocese.

A generous bequest from 1902 enabled the establishment of 'The Mary Jane Cross Charity' which has the objective of the relief of the poor of Woolton and Gateacre, this provides the Rector with a discretionary fund which is separate from the PCC.

The Church and its Safeguarding

St. Peter's takes its duty and obligation to protect all extremely seriously. We have adopted the procedures and guidelines provided by the national Church and Diocese and are doing all that we can to ensure that they are complied with. It is of paramount importance to us that we

- Promote the welfare of children, young people and adults at risk of harm.
- Prevent abuse occurring.
- Protect those at risk of abuse.
- Respond well to those who have been abused.

Section Five:

About the Wider Context

A message from our Area Dean and Lay Chair.

Now is an exciting time for you to join us in Liverpool South as we continue to discern and understand afresh what it means to be the Body of Christ in this place.

As together we prepare to embrace and embody Fit for Mission, we are asking what it means to be God's people in this part of the Diocese of Liverpool and we expect the new Rector of St Peter's Woolton to be a part of these discussions.

In Liverpool South we have already begun a Deanery-wide consultation asking Deanery Synod, Clergy Chapter and each PCC how they envisage the Deanery looking in a few years' time. At present there are 16 centres for worship and, including the vacant posts, 12 incumbent posts. We are also a Deanery with a Deanery Share of £822,269 – rebated to £791,115 – for 2022 and a Deanery Share debt of £211,564, which we are seeking to clear. However, we are realistic enough to know that as Liverpool South we can't continue in this way. The questions we are asking, in the consultation, include:

- How do clergy and parishes work together to equip each other.
- Can we, together, pay the full Deanery Share? If not how and where do we reduce clergy posts?
- Where do we seek to change parish boundaries to create Larger Single Parishes?

The Rector of St Peter's Woolton must understand that this Deanery reorganisation will affect them and the parish of St Peter and that the role they are to be appointed to will, most likely, change and evolve to encompass responsibility for another parish, or a wider geographical area and clergy colleagues within this new way of being. We expect the Rector of St Peter's to minister among the people of Woolton ensuring that they are fully aware of this and that they too are facing an exciting time of change ahead.

We look forward to welcoming you as you join Liverpool South in the exciting journey forward that God has planned for us.

Nicola Milford – Area Dean

Ian Crowe – Lay Dean