



Leyland St John

Parish Profile

Leyland Lane, Leyland, PR25 1XB

October 2025



<https://www.stjohnsleyland.co.uk/>
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1. Letter from the Bishop

Thank you for showing an interest in a post in the Diocese of Blackburn.

Our Diocese is passionate about the renewal of Parish life. Vision 2026 sets before the churches of Lancashire a profound belief in the power of the Gospel to transform lives and communities and expresses a firm commitment to maintaining clergy numbers and investing in the mission of the local church. We therefore seek clergy with a personal faith fiery enough to make new disciples for Christ, with a sincere commitment to the Parish as the heart of the church's mission and with the resilience and courage to bring growth and renewal to local churches. We don't want superheroes. Rather we are seeking authentic, prayerful priests of all traditions who share our passion for confident proclamation and generous service.

What's more, you would be coming to the Diocese at a fascinating time as we look towards our centenary in 2026. We are in the midst of a major process of listening to God and listening to our County as we discern where God is calling us next, a process that will result in a new strategic vision that will last until 2033, the 2000th anniversary of the Resurrection.

We have also recently been successful in obtaining a grant of £25.5m from the Diocesan Investment Programme run by the national church. This will enable us to:

- Offer a transformed pattern of ongoing training and support to clergy, including sabbatical leave as an expectation for all rather than a treat for the few

- Deploy 30 'Ignite' youth and children's workers to parishes around the Diocese

- Invest in urban areas through expanding the M:Power course for urban leaders, employing 18 Urban Pioneers and re-imagining Christian life in areas of particular challenge.

- Expand our Diocesan Renewal Programme which has led to an average of 6% growth in RWA in participating parishes.

We are a Diocese that is united in defying the declinist mindset that has taken hold of so much of Western European Christianity. Through a firm belief in the power of Jesus Christ to change lives combined with strong pastoral ministry and imaginative developments such as new local congregations, we are seeing growth in churches of all traditions. Strong relationships with our amazing family of 191 schools (95% of whom benefit from practising Christian Headteachers) provide another springboard for mission.

As a Diocese we do all we can to love and treasure our clergy. Our programme of Annual Conversations means that every licensed priest has a 90 minute conversation with a Bishop or an Archdeacon every year about their vocation, wellbeing and spiritual life.



*The Bishop of Blackburn
The Rt Revd Philip North*



*The Bishop of Lancaster
The Rt Revd Dr Jill Duff*



*The Bishop of Burnley
The Rt Revd Dr Joe Kennedy*

We have appointed an Assistant Archdeacon to advise on clergy wellbeing and we work hard to create networks that enable clergy to belong and find mutual support.

Those in their first incumbency are offered especially focused support. This includes participation in a two year Start of Ministry course, advice and care from a mentor and the oversight of our two outstanding Start of Ministry officers.

Lancashire has been described as 'England in miniature' and we can offer a vast diversity of parishes. We serve the most deprived communities in the United Kingdom on the Fylde coast and in East Lancashire as well as remote countryside. We are not immune from the particular challenges to ministry provided by an increasingly secular culture and a divided Church. But what brings us together is a profound and shared love of Jesus Christ and a passionate desire that all should know him, and in knowing him find life.

We really hope you enjoy reading this profile and that it provides all the information you need. If this particular post does not feel quite right, please do get in touch about other parishes in the Diocese that are vacant.

As you will see as you read this profile, St John's is an active church in a mixed suburban setting on the edge of a social housing estate with convenient motorway access, which combines a valuing of established worship patterns with an openness to new initiatives such as Wednesday Hub and 4 O'Clock Live. The parish is part of a deanery which is friendly and mutually supportive. We are praying for a priest with a heart for multi-generational ministry who will reach out in to the community and will also continue to lead the congregation in its commitment to see new and deeper disciples of Christ."

Most importantly of all, please be assured of our prayers as you discern the will of God for the next stage in your ministry.

2. What is the PCC's vision for the future?

St John's Leyland exists to **Live: Loving, knowing & sharing Jesus**



St John's Leyland exists to **Live** life to the full in Jesus Christ. This means ...

Serving those living, working and learning in North-West Leyland (including the Broadfield social housing estate, Western Drive, The Oaks, Croston Meadows, Golden Hill and Leyland Lane areas)

St John's Leyland exists to **Live** life to the full in Jesus Christ by:

Loving Jesus

- In response to his love for us in the gospel
- Through Gospel-centred, relevant and engaging worship and prayer
- Doing everything for his glory and in his name

Knowing Jesus

- By teaching and encouraging one another in the truth of the gospel
- Equipping one another to live the whole of our lives as transformed disciples of Jesus
- Discerning, nurturing and affirming the gifts and vocations of all God's people

Sharing Jesus

- By living lives of loving service in our community
- Sharing the good news of Jesus Christ in Leyland & beyond
- Supporting cross-cultural mission financially, prayerfully & relationally

Our vision priorities are:

1. **Sharing Jesus:** Reaching the unreached peoples of our parish and the world with the good news of Jesus
2. **Knowing Jesus:** Growing mature disciples by developing a more intentional and strategic discipleship process
3. **Loving Jesus:** Offering a more varied, accessible and contemporary pattern of worship – including an all age service on a Sunday afternoon
4. **Children & families:** Seeing an increasing number of young families who have a vibrant committed Christian faith

The most recent vision action plan agreed by the PCC was drawn up in July 2024 and is shown below.

Our Strengths 'Isn't it good that we have...'	Good relationships – we have a caring, welcoming, supportive environment Children, youth and families engagement Variety in worship styles Three distinctive congregations addressing different needs Wednesday Hub links to the community
Our Weaknesses 'Isn't it a pity that we have...'	Ageing and tiring group of volunteers Small number of people doing too much
Our Opportunities 'Wouldn't it be good if we had...'	More leaders – including children, youth and family worker Deeper discipleship for all Increased visibility and engagement with community of NW Leyland including new housing developments, schools and businesses

Our priority goals developed in 2024

1. Grow more mature disciples – especially men
2. Increase our outreach & discipleship of young people
3. Engage more with our community and world by nurturing a holistic understanding of the Christian Life – incl. 'frontlines', vocations, evangelism, creation & justice Issues
4. Improve our external communication to the parish – especially the use of social media
5. A more balanced age and gender demographic in our worshipping community and leadership
6. To see and encourage a number of people from our church called to serve elsewhere in full-time paid gospel ministry/mission
7. Our buildings to enable excellent accessibility, functionality, ambiance, and health and safety standards within the worshipping life of the church

3. What is our Spiritual life?

We are evangelical in tradition; we take the Bible as the authority for our lives and place a high priority on learning to understand and apply its teaching to our lives, with the help of careful exegesis, prayer, and the guidance of the Holy Spirit. We welcome any who are called by God and appropriately trained, gifted and authorised to lead, preach and/or preside at any of our services, both women and men.

Our PCC does not have a united position on the subject of human sexuality and therefore, in accordance with the bishop's guidance, we do not offer the prayers of love and faith. We respect each other's views on the topic and as this is still being worked through in the Church of England, it is something we will need to discuss in the future.

Prayer

We recognise as a church community that we are dependent on the wisdom and strength of Jesus and therefore prayer is a foundational aspect of our church life and at the core of everything we do.

Our leadership team invites anyone who is available to meet with them weekly for Monday morning prayers (9.30-10.15am), and for a 15-minute time of prayer at 9.45am each Sunday, prior to the 10.30 service. We have a prayer meeting for the whole church family on the last Tuesday evening of the month to pray for the mission and ministry of our church, including a focus on one of our mission partners. The weekly Monday prayers and monthly Tuesday evening meetings have been key opportunities for us to pray together for growth and renewal, in line with the diocesan focus for this year.

Intercessions during the 10.30 Sunday service are lay led (as are the readings), according to a termly rota, and include prayer for the mission partner on the rota for that week. Our weekly St John's Update includes this mission partner along with the names of three streets in our parish to pray for each week, and the names of those we know who are ill or bereaved or otherwise in particular need of prayer.

A monthly prayer diary is produced that includes the names of one household or 2-3 other members of the church family for prayer each day, and weekly prayer points relating to our mission partners, the life of our church and diocese, and/or world events.

Mission Partners

We currently support the following mission partners through regular financial gifts, as a share of the 5% of our annual budget allocated by the PCC towards mission giving.

- OMF (Overseas Missionary Fellowship)
- AIM (Africa Inland Mission)
- MAF (Mission Aviation Fellowship)
- Platform 67
- Tear Fund
- Open Doors
- Leyland CAP Debt Centre (Christians Against Poverty)

We have developed close personal links with two families, one couple and two single women whom we support through some of the organisations above, supporting them financially and in regular prayer, sharing of news updates and visits when they are in the UK. However, owing to the sensitive nature of the regions in which some of these partners work, we are advised not to publish their names alongside locations or sending organisation.

In addition, we sometimes support these and other mission organisations through one-off appeals or donations, and some individuals and groups within the church make gifts and maintain links with other mission organisations, including:

- The Leprosy Mission
- Compassion
- Nefyn Camps

All the above organisations and individuals are included regularly in our prayers.

Worship Services

Most of our services follow a Common Worship 'Service of the Word' pattern, and we are used to the flexibility and variety afforded within this framework. The ethos of all our services is relatively informal and relaxed (especially the Sunday 4pm and Wednesday 2pm services). We are fairly light on ceremony. (For example, no one processes into church, and our last two vicars didn't wear robes). Whilst we encourage regular participation in Holy Communion by confirmed members of all three congregations, usually only one of our three services each week is Eucharistic.

Our current pattern of services is as follows:

Sunday 10.30am

Recently, attendance has averaged at around 40-50 adults, most of whom are aged over 50 with an increasing proportion aged 70+, and a small handful of children or young people under 16. Provision is made for a Sunday Group in the lounge for any children who are present; they usually leave before the readings and sermon and return to church during the last hymn. Sermons are generally around 20 minutes long and will often be on a theme and passage chosen as part of a series agreed by the leadership team, not necessarily following the lectionary.

The church is set out with a mixture of seats in rows and around tables at the back for those who like to have somewhere to place their Bibles/take notes.

We share brews (prepared in the vestry kitchen facilities) and a chat in the church space after the service. This service is usually live streamed (Please see our YouTube channel [\(95\) St John's Church, Leyland - YouTube](#)).

Sunday 4pm – '4 o'clock Live'

A simple, multi-generational and interactive service started in 2019, with the aim of being accessible to people of all ages and stages, including those unfamiliar with church. At one stage this congregation had grown to include 20-25 adults and up to 15 children aged under 16, although numbers have dipped during 2025, and at the time of writing, following the departure of the previous Vicar and his family, numbers have shrunk further.



We sit around tables in the church, providing a surface for craft/drawing activities.

A light meal (cooked by volunteers) is provided after the service for those who wish to stay and eat together.



Combined 2pm services in August

For the past few years, during August, we have had a single Sunday service at 2pm which is usually live streamed. This service combines elements from our 10.30am and 4pm services, with brews available after the service, and provides an opportunity for members of the different congregations to meet each other. (We have trialled having occasional combined 2pm services at other times of the year eg during school holidays, with limited success)

Wednesday 2pm

A short, informal service is held in church at the end of the Wednesday Hub activities (see next page). Not all attendees at the Hub stay for the service, and a few people just come for the service at 2pm. Attendance is currently around 18-25 adults, most of whom are over the age of 60, a significant proportion of whom have additional needs. During the vacancy, this service will either be led by one of our two active PTO clergy, or by other members of the team.

Music

We were blessed with a musically gifted vicar and his wife over the past seven years, and for three years during that time we also benefited from the musical gifts of a curate (playing piano, guitar and/or flute). With their departure our music at the 10.30 service will revert to being led, on alternate Sundays, by a small, long-standing group generally comprising keyboard, violin and 2-3 singers. We will use music videos for the remaining services.

Songs are drawn from a mixture of Mission Praise and more contemporary songs and all added into a PowerPoint presentation that is projected onto the two new TV screens (installed spring 2025).

Growth Groups

Congregation members meet in small groups ('growth groups') during the week for Bible study, fellowship and prayer, in host homes or in the church lounge. This is something that we have done for over twenty-five years. There are currently six groups that meet on different days and at different times, attended by a total of 35-50 people each week (over 50% of our regular attendees). In recent years the groups have mostly used notes provided by the person preaching at the 10.30 service each week, to aid discussion of the passage the sermon was based on. We have decided that this is not sustainable during the vacancy, and the groups are following a discipleship booklet by Tim Chester for the coming term ('Life with Jesus'). Diocesan materials have also been used, eg the Lent course, and the congregation are encouraged to make personal use of the diocesan Advent and Lent resources to help their continued growth as disciples.

Wednesday Hub 10.30am – 3pm

Doors open at 10:30 am with games, crafts, quizzes, hobbies and brews available. We have a Prospects 'corner', a couple of tables where adults with learning difficulties and their friends find a particular welcome and like to encourage one another. Anyone is welcome, whether to pop in for 30 minutes, or stay for the entire session – it's free, but voluntary donations are welcome, either cash or contactless. This is a place you can spend time with people or be quiet. It's a place where it's OK to not feel OK.

We have lunch at 12:00 noon; members bring their own lunch with them or pop across the road to Tesco for a sandwich. This is followed by optional 'gentle exercise' at 1 pm (see photo), with a 2 pm themed service/reflection time, also optional.



Youth, children and families work

Our post Covid strategy to welcome youth, children and their families into our worshipping community was featured in a video produced by the national Church of England: <https://youtu.be/wda3fTLPpZY>

It includes both Sunday Group and 4 o'clock Live on a Sunday (primarily aimed at primary school age) and the following mid-week activities, each led by a team of volunteers.

Acorns – Thursday morning

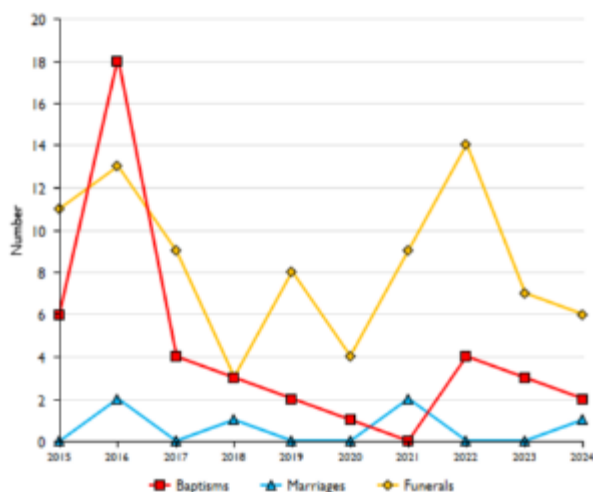
For pre-school children and their parents/grandparents and/or carers with average attendance of 15 children and 10 adults. We begin by using the flexible space within church for a bible story and songs, then move through to the hall for a related craft activity, followed by plenty of time for play and chat in the lounge, hall and garden, snack time back in the hall, finishing with bubbles and our goodbye song. For most attendees, this is their only regular connection with St John's and the team encourage them to think about connecting with 4 o'clock Live, albeit with limited success, partly because some attendees are driving from across the South Ribble area to attend and some are grandparents or childminders who only look after the children during the week.

YouthDOTcom (Discipleship On Thursdays) – Thursday evening

For secondary school/college aged youth. This term we are expecting 5-7 attendees (currently just boys), although we have contact with 3 girls in this age group whom we hope to encourage to join us. We meet in the lounge/hall and have fun and games, time for prayer, a snack and a structured Bible session.

Prior to Covid we employed a children and families worker, but sadly she died in 2021. We have been exploring the idea of employing another worker for a couple of years and a sub-group of the PCC have recently been engaging with the diocesan 'Ignite' programme ([Information relating to new missional roles in the Diocese | The Diocese of Blackburn](#)) on the possibilities of recruiting a worker that is part-subsidised by a grant from the National Church. However, this has now been put on hold during the vacancy.

Occasional Offices



We are not a busy church when it comes to occasional offices. Post-Covid, the majority of funerals for which there has been a service in church have been for members of the worshipping community.

We have one wedding a year on average, as our buildings aren't particularly picturesque, usually involving someone who has a current or past connection with the church.

Our current baptism statement is as follows: Baptism is a wonderful, but also a weighty, step to take. So we invite you to join our church-family, have a thanksgiving, and attend regularly for some time, so that you can get to know us and we can get to know you, before we have a conversation about baptism. If at that point baptism

seems to be the right next step for you, we offer a course of baptism preparation which helps to explain the meaning of baptism and how this is expressed in the baptism service.

Outreach and enquirers' activities

In recent years, the Social Outreach and Evangelism (SOE) PCC sub-group has planned and organised two or three 'waves of mission' each year, involving events to which we can invite our friends, family and neighbours, with each 'wave' preceded by a week of prayer. These waves of mission have included events such as family fun days, 'pudding evenings' and a Ceilidh, with opportunities for informal chat and/or an external speaker, and also some training in 'creative conversations' to encourage us to make the most of opportunities to speak about faith in everyday contexts. Our Christmas carol concert in 2024 included members of a local brass band and our own community choir - the church had standing room only!

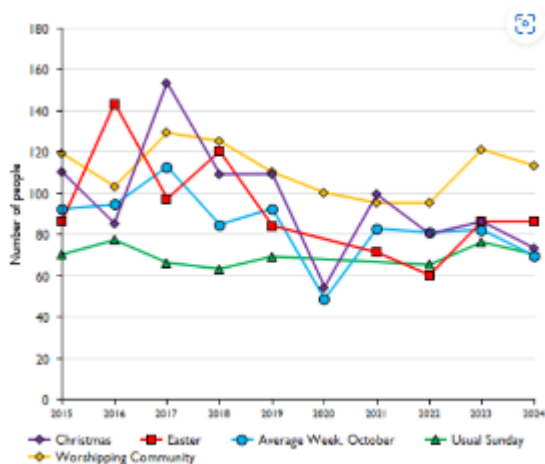
Each wave of mission has included one or more guest services, with the offer of an enquirer's course for anyone wanting to explore the Christian faith further. Whilst the social events have been well attended, we have seen only a handful of new people at the guest services and there hasn't been a recent enquirer's course.

This year (2025), the SOE team decided not to organise specific mission events, but rather to reflect the diocesan emphasis on prayer for growth and renewal, and also to provide opportunities to build relationships within and between existing congregation members, looking towards a renewed focus on mission and outreach in the diocesan centenary year next year. The second of two joint fellowship lunches planned for Sundays at the beginning and end of the summer turned out to be the farewell lunch for our Vicar, Andy, and his family.

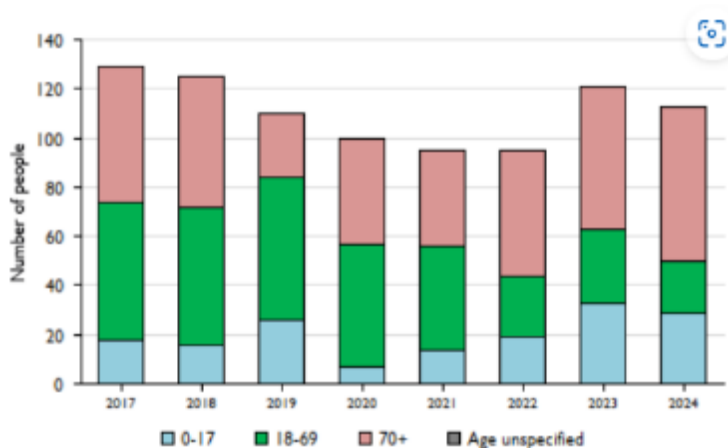
Other data

Our new electoral roll (2025) has 79 people of whom 32 (40%) live in the parish and 47 (60%) live outside of the parish – with most of these living within 3 miles of the church.

Attendance



Worshipping community



4. What resources do we have?

Leadership and governance

We are blessed with a committed core leadership team, including an Associate Minister (PTO), a retired Vicar with PTO, an LLM, an ALM (Children and Youth), an ALM (Pastoral) and two churchwardens. This team works well together and is supported by many volunteers who also share in ministry alongside the PCC.

Who's who in our Leadership Team	
Associate Minister (PTO) Retired Minister (PTO)	Barbara Wilson Stephen Fletcher
Church Wardens	Audrey Waring Dave Champness
LLM	Sue Champness
ALM and Pastoral Care Coordinator ALM (Youth and children)	Carol Sergeant Clare Pope
Treasurer	Tracey Johnson
Safeguarding Officer	Judith Watson
Data Protection Officer and Gift Aid Secretary	Dave Champness

Safeguarding

Our Parish Safeguarding Officer uses the national Safeguarding Dashboard and Hub IT systems to track progress with safeguarding action planning and safer recruitment.

PCC

The PCC has the following sub-groups. These groups include non-PCC members and usually meet in the month when there isn't a full PCC meeting.

- Social, outreach and evangelism (SOE)
- Mission Support
- Communications
- Fabric and maintenance
- Eco Church – we recently attained the bronze award

Pastoral Team

The Pastoral Team meets regularly, before a new pastoral visiting rota is drawn up by Carol Sergeant, as Pastoral care coordinator. Those currently on the rota as pastoral visitors are Carol, Stella Weaver and Barbara Wilson. Sue Champness and Audrey Waring also attend Pastoral Team meetings and share responsibility for pastoral follow-up of other members of the congregation who are not on the regular visiting rota, particularly younger families (Sue) and Wednesday Hub members (Audrey).

Buildings

Our main church building adjoins the church hall, which is over 100 years old. The Hall began life as a school, before becoming the meeting place for the worshipping community, supported by Leyland St Andrew's prior to St John's becoming a separate parish in 1991. To the rear of the hall are the church kitchen and lounge areas. The church and vicarage are on a combined plot (an aerial view of the site is included on page 14).

The main church building and foyer were built in 1968 and can seat approximately 100 people on individual chairs that replaced the pews in 2022. The church vestry includes kitchenette facilities which are used for preparing teas/coffees for after-service fellowship. The foyer also has an accessible toilet.

The most recent quinquennial inspection for the church and hall was conducted in 2022 and reported that the buildings are generally in good condition. The remaining larger maintenance/improvement items include:

- a) replacing the full height single glazed chancel windows with double glazing and improving the integral fire exit access to the rear of the church
- b) replacing the church, foyer and lounge carpets
- c) the church roof may need to be replaced in the next ten years.

Architect drawings have been produced detailing accessibility improvements in the foyer including the provision of power-operated doors and handrailing. However in July 2025, the PCC decided to pause the plans once the cost estimate of over £80,000 was received.

Over the past five years improvements have been made to the church audio-visual provision with an upgraded sound system and the replacement of the aging projector/screen set up with large TVs in early 2025. At the time of writing a faculty application is in progress to replace the single glazed high level clerestory windows/cladding with double glazed units and replace the pendant lighting with LED downlights in the ceiling.



Schools

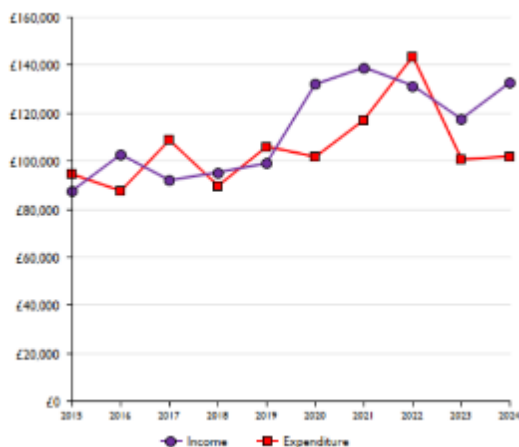
There are no church schools in the parish. However, there are five CoE schools (St Andrew's Infants, St James Primary, Balshaw's and Bishop Rawstorne High schools and Hutton Grammar) in the local area.

Stewardship and finances

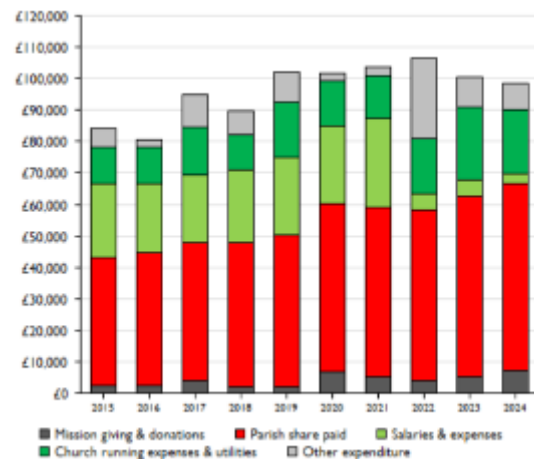
Over the years God has blessed St John's through the faithful and generous giving of the congregation augmented to a limited extent with income from third-party hiring of the hall for dance/martial arts activities. We have always contributed our full parish share by direct debit and have to date chosen to use the Lowest Income Communities Fund (LICF) grant (nearly £20,000 per year) from the DBF for missional activities rather than off-set against parish share.

As we have been registered charity (Number 1175098) for nearly eight years our full accounts are available for review on the Charity Commissioners' website.

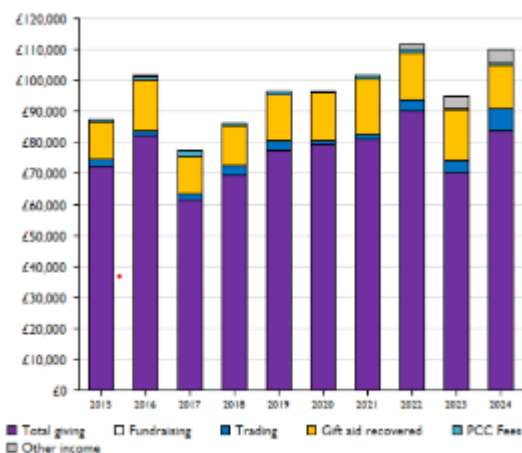
Financial metrics



Income/expenditure



Expenditure categories



Sources of income

5. What is the community we serve?

Leyland is a medium-sized town in Lancashire located in the South Ribble Borough. Originally Leyland was an industrial town mainly linked to the construction of industrial motor vehicles. Now the Leyland trucks assembly line is located about a mile north of the town, in a neighbouring parish, and employs about 1,000 people. The remaining industry is mainly based in a variety of units of which there are quite a number in the parish, including a regionally acclaimed builders' merchants, 'Berry's'.

People living in Leyland have easy access to the M6, M61 and M65 which provide excellent road links to the major employment centres in the north-west. Trains to Preston, Manchester and Liverpool can be boarded at the railway station and the main west coast mainline can be easily accessed via local trains to Preston. There are good bus routes to Chorley, Preston and beyond. The Lancashire countryside is readily accessible and the Lake District and Yorkshire National Parks are an easy day trip. The town is well served with a variety of supermarkets and a variety of independent retailers.

Leyland's 'green flag' awarded Worden Park, situated to the south of the town, includes a mix of mature woodlands and open meadows and sports pitches. It contains historic buildings, a miniature railway and a well-equipped children's playground

There are around 8,000 people living in our parish housed in a mix of properties. Approximately one third of the population live on the Broadfield Estate which was built in the late 1940's by the council. It is predominantly semi-detached houses, with a smaller number of flats and terraced houses. Another third lives in semi-detached houses and dormer bungalows built in the 1960's in an area bordering the River Lostock. The remainder live either in more recently built properties, comprising apartments, detached, semi-detached and terraced houses or in small areas of Edwardian terraced houses. Approximately 300 new houses have been, or are being, constructed in and just outside of the parish boundary over the past five years.

There are several areas of open green space within and on the edge of the parish. A short walk from the vicarage are footpaths following the River Lostock.

The parish is ranked nationally 2,210 out of 12,500 parishes for multiple indices of deprivation and 1777th for income deprivation ie in the bottom 20%.

Schools within the parish are: Northbrook County Primary School, Wellfield and Worden High Schools. Adjacent to St John's church is the Golden Hill Short Stay Pupil Referral unit for children who have been excluded from school.

Maps



6. Vicarage

The vicarage is located within the church grounds and is accessed via a short drive running from the church car park along the side of the church to the vicarage.

It was built in 1975 and has been extended several times. The downstairs accommodation comprises a large lounge, dining room, kitchen, utility room, study, shower room and a bedroom / second lounge. Upstairs there are four further bedrooms (one en-suite) and a family bathroom. There is an integral garage and a small shed in the garden. There is an area of the garden designated as belonging to the vicarage. At present there is no physical divide of the extensive garden between parish and vicarage use; this arrangement will be reviewed with the future incumbent.



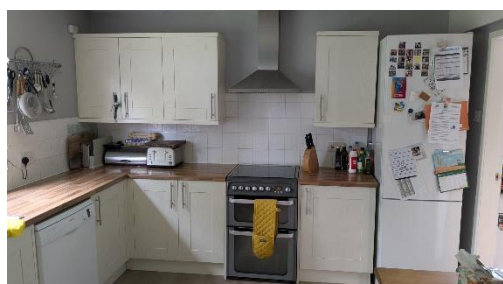
1 St John's Church 3 Lounge
2 Church Hall 4 St John's Vicarage



Lounge



Lounge



Kitchen



Kitchen



Dining room

7. Who is God calling?

As a PCC (following consultation with our congregations), we believe God is calling us to seek someone who has the following

Essential qualities:

Deeply prayerful and led by the Holy Spirit

- Faithful to Scripture and able to teach it clearly and engagingly
- Committed to personal discipleship and helping others grow in faith
- Willing to engage with different theological views while standing firm on gospel truth

Relational & Pastoral

- Warm, approachable, and compassionate
- A good listener and communicator
- Able to support individuals and families through life's challenges
- Values and includes everyone equally

Mission-Focused

- Has a heart for reaching the unreached with the good news of Jesus
- Passionate about sharing Jesus with the wider community
- Encourages outreach and evangelism through both words and actions
- Has experience of connecting with people outside of a church context

Empowering leadership style

- A servant-hearted leader with integrity and humility
- Eager to support and build on our existing vision
- Supports and develops ministries and gifts within the congregation
- Has some experience of leading within a multi-generational church

The following additional qualities and skills would be preferable:

- Ability to encourage the use of musical gifts to enhance worship
- Line management experience
- Experience of using digital platforms in ministry and outreach
- Good organisational and administrative skills

Outcome of vote on a resolution

As a PCC we were conscious that there was a range of views about male headship within the church with regards to the incumbency. The following motion was considered and voted upon at the Section 11 meeting:

'The PCC of St John's, Leyland requests, on grounds of theological conviction and in accordance with the House of Bishops' Declaration on the Ministry of Bishops and Priests, that arrangements be made for an all-male short-list for consideration as the next incumbent of Leyland St John.'

11 of the 12 PCC members were physically present at the meeting on 6th October 2025. With 3 in favour, 8 against and 0 abstentions, the motion was not carried.

8. Vision 2026 and Beyond

Vision 2026 is an agenda for growth agreed by the Blackburn Diocesan Synod in 2015. It challenges our parishes to be healthy churches that transform their communities as we look ahead to our diocesan centenary in 2026. It also lays out four ways in which this over-arching goal can be achieved: Making Disciples, Being Witnesses, Growing Leaders and Prioritising Children and Young People.

All that we do as a diocese is focussed on the delivery of Vision 2026. For example:

- To make disciples we have 'Fruitful', our Diocesan Discipleship app and distribute 10,000 devotionals at Lent and Advent which enable people to study the scriptures. We also encourage greater generosity in the giving of time, talents and treasures.
- To be witnesses, many parishes are setting up new local congregations at different times and in different places to reach out to new groups of people as well as showing God's love in action through projects that meet human need.
- New leaders are emerging as we seek to enable and equip those God is raising up for lay and ordained ministry. Our M:Power course is a nationally innovative resource for forming leaders from working class backgrounds.
- Our focus on children and young people is enabling creative thinking to raise up a new generation for Jesus Christ. This is supported by our family of church schools, teams to support children and youth work and our Youth Forum.

In the Diocese of Blackburn we are inspired by confidence in the Gospel and are ambitious in our desire to make new disciples for Jesus Christ. We are committed to mutual flourishing, to maintaining clergy numbers and to investing in training for new curates.

As we look to 2026 and the completion of the current Vision, the Diocese has embarked on a major programme of listening to God and our communities as we discern where he is leading us next. This is being supported in prayer as we observe a Year of Prayer for Growth and Renewal in 2025.

Our Diocesan Vision Prayer is:

***"Heavenly Father, we embrace Your call for us to make disciples, to be witnesses,
to grow leaders and to inspire children and young people.
Give us eyes to see Your vision, ears to hear the prompting of Your Spirit
and courage to follow in the footsteps of your Son, our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen"***

You can find out more by visiting the Vision 2026 pages on our website: www.blackburn.anglican.org

9. Clergy Care and Wellbeing

- Clergy are invited to participate in an 8 year annual programme to keep ministry fresh and vital. This includes periods of sabbatical and regular retreats.
- We offer an Annual Conversation in which every licensed priest spends 90 mins with a Bishop or Archdeacon discussing ministry and wellbeing.
- Ongoing theological training and teaching is offered through our partnership with Emmanuel Theological College. Clergy receive free access to a theological library of 22,000 books and regular seminars.
- Annual Diocesan Clergy Study Days and an occasional clergy conference seek to provide opportunities both to keep ministry fresh and to build relationships with colleagues.
- We offer first incumbents a mentor and participation in our Start of Ministry Programme.
- All clergy are entitled to an uninterrupted rest period of 24 hours in each period of seven days and one additional rest period of 24 hours in each month, and in the remaining weeks of the month to take a rest day and a light day.
- We offer a Clergy Assistance Programme. More information about this can be found on our [website](#)
- We have a great property department, who will do their best to ensure your house works for you and your family and is well maintained.
- We have a beautiful diocesan retreat house in the grounds of a ruined Cistercian abbey, where clergy are welcome to have personal reading days for a modest charge (you can book in for lunch or bring your own).
- We encourage all parishes in vacancy to consider how they will 'pastor' and support their new priest. The diocese has an anti-bullying and anti-harassment policy.
- If you are looking for a spiritual director or a mentor we have an excellent Warden of Spiritual Direction and networks of people with whom we can put you in touch.
- We are always looking for ways for clergy to mix apart from work – including reading weeks, regular hospitality, a cricket team and a clergy walking group. Further suggestions are welcome.
- We offer free counselling to clergy and their families through the [Inter Diocesan Counselling Service](#) and our own Diocesan counsellor.
- Clergy Wellbeing is overseen by the Assistant Archdeacon for Clergy Wellbeing, Canon Neil Kelley. In addition our Dean of Women's Ministry, the Revd Lucie Lunn, offers support and care to female clergy in the Diocese.



Whalley Abbey Centre for Christian Discipleship and Prayer