

# ST. STEPHEN'S CHURCH

Steeton with Eastburn



## **Bishop's Statement for St Stephen's Steeton**

Steeton is home to over 5000 people as well as Airedale General Hospital. In recent years, it has grown as many new houses have been built, and there are plans for more to come. The need to welcome new people into the village has been recognised and some have joined St Stephen's. Continued engagement with new residents to give them the opportunity to discover Jesus and the life of the local church is therefore an important task for St Stephen's.

St Stephen's Church is a significant focal point in its local community. Some good work has taken place in recent years to renew and update the church fabric, but there are still some significant maintenance issues to address, particularly with the church hall. It will be important to support those on the PCC who are tackling this responsibility.

The last two incumbencies have been disappointingly short. While they ended well, it was not long enough to see if new developments, such as mission and worship which reaches and nourishes a broader age-range, could be fully effective. This is a key factor behind the decision to make an Interim Ministry appointment, with a clear and intentional focus on building up the missional and financial sustainability of the parish.

From the perspective of the Episcopal Area, we see the overarching responsibility of the new priest is to provide clear and enabling leadership, which will foster growth numerically as well as spiritually and in service to their local community. We are therefore seeking an enabling leader, capable of managing the changes needed carefully and sensitively, who can work with the congregation of St Stephen's to reimagine ministry, grow the church (particularly amongst young families), develop confident discipleship, and nurture relationships within the village and local community in creative ways. Especially given the part-time nature of this post, we are seeking a person who can develop others into ministry and leadership alongside them. Within this overall responsibility, we see five specific interim ministry objectives for the incoming interim priest-in-charge:

- a) To determine whether it is possible to develop outreach and worship which will attract a younger demographic into St Stephen's (in particular more families and young people) as part of a sustainable 'mixed ecology' of new forms of church and worship alongside traditional ones. This may involve cultivating links with other local churches, both in the Deanery and outside, to seek any assistance required to launch and support new forms of mission and worship until they can be self-sustaining.
- b) To build up confident lay ministry from the congregation, developing pathways for greater discipleship and increased lay leadership, and encouraging individuals to develop in their faith and use their gifts and talents. (S)he will therefore need excellent teaching, team building and team leadership skills.
- c) To determine whether the parish's finances can be built up sufficiently to sustain the deployment of a half-stipend vicar in future and also be able to maintain the church buildings adequately.
- d) To play a visible role in the life of Steeton, alongside the PCC, engaging strategically to help develop a vision both for the village and for St Stephen's role in the village.
- e) To help the parish develop and articulate its identity, so it is clear what kind of skills and experience they are seeking in the next incumbent at the end of the Interim Ministry.

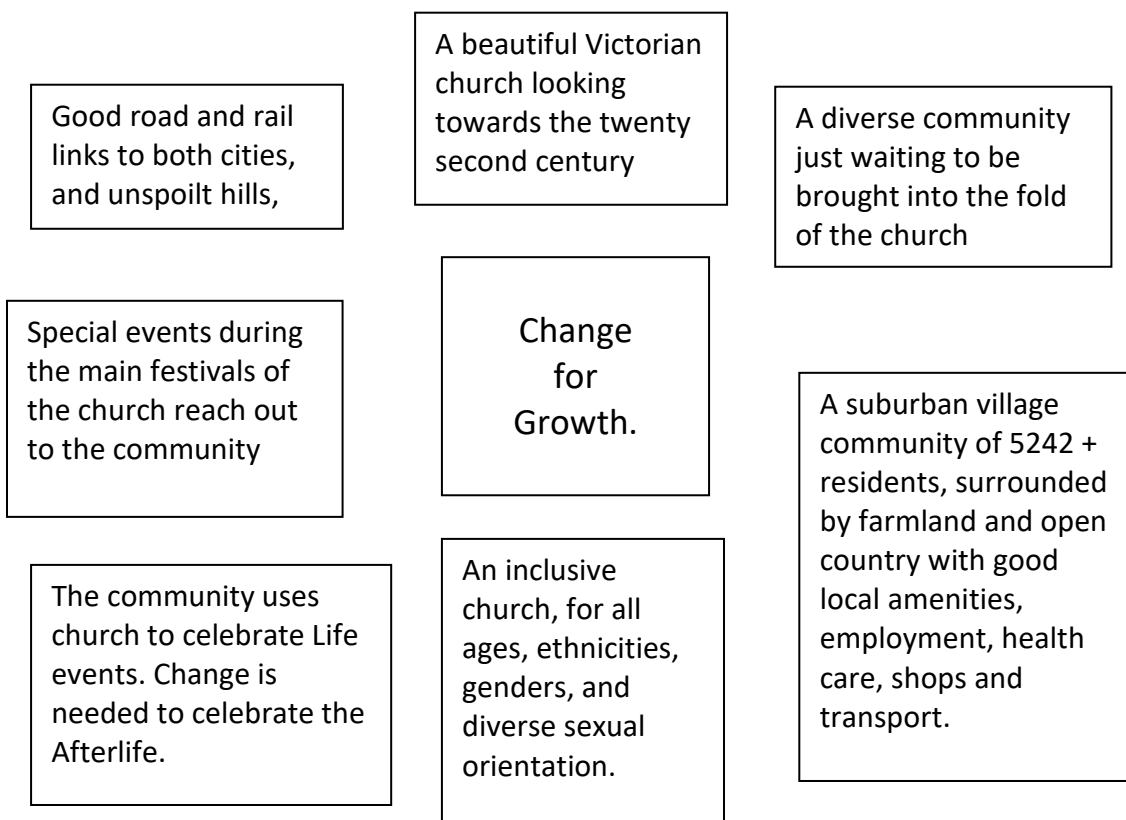
In common with all our Interim Ministry appointments, a monitoring process will be put in place, involving a quarterly meeting with the Archdeacon and a review point at the end of two years at the latest. This will enable a decision to be taken as to whether the arrangement should be extended, made permanent or the appointment reviewed and changed. This will allow the decision to be implemented during the third year of the interim post. The criteria for the review would be based on the five tasks listed above.

Our vision as the Diocese is about confident clergy equipping confident Christians to live and tell the good news of Jesus Christ. In appointing to this post, we are therefore looking for someone who is both visionary and enabling, with the capacity to lead into a new era of growth. The new incumbent will have a joyful and confident faith which has inspired a track record of church growth, both numerically and spiritually.

The Deanery of Aire and Worth is comprised of parishes similar to St Stephen's, many of whom are experimenting with mixing new approaches to worship and mission alongside inherited patterns. The new interim priest-in-charge will therefore find a group of creative and supportive colleagues in the Deanery chapter, all of whom will be deeply familiar with the joys and challenges that each other faces. (S)he will therefore be expected to work with a spirit of generosity in sharing wisdom and insights about ministry within the Deanery of Aire and Worth and across the Episcopal Area.

+Toby Bradford  
April 2026

## An Introduction to the Parish of St. Stephens



### The New Priest

We welcome a prospective Interim Priest with the following skills and dedication:

#### The Priest should be:

A Strong energetic spiritual leader.  
A good listener and communicator  
A person willing to support and work alongside laity roles

#### The Priest will need:

Interpersonal skills, able to relate to people of all ages  
A vision for change  
Energy and vision to lead  
Recognition of our needs

As traditional Church members we work well together as a dedicated and talented team. However, we need a Spiritual Lead who will introduce new ways of engaging with the population, educating and encouraging discipleship in tune with modern lifestyles.

In return we will support you in working within the limits of a part time post with appropriate personal development, training, and holidays, and have budgeted to pay your expenses in full. We offer you a congregation committed to paying our agreed share in full to the diocese, a cooperative PCC, a well maintained church, and a well planned, modern, vicarage. The congregation is a welcoming team of people who support and complement each other's roles

Website: <https://ststephenschurchsteeton.com>

### **St. Stephen's Church family.**

Up to this year we have worshiped in very traditional, historically acceptable ways. We value the deeply spiritual, traditional form of Holy communion, and the shared fellowship with like minded church family members.

However, we believe we must open our doors and spread the word of God to all people. People whose busy lifestyle allows little or no time to contemplate the meaning of life or life after death, people who understand the meaning of love but not the love of God. This means finding ways of reaching out to people, which for us is a move into the unknown, future Growth through new styles of worship, and new services, additional to the services we value.

We need help and leadership to achieve this.

We are committed in spreading the word of God and his love for all people, and the way we promoted this previously can be seen in the following information in our "Church and its People" and "the Church and the Community".

## The Church and its People

St Stephen's is a warm, welcoming, inclusive church, with a kind and generous congregation, especially in the service of others they see in need. We care for one another. We have a pastoral team who visit members of the congregation if they are sick. We pride ourselves on being open to all.

Our services are best described as central, traditional (vestments are worn). We have a Licensed Lay Minister, two Church Wardens, and a Deputy Warden, and PCC Secretary. As well as a Treasurer, we have a 'Treasury Team', and a paid bookkeeper and accountant who deal with our finances. Members of the PCC take on a number of different roles. We work well together as a team. We have two retired Priests who attend St Stephen's and generously give of their time to help the church. Many members of the congregation take part as readers, intercessors, welcomers, coffee makers, servers, grass cutters and in the church choir and children's team.

We have fifty (50) people on the electoral roll, Thirty eight (38) from the parish and twelve (12) from outside the parish. Our congregation is predominantly from working/middle class backgrounds.

Eucharist is celebrated each Sunday morning, occasionally altered for special services. We average 35 communicants on a Sunday morning and 8-10 on a Wednesday. We have special seasonal services throughout the year suitable for all ages. At the back of church there is a play area for children and on the second and fourth Sundays of the month a Pop-up Sunday Club, led by a member of the 'Children's Team', who takes the children with a parent into the hall during part of the service. Young people are encouraged to take part in the service by reading and processing with the bread.

A Celtic Prayer service is held on Monday evenings in church. A mid-week service of Holy Communion, using the Book of Common Prayer, is held on Wednesday mornings



Two of the activities from our 'Harvest Trail'.

Seasonal 'Trails' are held for families which include crafts, games, refreshments and a short time in church for a Bible story and prayer. These average about 12 children plus adults. We would like to provide these more frequently, but we found we could not sustain monthly sessions with the help we have at present.



Group Bible study sessions are held during Advent and Lent, and resources for personal study organised. Different services were introduced by our Lay Minister, helping to develop the spiritual growth of our church.

We joined with our Methodist neighbours to do two Lent Lunches, a joint Remembrance Day Service and 'The World Day of Prayer.' At Christmas time City Valley Church organised a Christmas Card whereby all the churches in Steeton and Eastburn advertised their Christmas services and each church shared in the distribution and payment.

### **The church and the community**

Many members of our church are involved in providing a monthly Lunch Club and a yearly 'Holidays at Home' day for, predominantly, senior citizens. These events are for the community and open to all. We would like to ensure we reach all who would benefit from these events.



Winners at the  
'Strictly Holidays  
at Home' August  
2025.

House building continues apace in our parish, and our challenge is to reach out to new residents of all ages to come and join us in the mission for church growth spiritually and numerically.

People in the community at Steeton still seek support for important life events. Last year there were seven baptisms, no weddings and seven funerals and two ashes internments in the consecrated memorial garden, (which is tended by two ladies from the local community).

The importance of the church to the village was demonstrated by the Village Fun Day organised to celebrate the end of the pandemic restrictions. The church Social and Fundraising Group invited representatives from other village groups together to plan the stalls and events for the day. The event was a great success with each group raising funds for their own needs. The church contributed toilets, Cream Teas, a 'Duck Race' through the village Memorial Garden and 'Hook a Duck' on the village green.

We encourage people to go into church when we hold fund raising events, using it for example, for an exhibition by the local Art Group. We hold special Fun Events for families (or Trails) in the hall and teach children (and parents) about God through activities and a story.



Communion is taken by a member of the congregation to a local Nursing Home, and retired clergy take it to members unable to attend church. Members of the Pastoral Group take cards and flowers to bereaved or poorly members of the congregation. Steeton Primary School holds its Carol Service in church. A monthly Luncheon club and an annual 'Holidays at Home' provides fellowship for the elderly and disabled, sponsored by local businesses and the Parish Council.

We support home and overseas missions and charities with money and goods. We contributed to the Salvation Army Food Bank at Harvest, and each month donated food items to the Inn Churches food bank in Keighley. We supported Martin House, Bradford Soup Run 'Socks and Chocs', and sent children's books to the Women's Refuge at Christmas. We supported the Diocesan link with the Sudan, and we donated to the Children's Society, Mission to Seafarers, and Christian Aid (with a Murder Mystery evening). Our communal Christmas card raised money for '500 miles' to provide prosthetic limbs for Africa.

The church Community Hall is used by an After and Before School group and Holiday club, The women's Institute, a Pilates group, and for children's parties.

Children's photos with parent's permission.

## **The Church and its Finances**

Up to the end of 2021 parish finances were reasonably healthy, with a contingency account established to help smooth cash flow and meet emergency expenditure and we had that year managed to pay the share in full. Though it was noted that with 32% of planned giving, by value, provided by people ages 80 or over there would be challenges ahead.

This has proved to be the case, as over the intervening 4 years we have unfortunately failed to pay the Share in full. Although by the end of 2025, we did in fact pay more than we had originally said we thought we could.

Now following the recent Parish Share Agreement meeting and the three-year adjusted budget agreed, with new families recently joining us and an increase in the number of established congregation members attending each Sunday we are hopeful than we can achieve full payment as we move forward. The Share request for 2026 is £30,000, rising to £33,000 in 2027 and £36,000 in 2028

Funding of the Share and operating expenses is from several income sources, including the planned giving scheme with 31 covenanters providing an average weekly figure of £13.10 (the majority of which is gift aided) the individual sums given spread across a wide range with the challenge of relying on an increasingly aged congregation is still in evidence. Income from church hall lettings reduced as issues meant the kitchen had to be closed for renovation.

As well as the contingency fund, which stands at £12,600 we also have two restricted funds, namely the 'Consecrated Ground Fund' with a balance of £2,000, for use only within the church grounds and the 'Refurbishment Fund' currently around £20,000. Our active and enthusiastic 'Social and Fund-Raising Group' have more fund-raising events in the pipeline, raising funds also for specific projects and external charities, and a small group has been set up to find grants for the future upkeep of our buildings.

Our Church financial position is challenging but then many families are finding times financially challenging. By treasuring our traditions but also moving forward with additional new approaches to our worship, relevant to modern life, there should be Growth through new services involving new people from the wider community, and Christ's following at Steeton should then be able to increase giving.

Whilst truly appreciating the generosity given in so many ways by all members of the congregation, it is good to see the willingness and enthusiasm the new families have, already getting involved and helping to shape the future of the Parish.



Old Steeton

## Steeton Village

The village of Steeton is ancient, predating the ecclesiastical parish by about 1000 years. The Manor, or settlement of Styveton (Stephen's town) is first noted in Saxon times. By the time of the Domesday book in 1086 Steeton and Eastburn had 550 acres of land under cultivation. In Norman and Medieval times, the abbey at Kirkstall and Bolton Priory had granges in the village. For centuries the village relied on a mix of an agrarian economy and home based wool spinning and hand loom weaving. The village did not grow or change much until the Industrial Revolution when several textile mills were established in Steeton and its vicinity. In late Victorian times some wealthy industrialists from nearby Keighley made their homes in Steeton and it was around this time that the church was built, funded by public subscription. The foundation stone of the Church was laid in 1880, and the church was consecrated in 1881. The church, along with the adjacent church hall, is situated in the oldest part of the village. Both buildings are Grade II listed, and the surrounding area is a designated Conservation Area. (John Shearing February 1981)

Steeton grew further in the 1970's when Airedale General Hospital was opened and new housing was built, principally to provide accommodation for hospital staff. Since that time there has been some further pockets of housing development, adding to the former hospital housing. More recently there has been significant housing development. Bradford Council's 2021 estimate of the population of Steeton with Eastburn was 5242 people. About 90% of all village properties are owner occupied with about 5% privately rented and a further 5% Council owned.

The Airedale hospital is by far the biggest local employer within the parish, probably employing far more people than all the other businesses and enterprises combined. There is a small, light industrial estate which occupies part of the site of a former ordnance factory. Here, Acorn Stair Lifts has its headquarters and call centre. Damart has a warehouse and distribution centre, and Grandma Wild's has a bakery. There are a number of smaller businesses and a DVLA driving test centre. In Eastburn there is a hi-tech precision engineering firm, formerly Landis Lund, now known as Fives Landis.

Steeton Hall Hotel is located in what used to be a local mill owner's residence. The village has a cricket club, a football club and a crown green bowling club. There is one pub, The Goat, an ex-servicemen's club and a working men's club known as "The Dock". Within Steeton village there is a Co-op, a pie shop, a newsagent's & convenience shop, several beauticians and hairdressers and a Chinese take away. Eastburn has a grocery store/newsagent's and post office, a pub/restaurant and a fish and chip shop.

There are three nursing homes within the parish, Steeton Court and Currergate in Steeton and Croft House in Eastburn. Steeton also has a private residential hospital, Three Valleys, which is a mental health rehabilitation unit. There is a health centre and pharmacy, and local primary Schools at both Steeton and Eastburn. Secondary education is provided at schools outside the parish.

## St Stephen's Church, Steeton



The foundation stone for the church was laid by the then Vicar of Kildwick, Revd Dr Herbert Todd in February 1880. The church was consecrated by the bishop of Ripon the following year. The adjacent church hall was erected some years later, it was initially envisaged that this would be a school, but a day school already existed in Steeton, so the building has never been used as such, except for Sunday school and a community hall. Both buildings are currently Grade II listed and lie within the Steeton Village Conservation Area.

The buildings are located in a picturesque setting, surrounded by lawns, gardens and mature trees. The upkeep of the grounds and buildings is overseen by a small group of volunteers. The PCC tries to ensure that small issues are dealt with promptly so that they do not become larger problems. This way, the buildings are maintained and kept in good order. Both buildings have disabled access and twenty four hour CCTV monitoring & recording facilities. The church has an audio loop and both fixed and portable PA systems.

The church has had the Chancel, Vestry, and Lady Chapel re-roofed (Oct-Nov 2017) and there are plans to re-roof the nave as soon as the funding and grants become available. More recently water ingress in the tower was rectified and the organ restored. The church is not only used for regular worship and services but occasionally for exhibitions, festivals, and concerts.

## The Church Community Hall



There are two halls, toilet and kitchen areas, and former classrooms which provide office space and storage. The toilets accommodate disabled facilities. The kitchen is currently being upgraded.

It is used for church and community social events and meetings, including Women's Institute, Pilates classes, and children's parties at weekends. A local nursery runs a 'Before and After school' facility in term time, and childcare in school holidays.

## The Vicarage



The Vicarage is located about 400 yards from the church on the private housing estate which was primarily built for hospital staff. It is a four bedroom detached house. The former integral garage was converted into a study when the property first became a Vicarage in the 1970's. It has a spacious lounge, separate dining room, modern kitchen and utility room plus downstairs cloaks and washroom off the entrance hall. Outside there are gardens to three sides of the property. The tarmac driveway can accommodate 3-4 vehicles. The building is maintained in good repair by the Diocese.

## **Terms of Appointment and Accommodation**

This is a part-time interim post, 3 days plus Sundays (initially for 3 years) under Common Tenure.

Provision of the house includes water rates and Council Tax. All expenses are paid. Removal costs and a resettlement grant are available.

The appointment is subject to a satisfactory Enhanced Disclosure from the DBS. There are six weeks holiday per annum plus Bank Holidays (or time in lieu) pro rata

Participation in an annual Ministerial Development Review and in-service training is required, and an annual retreat is strongly encouraged

## **Is God calling you to this post?**

To arrange a visit or conversation, contact:

Archdeacon of Bradford, Ven Dr Andy Jolley,  
[andy.jolley@leeds.anglican.org](mailto:andy.jolley@leeds.anglican.org)  
07973 458403

or Carmel Dylak:  
[carmel.dylak@leeds.anglican.org](mailto:carmel.dylak@leeds.anglican.org)  
0113 353 0290

or Parish Representative:  
Mrs. Lynda Corser  
[Lyndacorser58@gmail.com](mailto:Lyndacorser58@gmail.com)  
01535 678698

To apply for this post please go to <https://www.leeds.anglican.org/vacancies> and follow the link to Pathways.

## **Barnabas: Encouraging Confidence**

The Diocese of Leeds is committed to building **confident Christians** who are part of **growing churches** and helping to **transform communities**.

As followers of Jesus, we are called to **share the Good News**, serve others and make a positive difference in our communities. To help us do this, we need to be **confident** in our faith, in our churches and in the future.

Over the next 10 years, we are focusing on four key areas:

- **Confidence in our Mission** – Helping churches understand their purpose and make the best use of their buildings, time, and resources.
- **Confidence in our Future** – Ensuring the diocese remains sustainable, effective, and well-prepared for the years ahead.
- **Confidence in our Leadership** – Supporting and equipping everyone who serves in our churches.
- **Confidence in our Witness** – Encouraging and empowering people to share the Good News of Jesus, especially with children and young people.

These **four pillars will guide everything we do from Church House**, helping us work together and support the diocese more effectively.

### **What is Barnabas: Encouraging Confidence?**

Barnabas: Encouraging Confidence is a strategy designed to **support churches in their mission**.

Diocesan teams (and we hope Churches across the diocese) are focused on ensuring their work supports increasing confidence in the 4 areas of mission, future, leadership and witness.

It goes even further through seeking and using additional funding from the national church to provide resources and targeted initiatives which can help churches to **grow, adapt, and thrive**. A dedicated **Barnabas Programme** team will oversee this, working with wider diocesan teams to ensure we get alongside parishes, offering guidance and practical support.

The name **Barnabas** is inspired by the early church leader who encouraged and strengthened others in their faith. In the same way, this strategy aims to **build up** and **equip** churches so they can

move forward with confidence.

As we step forward, we do so with a shared commitment to seeing our churches and communities flourish.