

EVANGELISM LEAD-CHURCH WIGAN & TEAM VICAR

based in the Parish of Wigan East
(Chapelfields)

JOIN THE TEAM. PREACH THE GOSPEL. MAKE A BIG DIFFERENCE.

Here in Wigan we are praying for a new colleague to strengthen our team, who loves to introduce people to Jesus and rejoices in equipping others for ministry.

God is already wonderfully at work. For the last ten years he has taken us on a journey of transformation, helping thirty diverse and formerly disparate parishes to grow in unity and work together in new ways that have presented many openings for sharing the gospel. In particular, our social justice activities and work with schools has created a large and growing fringe of people who are ready to listen.

Therefore we want to appoint to the team a priest who is an evangelist. We want someone whose passion will keep pushing us outward, embedding a culture of evangelism and nurturing new evangelists and leaders.

The new team member will exercise pastoral responsibility in the Parish of Wigan East (Chapelfields), becoming part of the family of faith there. Thus the role offers opportunities to make a big impact locally and on a pan-Wigan level.



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do you seek...

to see more
people come
to Jesus?

a diverse and
creative
leadership
role?

to be part of a real
team?

to raise up
new leaders
and evangelists?

Church 
WIGAN

THE ROLE

This is a highly connected clergy role that will have an important impact on several levels.

You will be a senior figure in the Wigan clergy team that shares the prayer, discernment and planning of the whole mission to Wigan, and which provides peer support and spiritual formation. At the same time, you will be a crucial part of the excellent parish team in Wigan East, locally known as Chapelfields, working closely with local clergy colleagues, Hub Leadership Team and other lay leaders.

EVANGELISM LEAD

- Work with the Team Rector and team to lead the development of a culture of evangelism throughout Church Wigan.
- Work with hubs and Wigan Next Gen Team to help them grow in evangelism and develop confidence for proclaiming the gospel in all their activities.
- Model evangelism and personally lead evangelistic events and activities such as Alpha.
- Mentor new evangelists.

PARISH

- Rooted in Chapelfields, work closely with the Hub Leader, clergy colleagues and HLT to embed the new culture of missional discipleship and unity.
- Offer local priestly ministry to congregations and parishioners, including leading worship/preaching, officiating at occasional offices and providing good pastoral care.
- As the parish moves towards focal ministry, you will support two worshipping communities more closely, guiding and encouraging their local lay leadership teams, mentoring key members, being present at community activities, and being first point of call for pastoral issues. It's about real local connection.

This role is not so much a split role as it is a chance for an evangelistic clergy leader to exercise their gift fruitfully as part of their activities at pan-Wigan and local level.

This is a key leadership role, with an impact on a Wigan-wide and local level.



THE PERSON

WHO YOU ARE

Above all, you will be someone who is called to Wigan, who will delight to see its people become disciples of Jesus and its places blossom and flourish.

No one is perfect and we don't seek a super-priest. Yet others will notice your real and resilient faith and be encouraged by it. Because you pray often and seek to walk humbly in the Holy Spirit, you will be known for bringing wisdom and creativity to complex situations.

You will be able to thrive in the uncertainty of change, with an ability to lead in different contexts, adapting your leadership style to different groups of people. For others to follow you on the often rocky path of transformation, they will need to know that you love them. Courage will be important as you help people face change.

You will rejoice at being part of team - in work, prayer and fellowship. You will be a spiritual investor, discerning the potential in others and equipping them to grow. Here we talk of delighting to see 'my fruit grow on others trees' - that is, our hard work is celebrated primarily in the lives and good deeds of others.

And of course you'll be an evangelist longing to see the people of Wigan, young and old, turn to Christ. More than this, you'll seek to raise up new evangelists to carry on the work you've started.

Go out and train everyone you meet, far and near, in the way of life, marking them by baptism in the threefold name: Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Matthew 28.19 MSG



THE PERSON

PERSON SPECIFICATION	ESSENTIAL	DESIRABLE
Theological	<p>'Seeks first the kingdom and its righteousness' with a commitment to see the people and places of Wigan transformed, as well as the church.</p> <p>Broad-based theological understanding, willing to release the whole people of God in a mixed ecology of church.</p>	<p>Experience of serving church communities with a variety of ecclesial traditions.</p>
Spiritual & Personal Qualities	<p>An evangelist with a generous faith in Jesus nourished by prayer, scripture and worship.</p> <p>Team player who works with others to find wisdom, resilience and ways to overcome challenges.</p>	<p>Experience of leading evangelistic activities.</p> <p>Calm, reassuring presence in the midst of change with experience of handling disputes and conflict with grace, sensitivity and firmness.</p>
Vision & Leadership	<p>Proven relational leader who engages with people and builds trust with clear communication.</p> <p>Flexible thinker with a history of seeing opportunity and creating new community.</p> <p>Enabler who loves to release people into their calling and is committed to growing teams and leaders.</p>	<p>Has worked in a team context.</p> <p>Has some experience of animating new culture in an organisation.</p>
Knowledge & Skills	<p>Prioritises the important in a tempest of urgent demands.</p> <p>Devolves responsibility & delegates tasks yet maintains accountability.</p> <p>Is aware of financial issues and procedures</p> <p>Has profound grasp of safeguarding.</p>	<p>Has experience of leading teams.</p>

THE WIDER CONTEXT : CHURCH WIGAN

WHAT IS CHURCH WIGAN?

Church Wigan serves 200,000 people in Wigan and its surrounding towns and villages in East Lancashire. It is part of the Diocese of Liverpool and embodies its *Fit for Mission* priorities to introduce people to Jesus, deepen discipleship, grow leaders and work for justice.

Church Wigan was established in January 2020, bringing together 29 former parishes, with 2,200 members and 50+ buildings, into a single team ministry with seven parishes in a ground-breaking new 'hub' structure. The restructure reflected the growing relational unity and cooperation among formerly disconnected congregations, helping us share resources more easily. Of greater significance than the structural shift is the emerging culture of discipleship and mission which has produced a mixed ecology of church (currently 31 established congregations, 20 new worshipping communities and 30 mission initiatives).

Our shared vision is more than restoring the church; it is about seeing the people and places of Wigan rejoice and blossom in the grace of God (Isaiah 35 is a foundational inspiration for us). This can be seen in our 'Lifted' network of social justice ministries, such as our eight pantries (food clubs), warm spaces and CAP debt centre, as well as our chaplaincies and partnerships with many schools. There is a fringe of over 3000 people open to prayer and hearing the gospel.

There has been some misleading criticism from sources with no experience of what is happening in Church Wigan, and we're certainly not perfect: we've had to do a lot of learning on our journey together. Yet, the facts remain: national church statistics for mission reveal that Liverpool is one of only three dioceses to return to pre-pandemic levels of attendance and engagement, and that the greatest growth has been in Wigan.

“ VISION

Through Jesus
transformed people, transformed places.

This is what we
see God doing

The desert and the parched
land will be glad;
the wilderness will
rejoice and blossom.
Like the crocus, it will
burst into bloom;
it will rejoice greatly and
shout for joy.
...they will see the glory of
the Lord, the splendour of
our God.

Isaiah 35.1-2

[Core scripture
influencing our vision]



THE WIDER CONTEXT : CHURCH WIGAN

HOW WE DO THINGS: HUBS & PORTFOLIOS

We are clear about our purpose: to participate with God to grow authentic disciples of Jesus. This is done in diverse worshipping communities, some very traditional while others are fresh expressions, with a growing network of small groups. These are organised in seven parishes which act as *hubs* where new relationships are forged and ideas and resources shared across old parish boundaries.

In addition to geographic parish hubs, *portfolios* connect people with similar passions and ministries on a pan-Wigan level. They act as learning communities and have proved decisive in enabling the spread of fruitful mission. Some examples include 'Growing Teams', 'House of Prayer', 'Wigan Next Generation' and 'Children Schools & Families.'

THE IMPORTANCE OF TEAM

An important discovery we have made is that leadership is always plural. At every level we seek to do things as teams, not individuals. We speak less of leader development and more of growing teams of leaders.

This is modelled intentionally among Wigan clergy. Led by the Team Rector, ca. 20 team vicars, self supporting ministers and curates are licensed to one benefice-wide team. They are team in more than name only: they pray together, discern the mission and work out strategy together, socialise and support each other pastorally and as a chapter receive regular spiritual formation and retreat together. It's one of the main reasons clergy love ministry in Wigan, even when the work is tough.

Recently the Wigan Next Generation Team and lay leaders have joined the regular clergy team meetings, bringing a new voice to our prayer and discernment. It's yet another example of, as we say in Wigan, 'building the we.'

“MISSION

We join in with what God is doing
to make disciples of Jesus
among all the people of Wigan.

This is what we do
to see the vision
fulfilled

Many diverse
worshipping
communities

held relationally and
structurally in

7 parish hubs

part of

1 Church Wigan



THE LOCAL CONTEXT : THE PARISH OF CHAPELFIELDS

ABOUT THE PARISH

Wigan East – commonly referred to as Chapelfields – is the largest of the parish hubs in Church Wigan with a population of 38,000. The population is growing, with the most sustained housing growth in the Borough of Wigan. Platt Bridge and Hindley are the two focal town centres, but there are seven distinct communities – estates, towns and villages – each with a local sense of identity, and some lying at the very edge of the borough and diocese.

These communities are served by Chapelfields' five churches. Two further church buildings are in the process of being closed - a painful but necessary decision to help us sustain a joyful, realistic and growing ministry. There are seven closely-linked church primary schools, as well as good relationships with non-church primary schools and Outwood Academy Hindley.

Church Wigan's goal of empowering the marginalised resonates strongly in Chapelfields. St Nathaniel's Platt Bridge offers the well-used Food Pantry and is used as a community hub in times of crisis, such as recent flooding. Relationships with Wigan Council and other organisations are strong, and the parish leads the development of our outreach to families through schools. Given the diversity of ministry here - a town centre church, estate ministry, prison, partnership with a pub and a peace garden to name but a few - there's lots of opportunities for creative mission and evangelism.



A strong and growing unity exists in Chapelfields. An excellent hub leadership team, led by the hub leader (a team vicar), supported by two energetic retired priests, plus motivated local congregational leadership teams, are working together to explore how to refresh parish life and release new mission to grow new disciples of Christ.

As the new team vicar, you will join this team, strengthening its capacity in evangelism, leadership and pastoral ministry.

Chapelfields offers
**diversity,
challenge
and great
opportunity.**

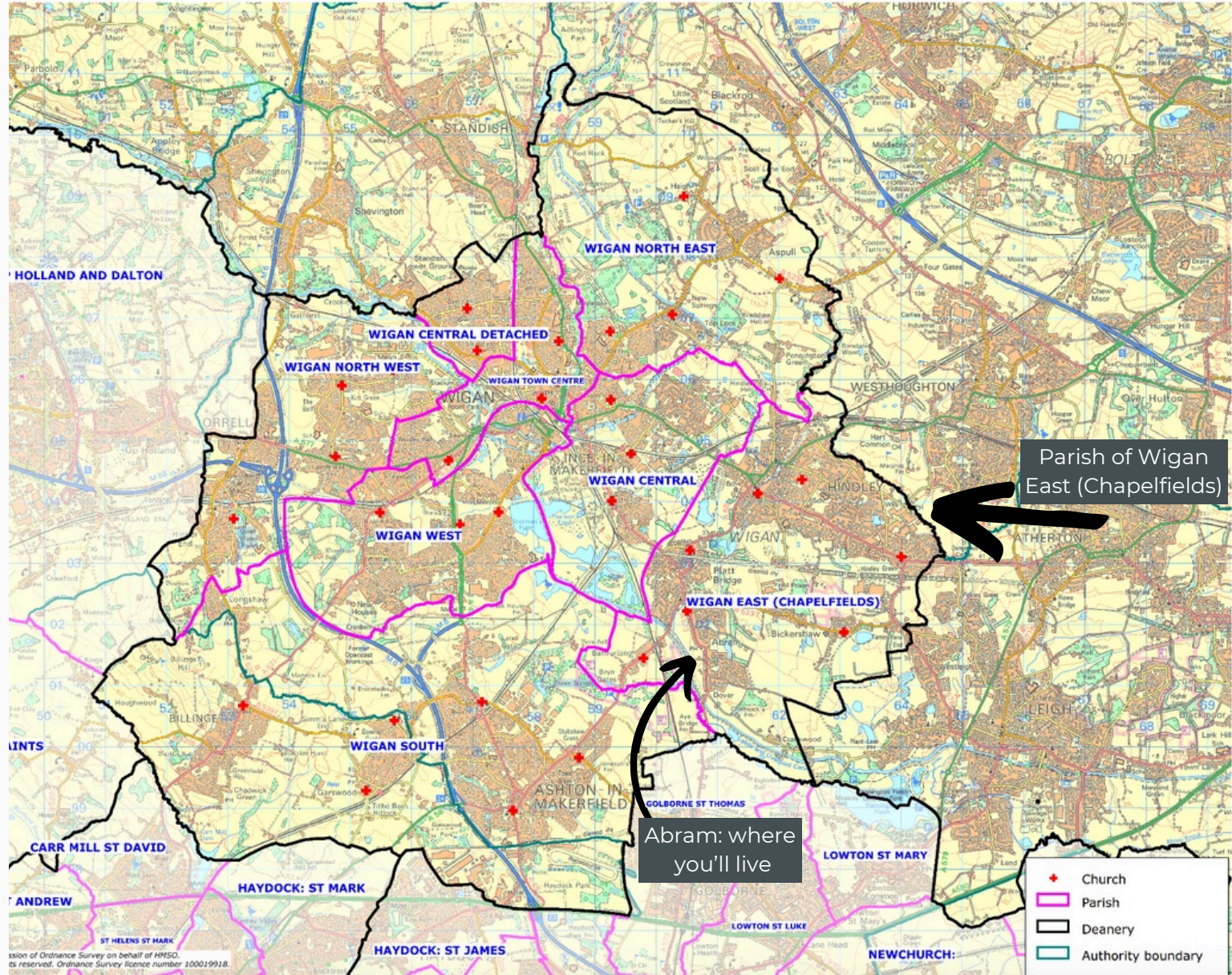


Your clergy colleagues in Chapelfields: Rev Dot Gosling, Hub Leader (r), Rev Steve Clarke and Rev Carol Close (inset).

THE LOCAL CONTEXT : THE PARISH OF CHAPELFIELDS

Wigan Deanery Map

February 2022



WHERE YOU'LL LIVE

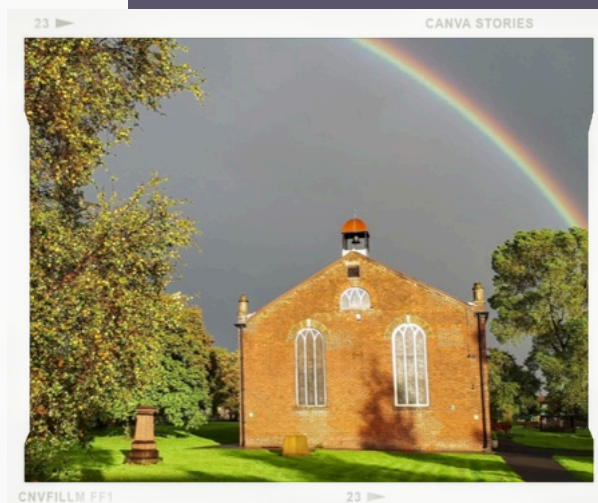
St John's vicarage is modern and situated in the former mining village of Abram, close to the town centre of Platt Bridge and a short drive to Hindley with its shops, restaurants and fast train routes to Manchester and Liverpool. Abram offers a very good church primary school and high schools are within easy reach. Close to the house is the lovely Leeds-Liverpool Canal, offering great walking and cycling.



CHAPELFIELDS : OUR PARISH CHURCHES

ALL SAINTS HINDLEY

is the historic mother church in the Hindley area dating back to 1641. It is traditional in its churchmanship, offering a warm welcome to everyone, and has both an open and closed graveyard. The church is situated in the middle of a deprived housing estate and across from The Banner pub with whom we have started working with as part of our outreach and mission programme. All Saints has great links with the schools in our area and with two Brownie and one Beaver/Scout group. There is a small meeting room attached to the church with a fully functioning kitchen.



ST PETER HINDLEY

is situated at the cross roads on the edge of the busy town centre of Hindley. Its style is traditional with a growing congregation and children's ministry. It has links with school and youth organisations, and the spiritual and prayer life of the church is being re-energised. A team oversees the day-to-day running of the church and its activities. Mission and outreach play a role in church life and new ideas are being embraced. Given its prominent situation, it is a popular venue for baptisms and weddings. There's a meeting room with toilets and Garden of Remembrance. There are links to the nearby St Peter's Pavilion.



ST JOHN HINDLEY GREEN

is an active worshipping community right on the edge of the deanery and diocese. As well as seven youth organisations there are adult fellowship groups endeavouring to bring a larger number of people to know Jesus. There are close links with the local primary schools and the children are welcomed into church several times a term. There is a willingness to forge ever-greater unity with all the worshipping communities within Chapelfields and across Church Wigan.



CHAPELFIELDS : OUR PARISH CHURCHES

ST NATHANIEL PLATT BRIDGE

is the parish church of Platt Bridge, one of Wigan's town centres. Its heart for mission to its community is centred on its Food Pantry held weekly in the hall at the back of church. It enjoys good links with the local church primary school, whose parents connect with the pantry, and the relationship with the local community school is growing. It also hosts the Next Gen Games & Community Night gathering young people. A warm and friendly welcome will always be given here.



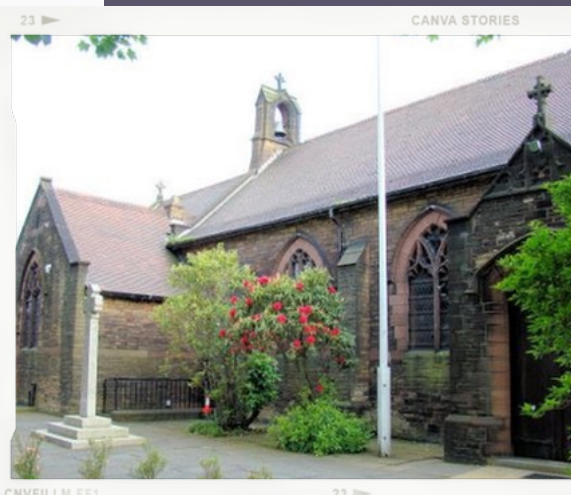
ST JOHN ABRAM

is a traditional church in a former mining village close to Platt Bridge. It has an excellent relationship with St Johns CE primary school, hosting services throughout the year, and has an openness to new ideas and a strong desire to reach young families. They are served faithfully by a retired priest and Lay Reader. There is a growing work happening among families with the provision of children's actives during the Sunday service, and a community breakfast takes place every Wednesday.



THE GOOD SHEPHERD BAMFURLONG and ST JAMES & ST ELIZABETH BICKERSHAW

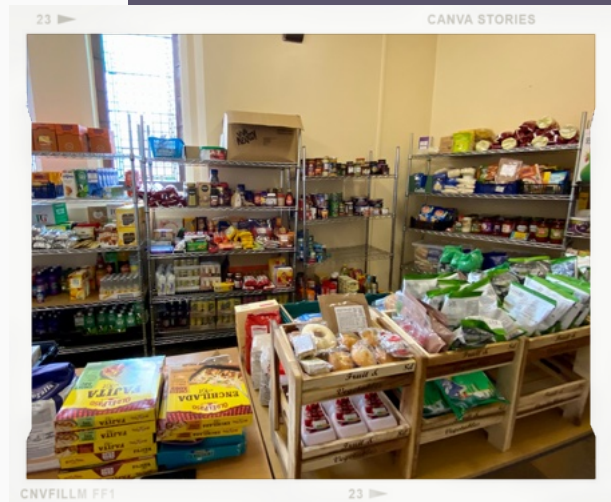
are two smaller churches serving villages near to Platt Bridge which are currently in the process of being closed for Anglican worship. The PCC is partnering with an independent church to use one of the buildings, bringing renewed spiritual energy to the local community. It is hopeful that a similarly useful 'resurrection life' can be found for the other building as well. In the meantime, we are working with the congregations to work out what follows for them.



CHAPELFIELDS : SOME IMPORTANT MISSION INITIATIVES

THE PANTRY AT ST NATHANIEL'S

is a much needed resource for Platt Bridge and its surrounding communities. It is run by volunteers from across the hub, opening once a week. Its 500 members benefit from the pantry's money-saving social shopping model and enjoy new friendships made at the associated warm space. It offers a useful centre for partners such as local councillors and service providers to connect with residents to discuss needs and resources, and gives schools and churches in the parish a good cause to which they can actively contribute with food and voluntary service. As such, the Pantry is a major missional opportunity.



CHILDREN, SCHOOLS & FAMILIES

is led by a small team in Chapelfields, including the portfolio leader for Children, Schools & Families in Church Wigan, and offers huge potential for mission. The purpose is to reimagine how church, schools and families can work together to build faith and promote healthy, life-giving relationships between children, adults and schools and churches. Chapelfields works with all 11 church and community primary schools situated in the parish, and each of these value the relationship highly. Our portfolio leader convenes a regular meeting of school RE coordinators to explore how we can work collaboratively on schemes such as the 'Growing Faith Adventure'. Additionally, the team has run Experience Easter/ Christmas, Prayer Spaces, and has written a resource for reception children who come into church, often for the first time; parents, teachers and children alike say how amazing they find it. The team has a new partnership with national charity *Transforming Lives for Good* (TLG) which provides mentors for children at risk of permanent exclusion from education. This has started in one school and all the others are wanting to be part of the programme.



CHAPELFIELDS : SOME IMPORTANT MISSION INITIATIVES

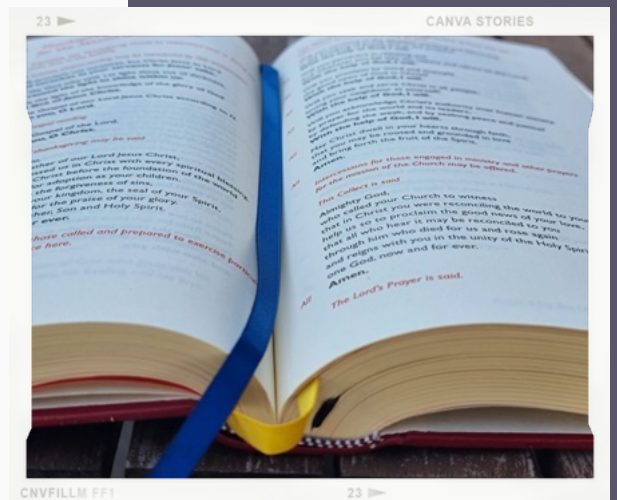
COME+SEE

is a new community based in St Nathaniel's established as part of the Wigan Next Generation ministry. Tailored to the needs of young people, it focuses on gathering them around board games and community activities, and connects with the monthly Next Gen worship night. We are currently discerning how to develop Come+See as a number of leaders move on to new fields of ministry.



PAUSE TO PRAY

is the hub fellowship/ small group that meets weekly where members have studied prayer and bible courses, or have dedicated time to exploring creative ways of praying. It has become a vital focus of hub life (nobody likes missing it!) where relationships across the hub are built and nurtured and a growing sense of unity is seen.



HMP HINDLEY

is a prison and young offender institution for men aged 18 and over situated in the parish in Bickershaw. The prison chaplaincy team includes an Anglican priest, and clergy and lay people from Church Wigan regularly get involved. We are currently exploring the possibility of running Prison Alpha with help from wider Church Wigan..



CONTACT

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Visit the
Church Wigan
website

