



Fountains Church Bradford

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Vacancy Brochure

Leader of Fountains Church Bradford Bishop's Statement

Our Diocesan vision is about confident clergy equipping confident Christians to live and tell the good news of Jesus Christ. For all our appointments we seek clergy who have a joyful and confident faith which has inspired a track record of church growth. Here, we are looking for a leader who can take Fountains Church Bradford into the next stage of its young life, continuing its pioneering role as a city centre resource church in, of and for Bradford.

The new leader will need to operate on a city-wide stage, working with the Bishop and Archdeacon of Bradford as well as the other leaders of Fountains to continue realising the vision set for the church since its inception. (S)he will therefore be an experienced and strategic leader of leaders, who can enable each person and each worshipping community to play their part in such a way that the overall team is much greater than the sum of its parts. (S)he will also be comfortable with the governance and accountability demands related to a church of this size and complexity.

The Bishop's Mission Order and associated CIO for Fountains Church Bradford were set up in May 2019. Initial Strategic Development Funding (SDF) for the church of £3,116,623 was awarded in November 2018, split approximately 50:50 between money to refurbish premises and funds for salaries, stipends and running costs. The identified property was a large building (c30,000 sq. ft.) of modern construction located in Bradford city centre. It had been built in 2002 as night clubs, comprising main units on 4 levels and a separate kiosk. The church was launched in September 2019, with the hope and expectation that it would subsequently plant or revitalise other churches every 2-3 years. However, the intention was not simply for Fountains to grow and plant, but to raise the spiritual temperature of Bradford as a whole.

The key stated goals in the initial SDF bid were that by the end in 2024 there would be:

- Worship and prayer 7 days a week and a worshipping community of at least 500;
- One plant or revitalisation fully established and a second started;
- Multiple, successful social enterprises, engaging with a widening fringe of people;
- Fully covered operating costs, including Share paid to the Diocese, and surplus being generated to allow the purchase of the building lease;
- Good reputation with the district council, police, civic, business, faith and education leaders.

The pandemic had a significant impact on the type of growth the young church experienced, which was primarily among more marginalised communities who were accessible at that time. It also caused significant cost increases for the planned refurbishment works of the church building. Hence, in 2022 a new bid, named “Mountains into Roads”, unlocked a further £3 million in SDF, of which £2,196,538 was for building works to refurbish the rest of the property. These were successfully completed in September 2024. The remaining monies enabled the funding window for staff and running costs to run two years longer to the end of 2026. The goals for Fountains and its network churches were updated for this bid, and the end date moved to 2027. These included a further 4 new plants or revitalisations (now reached), increased numbers of worshippers and new disciples (currently behind target), new lay leaders (already surpassed) and ordination candidates (on track). Fountains has therefore made good progress against its agreed SDF objectives, although at a slower pace than had been envisaged in 2018. Hence, the last annual review for the SDF reporting was Amber/Green. The Bishop’s Mission Order was unconditionally renewed in 2024. The church is developing a good track record in supporting church revitalisation and starting new worshipping communities, not least Saturday Gathering and Wrestling Church. It has a strong leadership team, comprising ordained and paid staff as well as mature and experienced lay people. In particular, the church is blessed with several very gifted worship leaders in its Sunday afternoon congregation.

Fountains has continued access to Church Commissioners’ SDF this year and next year to support its planting and revitalisation work in the city. This funding is providing a contribution to the employment costs of the Operation Manager, three Mission Apprentices, and a Creative Director role, as well as covering rent payments to the Diocese of Leeds. In return, Fountains is committed to support church planting and revitalisation within the Bradford Episcopal Area, sharing resources generously with other churches and sending people graciously to revitalise and plant churches. Income from congregational giving, as well as rental and event income from the building, are enabling positive growth towards financial sustainability, but these income streams need to keep growing for that aim to be achieved.

The main missional challenge for the next leader of this young church is to enable renewed growth in the Sunday afternoon congregation, both numerical and also in corporate missional discipleship, so the church can inhabit more fully its role as a Resource Church. Alongside this, working with a Business and Operations Director, is the financial challenge of ensuring adequate sustainable income streams to resource the church's mission and ministry. Hence, I see the following goals for the new Leader:

- To refresh the church's strategy, building from its original vision and progress to date, ensuring the vision, values and strategy are widely understood and owned by individuals and groups from the different congregations as well as wider stakeholders;
- To strengthen and enlarge the church's core membership, setting a culture of strong corporate and personal discipleship in the church, and to continue to identify, encourage and develop new lay leaders and potential ordinands;
- To lead and manage the staff team, ensuring it is cohesive and mutually supportive with shared vision and values, and each member can play to their respective strengths.
- To consolidate and continue the church's mission, outreach and church planting work (in particular through the Fountains Network Churches in Frizinghall and Shelf with Buttershaw) so that the gospel is shared with more of Bradford;
- As current SDF support ends, to work closely and collaboratively with the person appointed as the church's Business and Operations Director to ensure ongoing financial sustainability for Fountains CIO and to ensure mission initiatives are focused ("do less, and do it better") on agreed priorities, such as:
 - o mission and ministry in and from the City Centre;
 - o growing missional capacity, particularly with the 4:30 pm congregation;
 - o work with children, youth and families.

Most of the parishes of the Deanery of Inner Bradford are experimenting with mixing new approaches to worship and mission alongside inherited patterns. The new post-holder will therefore find a group of entrepreneurial, creative and supportive colleagues in the Deanery chapter, all of whom will be familiar with the joys and challenges that each other faces. We expect the new post holder to work with a spirit of generosity in sharing wisdom and insights about ministry within the Deanery of Inner Bradford, and across the Episcopal Area.

+Toby Bradford,
19 July 2026

Our History

Fountains Church was planted in 2019 following significant investment from the Strategic Development Fund of the Church of England and the Diocese of Leeds. This enabled the purchase and transformation of 33,000 square feet of former nightclub premises into a purpose-built church building, alongside the formation of a staff team to support the growth of the new church. The full building renovation was completed in 2024.

Our building sits in the heart of Bradford city centre, nestled between the Alhambra Theatre and the National Science and Media Museum, close to City Park and the iconic fountains from which we take our name. Our mission is to worship God, belong together, and bless Bradford, living this out in ways that are authentically in, of, and for the city.

Our Worshipping Life Together

Our First Congregation – Sunday 4.30pm

Our first congregation began life in 2019 in a nomadic way. Meeting at 4.30pm on Sunday afternoons, the congregation journeyed between a social hall, another church building, a pub function room, and outdoor gatherings before finally moving into the building. This congregation is lively and diverse, reflecting the make-up of Bradford, with people from a wide range of cultures, backgrounds, and ages, and a generally younger profile than an average parish church. Sung worship is led by a live band, teaching is rooted in Scripture and applied to everyday life, and there is a deep commitment to being a church that is in, of, and for Bradford.

Children's Church runs alongside for three Sundays of the month. Little Springs gathers our 18 months to 4-year-olds, Waterfalls our 5-10's and a youth group meet for our 11-16's.

On the first Sunday of each month, the 4.30pm service is a whole church gathering. Following a shared family meal at 6pm, a New Wine celebration takes place at 7.00pm, with extended times of sung worship, a visiting guest speaker, and opportunities for prayer ministry.

A BSL-interpreted service is offered once a month alongside our communion service, reflecting our commitment to accessibility and inclusion, and a growing deaf community is forming within Fountains.

The congregation is supported by small groups meeting across the city, led by committed leaders who provide strong pastoral care.



Other Worshipping Communities

WRESTLING CHURCH

Wrestling Church grew out of the lives of professional wrestlers within the congregation. What began as an evangelistic outreach has developed into a worshipping community where many people who would never normally enter a church have encountered the good news of Jesus. Numerous baptisms and confirmations have taken place through this community.

DAILY PRAYER

Prayer is foundational at Fountains. Daily prayer takes place Monday to Friday at 9am, led by staff and joined by members of the congregation and our network churches.

SATURDAY GATHERING

Saturday Gathering meets on Saturday evenings and is shaped for those on the margins of society who would not normally come to church. Many live in poor quality accommodation around the city, some have experience of homelessness, and lives are often marked by addiction, depression, isolation, or ongoing chaos. Meeting around food and simple worship, this community offers dignity, belonging, and safety, with gentle and relational pathways into discipleship.



Community Meals and Pathways Deeper

Food is central to life at Fountains, and we are known for generous hospitality. We are supported by a full-time chef, and our twice-weekly community meals are a key part of our mission and discipleship pathways not an end in themselves; they are intentional gateways into deeper connection, conversation, and discipleship.

Tuesday Community Meal → Wellspring Café

The Tuesday Community Meal leads into Wellspring Café, a gentle, reflective space offering calm, conversation, prayer, and a short, accessible act of worship. Wellspring provides a non-threatening environment where people can pause, reflect, and encounter God. It has become a place where trust is built, faith questions emerge naturally, and people begin to explore what following Jesus might look like for them.

Thursday Community Meal → Margins Bible Study

The Thursday Community Meal flows into a Bible study specifically designed for people on the margins. This group creates space for Scripture to be explored honestly, slowly, and relationally, recognising the lived experiences of those present. For many, this is their first sustained engagement with the Bible and often becomes a significant step in their faith journey.

Small Groups and regular courses such as Alpha are essential ways that we continue to support people as they explore faith, develop relationships with others, and grow in their discipleship journey.





Children and Families:

Stay and Play → Stepping Stones

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Our Stay and Play group welcomes families with young children, offering a warm and supportive environment rooted in hospitality and care.

As children move on to nursery or school, families are invited into Stepping Stones, where space is intentionally kept for them to continue gathering. While children still play together, the emphasis gradually shifts towards relationship-building with parents and carers, creating opportunities to share stories, pray, and talk openly about Jesus.

Over time, it is hoped that Stepping Stones will grow into a worshipping community in its own right.

Emerging Opportunities

Myriad Hub

This year we have launched a Myriad Hub, which is a significant step in our commitment to developing new worshipping communities both within Fountains and across the Bradford area.

The Hub will train, support, and encourage leaders to plant new communities in line with the Church of England strategy to see many new worshipping communities formed, particularly among those currently unreached by traditional church.

Bradford College

We are building relationships with Bradford College, with an invitation to explore the creation of a Christian Union. This reflects our heart to support students spiritually, pastorally, and missionally during a formative season of life.

Small Groups and Pastoral Care

Small groups are central to life at Fountains Church and play a vital role in discipleship, belonging, and pastoral care. Groups meet across the city in people's homes and reflect the diversity of our worshipping communities. Each group is led by a committed and trained leader (often with a co-leader), supported by the wider staff team. Leaders are encouraged to hold both Scripture and people well, creating spaces where the Bible is taken seriously, prayer is normal, and real life can be shared honestly.

Small groups are places where:

- faith is deepened through regular engagement with the Bible
- prayer and worship are practiced in accessible ways
- pastoral needs are noticed early and responded to thoughtfully
- people are encouraged to grow in confidence, service, and leadership

Groups take different shapes — discussion-based, pastoral, or exploratory — but all are connected into the wider life and vision of Fountains. We see small groups as one of the primary ways people move from attendance to belonging, and from belonging into mature discipleship.





Church Life

We value time together beyond Sundays and regularly gather for weekends away, including recent trips to Wydale Hall near Scarborough and Langdale YHA. These times deepen relationships and shared vision.

We also enjoy a regular church family walk, exploring the local countryside together, alongside men's breakfasts and women's groups, creating varied spaces for fellowship, faith-sharing, and mutual support.

Our Staff Team

Our staff team includes ordained leaders; a curate in her final year and two associate vicars who serve part-time at Fountains and part-time in the network churches. We are supported by an Operations Manager and Assistant, Events Coordinator, Chef, Tech support, and two Mission Apprentices.

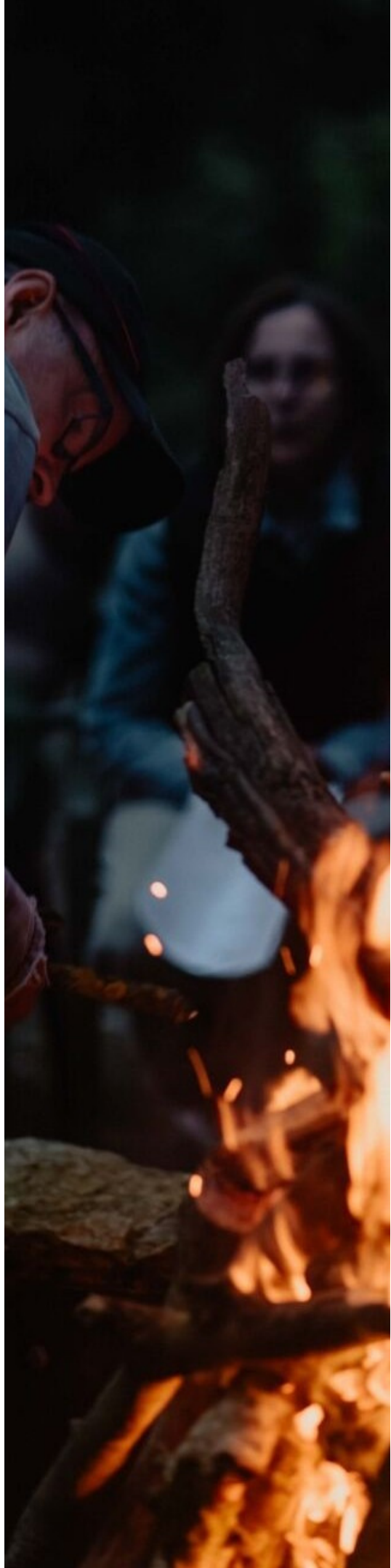
We work hard, laugh often, and lead with grace

<https://fcb.church/our-team>



Network Churches

Fountains is networked with St Margaret's Frizinghall and St Michael's Shelf. We partnered first with St. Margaret's and the Revd Leah Leighton shares her time between St. Margaret's and Fountains. The second network is St. Michael's Shelf with St. Aidan's Buttershaw, with Revd Chris Enwerem also shared with Fountains. The relationship is built on the churches' mutual support and a shared sense of mission to our communities, enabling the growth and flourishing of all churches through shared prayer, leadership and learning.



Our Strategy and Governance

As a resource church, we are committed to resourcing the growth of God's Kingdom across Bradford and working collaboratively with the Bishop and Archdeacon of Bradford, along with other clergy and church leaders across the city. A key part of our strategy is growing leaders, both within and beyond the church, with around 44 people currently being developed and several exploring ordination.

This year marks a significant reduction in national church funding, making congregational giving and income from building rentals increasingly important. We are committed to building on the strong financial foundations already established.

Fountains Church operates under a Bishop's Mission Order. Our first five years are complete, and the BMO has been renewed for a further five years. We are supported by a strong board of trustees, chaired by the Archdeacon of Bradford, which meets six times a year, alongside episcopal oversight.



Events and Financial Sustainability

Events are a vital part of sustaining the ministry at Fountains Church. Through conferences, concerts, community events, private hires, and partnerships, our events programme generated over £97,000 last year, making a significant contribution to the life and mission of the church. As we move into a season where we need to become increasingly self-sustaining, this income stream is more important than ever.

Alongside congregational giving, events income forms a key pillar of our financial strategy, enabling us to resource mission, support staff, maintain the building, and continue reaching the city with the good news of Jesus. We see this not simply as fundraising, but as stewarding the building God has entrusted to us for the flourishing of Bradford. It is also proving to be a good opportunity to share our faith once again with people who are not usually found within a church space.

<https://www.fcb-hire.co.uk/>

Could you be called to join us?

We asked our communities...

What do you value about Fountains?

Fountains is a place that holds together diverse groups of people well, people feel loved and cared for here. Solid bible teaching and spirit filled worship in our congregations and small groups has built good foundations for discipleship and pastoral care. People appreciate our location in the city centre and that we are well placed to support those on the edges of society.

Where do you sense God leading us?

Fountains has a strong missional heart at its core, people are excited by the continuing missional opportunities of this young, city centre church. Following a time of building and planting Fountains is ready for a period of deepening discipleship and enabling the congregation to fulfil the vision of Fountains to be a church in, of and for Bradford. As the church continues to grow children and families are a priority and having a dedicated focus in this area is a key challenge for the future.

Who is our new leader?

We want someone who is compelling both inside and outside of church, who people want to follow! Our new leader will be reliant on God, open to Holy Spirit and rooted in the authority of scripture to set vision and lead Fountains in this next season. Someone who will lead with humility but bravery, can listen responsively but be willing to continue to pioneer into our city. They will be a strong team player, who can invest in and lead our dynamic staff team and the wider congregation in developing and releasing their gifts so Fountains can build on its strong worshipping tradition and continue to reach out imaginatively into Bradford.



Vicarage

The successful candidate can choose to live in one of two vicarages (or a housing allowance can be provided). The first vicarage (top photo) is a modern, detached house in Frizinghall, a pleasant suburb of Bradford close to Heaton Woods, Shipley and the UNESCO village of Saltaire. There are lovely walks locally and it is easy to access Bradford city centre by public transport, bike or car. The house is currently being refurbished and serves as a practical and warm family space with lovely gardens and neighbours. The second vicarage is also a modern, detached house in Shelf in south-west Bradford. It is part of a relatively new build estate, Clayton Heights, and it also offers ready access to the city centre and local countryside.

Bradford itself offers a rich cultural life, as showcased in being UK City of Culture in 2025. Highlights include the Alhambra Theatre, the National Science and Media Museum, and the annual Bradford Literature Festival, alongside a strong tradition of parks and green spaces. As befits a diverse and vibrant city, Bradford is known for its outstanding multicultural cuisine, including some of the finest curry houses in the country.

For those who enjoy wider travel and the outdoors, the Yorkshire Dales are approximately 40 minutes away, and the coast can be reached within around 90 minutes, offering easy access to some of the best countryside and coastline in the north of England.



Frizinghall Vicarage



Shelf Vicarage



Further Information

The Diocese of Leeds www.leeds.anglican.org

Vacancy documentation: <https://leeds.anglican.org/vacancies/clergy-vacancies/>

Fountains Church Bradford

Website: www.fcb.church

Facebook: facebook.com/FountainsChurchBradford

Instagram: www.instagram.com/fountainsbfd/

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