



Parish Profile

St James the Great

Wrightington with Heskin

**Address Church Lane Wrightington
WN6 9SP**

Date April 2025

www.stjamesthegreat.net
www.facebook.com/StJamesWrightington

Contents

1.	Letter from the Bishops.....	3
2.	What is the PCC's vision for the future?	4
3.	What is our Spiritual life?	5
5.	What is the community we serve?.....	8
6.	Vicarage and Education Options	9
7.	Who is God calling.....	11
8.	Vision 2026 and Beyond.....	12
9.	Clergy Care and Wellbeing	13

1. Letter from the Bishops

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



*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 Joseph Kennedy*

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 James' is an active church in a rural setting, which combines a valuing of established patterns and community life with an openness to new initiatives – one recent example is a new youth and family service (30@5) to replace the Sunday School. The school is a key partner, and the parish is part of a deanery which is friendly and mutually supportive. We are praying for a priest with a heart for rural ministry who will love 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?

At St James the Great, our vision is rooted in a warm, inclusive mission to proclaim the good news of the love of Jesus Christ in our community

We seek to grow in faith and numbers whilst continuing to share God's love with everyone in our parish.

Our Mission Statement

We, God's people in the parish of St James the Great, Wrightington with Heskin, seek to proclaim the good news of God's love by enriching the quality of our worship, by endeavouring to draw more families into the life of our church and by meeting the pastoral needs of the community.

- **Encouraging all-age worship:** Our congregation currently consists mainly of retirees, and we joyfully welcome those of all ages. We recognise the need to draw in younger members, especially families and adults in their 30s–50s. A further aim of our Mission Action Plan is to promote all-age worship and activities that bridge the generations. We are continually looking for ways to make our worship and community life engaging and relevant for all ages including young people, so that they too can find a spiritual home at St James's.
- **Nurturing children's faith:** We have recently updated our children's area at the back of church with colourful display boards for information and children's work. This creates a welcoming space where parents and young children can participate in worship (with toys and books available) without feeling anxious. We also run a weekly 30@5 children's worship group in our hall every Sunday at 5 pm, drawing families from the local school

and wider community into an informal, child-friendly service. Supporting and growing our children's ministry remains at the heart of our vision.

- **Growing Disciples:** We are committed to making disciples of Jesus by a variety of social groups such as Mother's Union, Play and Praise, the Vineyard Bible Group and our monthly open Prayer Group. Our Vision is to extend these activities and encourage more to take part.
- **Strengthening pastoral care:** We are blessed with a dedicated pastoral team. We plan to improve the structure of our Home Visiting Team to ensure those who are housebound or in care (including those receiving home communion) feel consistently supported. Caring for one another is central to our parish life, and we want to be thorough and organised in how we reach out to anyone in need, so that no one is overlooked. Following the 10.30am service there is a social time together in the parish hall where refreshments are offered, a chance for the congregation to chat together and newcomers to be welcomed and embraced. Our mission is to enhance this community time and also encourage new groups of all ages to use our hall as a meeting place.
- **Community outreach events:** We want to continue to engage the wider community through several beloved annual events in the church calendar. Such events are well attended by church members and locals alike, building bridges and sharing the light of the love of Jesus Christ beyond our Sunday worship.
- **Charitable giving and witness:** We see social action as a natural expression of our faith. For example, we host an annual lunch in aid of Christian Aid, and we regularly organize collections for those in need – from an Easter Egg appeal for disadvantaged children to our Harvest donations which are given to a local food bank who we regularly support. We feel that these acts of generosity and service are important ways to “be Christ's witnesses” in our community. They not only help those in need but also unite our congregation around a common purpose of loving our neighbours.
- **Stewarding our grounds:** We are blessed with dedicated volunteers who lovingly maintain our churchyard and gardens. A small team from the congregation regularly tend the grounds (though we do employ a gardener for the heavier mowing). Our vision is to inspire more helpers to join these efforts, both to share the workload, lessen the cost and to strengthen the shared pride we take in our beautiful surroundings.

Above all, we aim to remain a warm and inclusive church family, open to all. We look forward to welcoming a new vicar who will share this vision and help us continue to “draw more families into the life of our church”, build on our strengths, and step confidently into the future with faith and hope.

3. What is our Spiritual life?

In summary, the spiritual life of St James the Great is active and life-giving. We cherish our traditional Anglican heritage whilst eagerly embracing new ways to worship and learn together.

Our hope is that everyone – long-standing members, newcomers, young and old – finds spiritual nourishment and a sense of God's presence in our church. We pray that our next Vicar will help deepen our spiritual life, guiding us in prayer, teaching, and worship as we continue to seek and serve Christ together.

We consider our Church to follow a middle ground, we are used to having our services relayed by screen which the vast majority of our congregation have embraced. This has also given us the opportunity to introduce new worship songs through the use of video resources. Service books and hymn books are always available for those wishing to follow the service in a traditional way.

Sundays

- 9.00am Holy Communion BCP (said) – a quiet, traditional service using the Book of Common Prayer, with an average attendance of around 20 (mostly from our older members who appreciate the timeless language and reverence of this service).
- 10:30 am Parish Communion (Common Worship) – our main Sunday service, using contemporary liturgy, vestments, and a variety of hymns and songs. Music is an important part of our worship and we sing both traditional hymns accompanied by the organ and more modern worship songs. This service attracts a broader congregation of around 60, including families and children, and offers a warm, community feel. We encourage lay participation (for example, in readings and intercessions,) to make our worship as inclusive as possible. Afterwards, everyone is invited to the hall for coffee, tea, and fellowship (as noted earlier)
- 5.00pm to 5.30pm 30 @5 group meet in the Church Hall Our 30@5 Group meet every Sunday in term time and has replaced the Sunday School format, being held in the Parish Hall from 5.00pm to 5.30pm. Our parents were canvassed for the best time to hold children's worship and this was established in 2024. Four members of the PCC and congregation assisted the Vicar and his wife in running the sessions which include the text for the day, taken from the Sunday readings, craft associated with the text followed by prayers and a closing song. The Vicar's retirement has led to many of the parents being drawn into leadership of 30@5, reflecting their own growth and how importantly they view this time for themselves and their young people.
- Members of the congregation read the lessons each Sunday at both services on a rota basis. We also have an intercessors team.

Monthly

- Each month we have a gathering to explore the Bible together (The Vineyard) and we have recently introduced a monthly Prayer Meeting, open to everyone in the parish, held prior to the PCC meeting in the parish hall.

Outreach

- During our last ministry we have taken part in several Alpha Courses, the last one being by Zoom in the Covid lockdown period.
- Within the Church Calendar we hold annually a Christingle Service, Harvest Service and Lunch, Lunch in aid of Christian Aid, a Good Friday lunch and walk up to Harrock Hill following the morning service and hold a Toy Service near Christmas when all donated toys are given to a local Women's Refuge Centre. We regularly donate to our local food banks, collect and donate Easter Eggs: all this we feel shows our congregation as being Witnesses to the love of Jesus Christ.

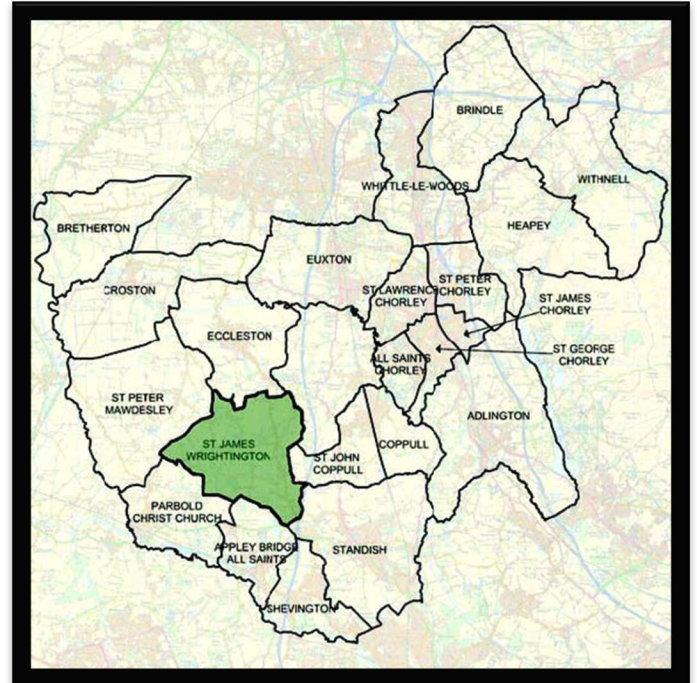
- We publish a bi-monthly informative church magazine and a Sunday News Sheet with the readings for the day.

4. What resources do we have?

Our Church is set in beautiful countryside with views to the Fylde coast and beyond and is well maintained both inside and out.

Our Church Building

St James the Great church is a cherished resource in our parish – not just a building, but a sacred space that has served the community for generations. The church itself is a Grade II listed building located on Church Lane, at the heart of Wrightington. It is a traditional stone-built village church with a welcoming atmosphere. Inside, the layout is classic with a central aisle, wooden pews, and stained-glass windows that lend a sense of continuity with our heritage. The sanctuary and nave are well-maintained, and there is a modest side chapel area suitable for smaller services.



In recent years, we created a small children's corner at the back of church, furnished with toys, and books – a friendly space that helps young families feel at home during services. The church is equipped with a sound system (and hearing loop) to aid those with hearing difficulties. We see our building not as a museum, but as a living place of worship and community gathering, and we are thankful for the dedicated team that cleans and cares for it. There is step-free access via the west door, making the building accessible to wheelchair users

and those with mobility issues.

Overall, our church is a lovely, warm and prayerful space that we gladly share with all who come through its doors.

The Parish Hall, built in 1932 for the people of the parish has been recently refurbished throughout to a high standard including new kitchen and toilet facilities, with the addition of a small meeting room which gives access into the main hall. Storage facilities are found beneath the stage, in a mezzanine area above the entrance hall and two cellar rooms. Funds to enable this refurbishment came from a variety of sources including National Lottery, Lancashire Environment Fund, numerous Attic Sales and donations from the community at large.



The building is hired on a daily basis by regular groups including, Dog Training Classes, Choir Group, Art Class, and Bridge Club as well as being used by church groups meeting either weekly or monthly.

Most of the groups meeting have an open invitation for anyone who is interested.

Financial Sustainability:

Income during 2024

- Annual Income from regular giving such as Stewardship, Gift Aid, HMRC Receipts total £30,025.
- Donations and Appeals total £8,900 for the year.
- Fund Raising from Parish Events and Attic Sales totalled £13,600 for the year.
- Income from the Church Hall Lettings totalled £10,800 for the year.
- PCC Fees Income received from Weddings, Funerals and Memorials totalled £6,785 for the year.

Our Reserves:

- Current/Deposit Account in the sum of £27,500
- CCLA (CBF) £41,000

We are currently paying £3000 per month towards our Parish Share which this year has been set at £58,902. Payment of our Parish Share always presents us with a challenge and is very much supported by constant fund-raising events.

5. What is the community we serve?

Our Community:

Our Mothers Union is very active and has a regular following with an interesting and informative monthly meeting. They take part in World Day of Prayer with churches of other denominations in the surrounding area.

Play & Praise parent and toddler Group is held each Wednesday morning in the parish hall from 10.30am to 12.00 noon. This was established and is run by the Mothers Union and offers a playgroup for children under school age and their parents to come and meet together for a social time.



Broadening our demographic: As noted, one of our key aims is to bring a wider demographic into our congregation – particularly adults in their 30s, 40s and 50s who are currently under-represented. We have a strong base of committed older members and a growing ministry with children, but the “middle” generation is where we see a gap. This age group in our area is often very busy with work and family, and many have not formed a churchgoing habit. We are exploring ways to connect with them – whether through more family-oriented social events, contemporary worship offerings, or simply personal invitation and involvement in community projects. We are encouraged by those families who do engage (through baptisms, school connections, 30@5, etc.), and we are prayerful that a new vicar will help us be bold and imaginative in drawing these people into fuller participation.

Our vision of an inclusive church truly means all ages and backgrounds, so this is an important area for growth.

One of the main issues we face is the constant need for fund raising to meet our Parish Share, functions are held regularly and can include Band Concerts, Choir Concerts, Fun Day, Bonfire Celebrations, and Christmas Fair.

6. Vicarage and Education Options

The Vicarage

is a large detached property built in 1974 in close proximity to the Church and Parish Hall. The building has been well maintained and benefits from outstanding views to all sides.

Accommodation includes entrance hall, study, downstairs toilet, dining room, lounge, large kitchen with utility room giving internal access to a double garage.

Upstairs comprises four bedrooms, one en-suite shower and basin, a further bathroom and a separate toilet. There is parking for several vehicles on the drive.



Our Schools

Heskin Pemberton Church of England School has a long and active association with St James' with the Vicar regularly attending Worship Assemblies and, as a school, attend church each term at Easter, Summer, (dedicated to the school leavers,) Harvest and Christmas for a special service. It is classed as a Voluntary Aided School though funded by the local authority.

The school has a long history, being founded in 1597 in the reign of Elizabeth 1. There is a charter signed by Queen Elizabeth in the school building and dated 1597.

Quote from Headteacher - Mr Alan Brindle

"I feel extremely privileged to be the Headteacher of Heskin Pemberton's. Our school is a wonderful, nurturing environment for all of our children and they are placed at the centre of everything we do. We set the highest academic standards and we pride ourselves on developing the whole child, taking every opportunity to identify, encourage and celebrate their unique skills and abilities. The behaviour of our pupils is impeccable and they consistently demonstrate a kind, considerate attitude when dealing with others. The children at Heskin feel safe and enjoy coming to school to have lots of fun and excitement!"

Our Core Gospel Values permeate throughout every aspect of the school, providing the bedrock for our unique, warm, caring and supportive character and atmosphere.

Expectations are always high and, as a school, we challenge and support every child in reaching their true potential."

Quotes from some children at Heskin School.

"I would like our new Vicar to be young, funny and teach us about Jesus"

"I would like our new Vicar to be kind, listen to us and lead worship in school"

Other schools in the area are:

- Mossy Lea Primary is a local authority owned school which enjoys a central position in Wrightington village. The school benefits from an extension in 2011 and caters for children from the local area.
- There is also a Roman Catholic Primary School within the village of Wrightington – St Joseph's.
- There are two nursery schools within the villages of Heskin and Wrightington: Pingawings in Wrightington is well attended and set in the pleasant grounds of Tunley United Reform Church. Alexandra Kindergarten on Withington Lane in Heskin is also a well-attended and lively nursery.
- There are also several High Schools and Sixth Form Colleges within easy reach, Bishop Rawstorne Church of England Academy is the principal high school in the area, being fed largely by our faith based primary schools. Website: bishopr.co.uk
- Runshaw College is our nearest Sixth Form College, Website: <https://runshaw.ac.uk/>

7. Who is God calling

We have been praying about the kind of vicar who will next lead our church, and we trust that God is preparing someone with the right gifts and heart to serve here. In particular, we hope for a vicar who can help people to walk with God in their daily lives.

We welcome applications from all candidates, noting that the post is half time, and feel the following to be preferable.

Who is God calling?

- A spiritually grounded and prayerful leader – someone who has a deep love of God and a reliance on the Holy Spirit.. This person should value both the beauty of traditional Anglican worship and be open to creative and informal worship expressions for all ages, so that our services can speak to a wide variety of people
- Someone with a sense of humour, we are basically a fun-loving, welcoming congregation.
- Some technological ability to take forward our screen led services and 30@5 worship.
- Someone who will continue our co-operative working partnership with the local church school, Heskin Pemberton Primary.
- Someone with a deep faith in Jesus Christ, gifts of vision, pastoral care and prayerfulness.
- Someone who can enthuse people and have a positive outlook.

The Support we can offer:

- A supportive team of two church wardens, a PCC comprising 10 members plus 2 further co-opted members which include Treasurer and Secretary. There is also a Baptism Secretary, a Verger, several Chalice Assistants together with a host of willing volunteers within the parish.
- A beautiful location and a well maintained house.
- A well supported church ready to move forward with a new Incumbent.
- Our prayerful support towards Our Vision.

We hope this profile gives you a flavour of our parish, our joys and challenges, and the kind of vicar we are praying for.

If God is calling you to St James's, know that you would be welcomed with open arms and hearts.

We invite you to join us in bringing the love of Jesus Christ to Wrightington with Heskin – a community we dearly love and are excited to serve in new ways in the years ahead.

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 overarching goal can be achieved: Making Disciples, Being Witnesses, Growing Leaders and Prioritising Children and Young People.

All that we do as 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 when 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:

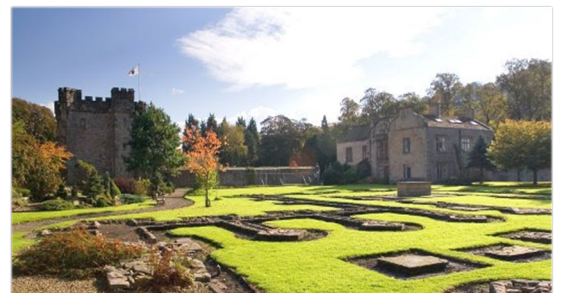
***"Heavenly Father, we embrace Your call for us to make disciples, to be witnesses, to grow leaders and to inspire children and young people.
Give us eyes to see Your vision, ears to hear the prompting of Your Spirit and courage to follow in the footsteps of your Son, our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.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