

The Diocese of Manchester

PARISH INFORMATION AND PROFILE

THE BENEFICE OF SADDLEWORTH

The Church of England in Saddleworth
“Belonging, Believing, Becoming”



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*The parishes of
St Thomas Delph, Christ Church Denshaw, Holy Trinity Dobross, Christ Church Friezland, St Mary Greenfield, St Anne Lydgate, St Chad Saddleworth*



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OUR NEXT TEAM RECTOR

We are seeking a bold, inspiring leader to guide and care for the Saddleworth Team.

This someone is:

- Confident in the Gospel of Jesus Christ and in their calling.
- Creative in worship; at ease with a variety of expressions.
- Comfortable engaging with people at every stage of faith.

As a person who is prayerful and rooted in Scripture, you will empower and nurture our Team while working collaboratively across our worship centres. Organised, innovative, and visible in the community, you will lead with courage, compassion and a healthy balance of work and well-being.

We seek a motivated Team Rector who will serve the people of Saddleworth, building on the Five Marks of Mission already evident in our community:

- **Tell – *grow younger*:** We seek a Team Rector who will proclaim God's love afresh in each generation.

We really value being an intergenerational church, weekly welcoming 200+ families with primary-aged children. The link between church and school admissions continues to be a big part of what we do. We also want to make sure teenagers, young adults and their parents and carers feel supported as they grow in faith.

- **Teach - *develop missional leaders*:** We seek a Team Rector who will nurture worship, discipleship, fellowship and vocations.

We want to help people encounter God more deeply through Word and Sacrament. We hope to improve engagement with the Service of the Word, set up more small groups and seasonal study sessions, offer Church away days, and provide training for PCC members.

We already have strong links with some local primary schools, and we would love to strengthen the relationships between church, school and home.

- **Tend - *parish renewal*:** We seek a Team Rector who will respond to need by generously sharing our gifts, time and resources.

We support our wider community in joy, with baptisms and weddings, and in sorrow when families are arranging a funeral for a loved one. We also offer regular worship in residential care homes as well as home visits to provide pastoral care during difficult times and for those who are isolated. Seemingly affluent local people still face challenges such as loneliness, relationship breakdown and both mental and physical ill-health.

We want to renew our approach to financial giving—both regular and one-off—by teaching about generosity from Scripture and updating our systems to make giving easier and more accessible.

- **Treasure – *towards Net Zero Carbon*:** We seek a Team Rector who will care for creation by protecting our shared planet.

We want to continue the pioneering work of Saddleworth in Eco Church. We encourage using the Energy Footprint Tool as well as the work of the wider community (such as Saddleworth Hydro). We wish to live greener and more sustainably but also equip and enable people to worship in diverse ways that celebrate and engage with creation.

- **Transform – *a transforming presence*:** We seek a Team Rector who will work for justice, peace, and reconciliation through prayer, example and activism.

We are committed to deepening our cooperation with Churches Together in Saddleworth and strengthening our shared witness in the world. We want to equip believers to engage positively with society through education, personal action, politics, and peaceful protest – always with truth, compassion, respect and integrity.

Our Offer

- **A comfortable and spacious home with a generous garden in Uppermill.**

In the heart of this semi-rural Benefice, you'll be in walking distance of stunning nature (including local moorland and Dove Stone Reservoir) and convenient public transport links to Manchester, Leeds, Sheffield, Liverpool and beyond.

- **A wide range of educational options for children and young adults.**

Our villages offer access to a wide range of educational opportunities. There are good, accessible establishments from Early Years through to universities within easy reach.

- **An office in the Parish Centre of Uppermill.**

This local administrative hub of the Benefice hosts worship and various community groups along with a garden capable of growing edible produce. It is directly opposite, but very much separate from, the Rectory.

- **A welcoming, supportive Christian community of all ages.**

With a variety of practical skills and lived experience we understand the demands of leading a larger Team. You will find respect for the privacy and well-being of you and your family. Within our Team we are blessed with a fantastic team of 50+ adult volunteers.

- **A community with a unique identity and traditions in which Church plays a key role.**

Spirituality meets creativity and community in the Whit Friday Walks, services and Brass Band Contests. Faith, work and recreation combine to reflect the area's agricultural heritage in Rogationtide Walks and The Saddleworth Rushcart.

OUR TEAM ASPIRATIONS

We need someone who:

- Loves the Lord Jesus Christ and is committed to their own spiritual growth, basing their life on prayer and scripture.
- Wants to help people to pray and grow in faith and knowledge of Jesus Christ.
- Longs to connect with people of all sorts and seeks to communicate with people of all ages in church, community and Civic events.
- Wants to create fellowship and community as safe places in which to share real life with honesty and relate the Gospel to everyday life.
- Makes worship of all kinds meaningful – not so much a person of ‘high’ or ‘low’ church but ‘deep’ church.
- Has courage to make difficult decisions about the leadership of our parishes, whilst treating everyone with respect.
- Will work with and persevere with all who share the work of the Church and will search for the lost who are not yet part of the Church of God.
- Can blend seriousness and joy together with humour.
- Loves the countryside and the idiosyncrasies of village life.
- Dreams dreams and holds these out to us, whilst treasuring the Traditions that matter most, whilst being ready to think outside the box, to start up the new and close down the old wherever that is needed.



INTRODUCTION

The Benefice of Saddleworth is reflective of the geographical area known as Saddleworth, which sits to the northeast of Oldham and extends into the southern Pennine foothills. It has a population of approximately 25,500 and comprises the villages, Denshaw, Dobcross, Greenfield, Lydgate, Friezland, Delph, Uppermill and Diggle.

The Benefice was established in 2003 and in many ways, continues to evolve. Each of the parishes has its own unique worship community and there is some collaboration among them. The absence of a Team Rector has prompted reflection on how we can move forward—both spiritually and administratively—by cooperating with and learning from one another.

Saddleworth's modern history is rooted in the textile industry, with buildings often serving as both homes and workspaces. The industrial revolution led to larger mills powered initially by local water sources. The Huddersfield Narrow Canal and later railways improved transport links to Manchester and Huddersfield. Today the area benefits from efficient road and rail connections.



Presently, these villages feature cottages once home to weavers, mill buildings now transformed into apartments or business premises and a vibrant blend of local shops and gathering places. The area has grown into a popular destination for both residents and visitors alike.

BASIC INFORMATION AND STATISTICS

Saddleworth Benefice comprises seven parishes and nine worship centres. These are St Thomas, Delph; Christ Church, Denshaw; Holy Trinity, Dobcross; Christ Church, Friezland; St Mary, Greenfield; St Anne, Lydgate and St Chad, Saddleworth. The latter parish includes the church, the Parish Centre and a mission church at Kilngreen (Diggle) all of which have their own congregations.

We are currently looking to recruit a new Team Rector.

Our Patron is the Bishop of Manchester.

We are part of the Archdeaconry of Rochdale, with the Venerable Karen Smeeton as our Archdeacon (Karen.Smeeton@manchester.anglican.org).

Our Area Dean in Oldham and Ashton Deanery is the Reverend Daniel Ramble (DanielRamble@manchester.anglican.org).

OFFICIAL CLERGY HOUSING

The official housing for the Team Rector is The Rectory in Station Road, Uppermill, located opposite St Chad's Parish Centre which contains the Team Office. This desirable detached house has four bedrooms, a large lounge, kitchen diner, utility room, study, wrap around private garden, garage and off-road parking. It is in the centre of the village with easy access to all amenities and the local schools.



CHURCHES IN OUR BENEFICE

St Thomas, Delph

The church is situated in the centre of the village of Delph.

The Churchwardens are Richard Lait and Bill Maxwell, all the officer posts are filled and there are currently no vacancies on the PCC. The Parish Representative is Richard Lait.

The church pays its Parish Share in full.

The worship style is local church and evangelical.

Christ Church, Denshaw

The church is situated in the village of Denshaw.

The Churchwarden is Rosalyn Martin. All the officer posts are currently filled and there are no vacancies on the PCC. The Parish Representative is Rosalyn Martin.

The church pays its Parish Share in full.

The worship style is Moderate Anglo-Catholic.

Holy Trinity, Dobcross

The church is situated in the village of Dobcross.

The Churchwardens are Paul Wooding and Denis Cavanagh. All officer posts are filled and there are no vacancies on the PCC. The Parish Representative is Rachel Westwell.

The church pays its Parish Share in full.

The worship style is varied.

Christ Church, Friezland

The church is situated in the village of Friezland.

The Churchwarden is John Stevenson and there is a vacancy for another. There is also a vacancy for a PCC Secretary. The Parish Representative is Yvonne Carson.

The church pays its Parish Share in full.

The worship style is Moderate Anglo-Catholic.

St Mary, Greenfield

The church is in the village of Greenfield

The Churchwardens are Steve Nikolich and Heather Shaw. All the other officer posts are currently filled and there are no vacancies on the PCC. The Parish Representative is Louise Lilley.

The church pays its Parish Share in full.

The worship style is described as Traditional Low Church.

St Anne, Lydgate

The church is in the village of Lydgate.

The Churchwardens are Paul Roberts and Barbara Hodgson. All the other officer posts are currently filled and there are no vacancies on the PCC. The Parish Representative is Paul Roberts.

The church pays its Parish Share in full.

The worship style is Moderate Anglo-Catholic.



St Chad, Uppermill (Saddleworth)

The church is about half a mile outside the village up into the hills, adjacent to it is the Hearse House. There are two other centres of worship in the parish, Kilngreen Mission Church in Diggle and the Parish Centre in Uppermill.

The Churchwardens are Ruth Broadhurst and Tim Edge. All the other officer posts are currently filled and there are no vacancies on the PCC. The Parish Representative is Nina Brannan.

The church pays its Parish Share in full.

The worship style is Moderate Anglo-Catholic,

SAFEGUARDING AND INCLUSION

Safeguarding

All of our churches are committed to safeguarding children and young people, vulnerable adults and those in abusive relationships. Our Team aims to create safe environments where children and young people are nurtured and protected and where everyone is able to worship and pursue their faith journey with encouragement and in safety. Our Safeguarding Officers and PCC members across the Team strive to create a culture where everyone in our churches shares the responsibility for safeguarding.



Ordination of Women

The Priests (Ordination of Women) Measure 1993 has been considered by PCCs across the Team and they have agreed that any suitable candidate, be they woman or man would be welcomed. There have been no resolutions passed by our PCCs under the House of Bishops Declaration on the Ministry of Bishops and Priests 2014.

Inclusive Church

Our churches across the Team are committed to being inclusive and everyone is welcome.

DATA ABOUT OUR BENEFICE

The following details are taken from the 2024 Statistics for Mission returns and summarise the age profile of the congregations and the basic statistics.

	St Chad Saddleworth	St Anne, Lydgate	St Mary, Greenfield	Christ Church, Friezland	Holy Trinity, Dobcross	Christ Church, Denshaw	St Thomas, Delph
Worship Community Total	136	227	195	94	92	44	74
Worship Community age 0 - 10	46	93	70	32	21	6	24
Worship Community age 11 - 17	0	3	5	7	4	0	2
Worship Community age 18 - 69	50	106	70	25	38	24	28
Worship Community age 70 plus	40	25	50	30	29	14	20

	St Chad Saddleworth	St Anne, Lydgate	St Mary, Greenfield	Christ Church, Friezland	Holy Trinity, Dobcross	Christ Church, Denshaw	St Thomas, Delph
Number on Electoral Roll 2025	103	108	50	77	68	58	68
Average weekly attendance of adults	50	46	80	45	36	22	50
Average weekly attendance of children and young people under 16	1	17	60	10	11	5	20
Baptisms	14	41	9	7	5	2	2
Marriages	1	6	2	5	1	1	0
Funerals	16	13	11	16	3	6	4
Christmas communicants	59	46	58	85	41	16	60
Easter communicants	121	62	83	60	40	41	69

COMMUNICATIONS

Most of the parishes produce pew sheets with details of upcoming services and events and these are available as hard copy or electronic versions. Most utilise WhatsApp to communicate within the various congregations. Some parishes produce newsletters that are circulated within the villages as hard copies.

Team WhatsApp groups have been set up for the parish Churchwardens, the Treasurers and the Safeguarding Officers to facilitate the exchange of information and good practice.

All parishes have a Church Near You site and a page on the Team Website (www.cofeinsaddleshworth.org.uk) as well as a Facebook page. We have become very aware that collectively we could use the social media available to us more effectively in the future.

St Chad's Saddleworth also has a website which focuses on the history and historical records of the parish, www.historicsaddleshworthchurch.org.

OUR UNIQUE SADDLEWORTH LOCAL COMMUNITY

The villages of Saddleworth have their modern history rooted in the woollen industry and evidence of this exists in the housing, the converted mill buildings and the transport links, particularly the canal. The area would now best be described as semi-rural.

The area is predominantly white and reasonably affluent. Nearly 80% of the 12,000 houses in the area are owner occupied which creates its own challenges particularly for the younger age group who want to stay in Saddleworth. This is reflected in the age profile of the area with nearly 50% of the population over 50.



Whit Friday starts with the Whit Walks of Witness, in which all churches participate and culminates with numerous open-air services, attended by several hundred people at each.

The Brass Band competitions, as featured in the film *Brassed Off*, then take place in the late afternoon and evening and attract top class bands from the UK and abroad. As each of our villages have bands, often at junior and senior levels, the interest and local competition is fierce.

Some of the challenges facing local people in the area include: the pressure of development; rising land prices; the decline of a mixed local economy with small scale businesses and tourism rising; lack of affordable housing and the pressure and expense of maintaining local infrastructure in a large rural area. Saddleworth is also an area that does big events and does them well and the churches are integral to these in terms of organisation, hosting and participation.





In August the villages host the annual Rushcart Festival, which culminates outside St Chad's Saddleworth on Sunday and includes a well-attended Sunday morning service. This annual event attracts hundreds of Morris men and women from all parts of the country.

In November, alongside services in our churches and at our local war memorials, there is an open-air service held at the main Saddleworth war memorial. This takes place on a hillside above the villages of Uppermill and Greenfield. The site is locally known as Pots and Pans and the service is attended by several hundred people who brave the climb, often in inclement weather, to remember the fallen.

SCHOOLS

There are strong links between our churches and church schools, with the opportunity for mission of paramount importance. Headteachers and staff are very supportive of our churches with many of our primary aged children going on to attend Church of England secondary schools.

There are 10 primary schools in the Benefice, 5 of which are Church schools

- Bright Futures, Greenfield (Special Needs- Autism)
- Greenfield Primary School
- Greenfield St Mary's CofE
- Friezland Primary School
- St Anne's CofE, Lydgate
- St Chad's CofE Primary School, Uppermill
- Holy Trinity CofE, Dobcross
- Diggle School
- Delph Primary School
- Christ Church CofE, Denshaw

Most of the schools are rated Good by OFSTED.

There is one secondary school in the Benefice, Saddleworth School, which is located in Diggle and is part of The Cranmer Education Trust.

Nearby there are also three Church of England secondary schools in Oldham: Brian Clarke Academy, Crompton House School and Blue Coat School, all of which take students from Saddleworth Benefice. These schools have church attendance requirements as part of their admissions criteria.

Church Groups and other Voluntary Organisations

There are many church groups and voluntary groups across the Team, a sample of which are highlighted in the individual Parish Profiles.

Mission Community

The Saddleworth team is Mission Community 5 in the Oldham and Ashton Deanery of Manchester Diocese.

Ecumenism

The Churches Together in Saddleworth group includes all the parishes in the Team. It has representation from the three Methodist Chapels, the Roman Catholic Church in Uppermill, Ebenezer Congregational Church in Uppermill and Family Church which meets in Greenfield.

There are strong links within the Team across this ecumenical group which results in work and worship together throughout the year.

Ministry

Within the Saddleworth Clergy Team are the following posts to assist the Team Rector:

- One full time Team Vicar
- One part time Priest-House for Duty
- One Ordained Local Minister
- One Lay Reader- Emeritus
- One Deacon in training
- A small, dedicated number of locally based Permission to Officiate clergy who assist when they can by taking services.

The Saddleworth Team work very closely with the laity in each parish to deliver worship. A number of laity have recently undertaken the Diocesan ALM courses in several electives. Others are in the process of training. The Clergy Team hold a monthly Team meeting to pray together, co-ordinate diaries, share ideas and to plan future Team services and events. As a Team they always go out for an extended lunch at Christmas and hope to hold a summer garden party later this year. After being in vacancy since June 2024 the Clergy Team are really looking forward to welcoming a new Team Rector to the Saddleworth Team. They work closely as a team and are looking forward to new leadership to help to refocus their ministry in Saddleworth.

Team Administrator

The Team Rector is supported by a part time Team Administrator, Jane Ratcliff, who is based in the Team Office at the Parish Centre, handily located opposite The Rectory in Uppermill. The Team Office is secure, modern and welcoming. It has up to date technology, along with a printer capable of printing large scale and complex jobs. The office area has space for meetings, training and one to one discussions.



Jane is available to help with any administrative requirements the Team Rector may have, including diary management, communications, printing, newsletters, design work, website updates and social media postings. With seven parishes in the Saddleworth Team, the Team Rector will have contact with many people across the church communities. Jane will support and assist with the induction of the new Team Rector, to enable a smooth transition into the life and work of the Saddleworth Team.

Mission

Currently, each church has responsibility for developing their own strategy for mission. Please see the Parish Profiles at the end of this document for further details.

Finance, Stewardship and Sustainability

Across the Team, Parishes consistently pay their Parish Share in full. Many people give generously of their time and money to sustain our churches.

Saddleworth has a deep commitment to caring for God's earth, reflected in our churches gaining a Bronze and 6 Silver Eco-awards across the Benefice. This is also demonstrated in other ways, including; wildlife surveys, Forest Church services, renewable energy, making our buildings warmer and more energy efficient, supporting social justice by using Fairtrade and other ethical shopping schemes and volunteering to restore habitats. There are regular collecting points for recycling used things – batteries, candles, printer cartridges, bras, shoes, etc. We also have links with local Foodbanks, offer warm spaces and run a Charity Shop within the Benefice.

A number of the churches within the Team support Saddleworth Street Pastors in both our giving and volunteering out on the local streets.



A FLAVOUR OF OUR PARISHES

On the next few pages are brief Parish Profiles to our seven parishes.

St Thomas Church (Friarmere) Delph

Where we worship

St Thomas Church is located in the centre of the village of Delph. The building is originally Victorian, but through the generous giving of the congregation it was totally refurbished in 2021. In earlier times the church for this area was situated on a hilltop high above the village at Heights, but this redundant church was passed to the Churches Conservation Trust in the early 1960s. Our modern refurbished church is an excellent resource, with fully accessible facilities, including meeting rooms and kitchens, which is often used by the Team and other local groups.



Who we are and what we do

The regular worship at St Thomas is of an evangelical, low church style, including a lay led Service of the Word twice a month. Our church spans most generations, including younger families and older retired folk. Delph Junior Church is a long established, thriving opportunity to teach and support our children and their families. There is a focus on Biblical teaching and relaxed worship, including worship songs, occasional café style church as well daily Compline and prayer for healing which is lay led and takes place online. Our pastoral team practically supports and prays for those who may need home visits. One member of our church congregation heads up our work in the village state maintained primary school, leading weekly assemblies, attending school events and facilitating Experience Christmas, Easter and Pentecost for the children.

The church Vision Group is charged by the PCC to consider the ongoing development of our 'worship', 'growing our people' and serving the 'local community'. This has resulted in many exciting initiatives like a 'Faith and Questions' group, as well as 'themes for teaching' used across all styles of weekly worship. Various social activities support and interact with the wider village community.

At St Thomas we tithe 10% of all the church income to support God's work in other areas. The congregation and PCC select these organisations on a three yearly cycle. As well as regular planned giving the church has long standing links with the Kampala Children's Centre, where donations from coffee served after church help a housemother financially and sponsor a child. The church pays the Parish Share in full and the PCC has a 94% record of attendance at meetings. All church officer posts are filled.

Christ Church Denshaw



Where we worship

Denshaw is the smallest of the Saddleworth villages with the traditional Victorian church being positioned prominently in the village. There is a large churchyard that is well maintained with bird boxes, bug hotels and a hedgehog house to help our wildlife. and the village school is located opposite. The building is Grade II listed and was built for the village in 1863 with recent additions including a kitchen and lych gate.

Who we are and what we do

The church offers regular worship that is Moderate Anglo-Catholic. We exercise this in an inclusive way to welcome and celebrate those who come from different Christian traditions. The Order of Service is essentially that in BCP however the readings follow the CW lectionary. The hymn book is 'Hymns Old and New' (New Anglican Edition). Sunday Worship usually takes place at 9.30am with a Eucharist service on three Sundays a month, and a lay led All Age Service of the Word taking place on the 4th Sunday. Choral Evensong is celebrated on the first Sunday of the month at 6pm. We have a Sunday School who meet each week in the Oddfellows Hall at 9.15am. They join the main congregation towards the end of the service. Sunday School members are always invited and enthusiastically accept the opportunity to share with the congregation what they have been learning that week and the congregation express their recognition of their endeavours. Their work is displayed in church. A compline service is held in church on alternate Wednesdays and the school attend a collective worship service on a Friday morning led by an ALM who is also a foundation governor. This is very popular and we have also extended this to include Experience Christmas, Easter and Pentecost for the children. We have seen a number of families crossing over and attending on Sundays which is encouraging. Our church spans most generations, including younger families and the older retired members. Our pastoral team practically supports and prays for those who may need home visits.

The PCC have been very active in producing a Mission Action Plan. This is regularly reviewed and in addition to pastoral and safeguarding, is always an item on the PCC agenda with separate meetings arranged as required. Regular collections for the Foodbank, Salvation Army and Women's refuge take place throughout the year which is warmly appreciated and a portion of the baptism collection is donated to a charity of the

families choice. The church pays the Parish Share in full and all church officer posts are filled. The church has been awarded bronze and silver Eco awards.

Various events are organised throughout the year including the Christmas Fair and lights, quizzes and a bi-annual Black Dyke Brass band concerts which is extremely well supported. A social and fundraising team have been newly formed and are looking at increasing our outreach across the village.

Holy Trinity Dobcross



Where we worship

Holy Trinity Church, a grade II-listed building dating from 1787 stands at the heart of Dobcross. The church is the sole place of worship in the village and is open most days offering peace and welcome to all. Known for its superb acoustics, the church is an excellent venue for worship and concerts, with capacity for up to 300. We maintain a choir to enrich musical worship, reflecting our strong missional focus. The narthex is available for private bookings and includes a kitchen, accessible toilets and baby-changing facilities. The last QI of the Church was in 2022 and identified a number of issues including water ingress, with some projects already undertaken to address these issues.

Who we are and what we do

Dobcross is a picturesque village with a population of around 2,550, known for its strong sense of community and cultural life, with the popular community co-operative village store and post office located next door to the church. Music is at the heart of Dobcross; the village has a proud tradition of brass bands and hosts concerts and festivals that draw visitors from far and wide, with national media interest in our annual Whit Walks and brass band competitions. Our congregation reflects this heritage, valuing music as a vital part of worship.

Young people are central to our life. Sunday School has growing attendance (18–20) and a motivated team of Sunday school leaders. The children are always enthusiastic to share their learnings and engage with the congregation over coffee and biscuits or some home baked treats after the service each week. We also enjoy close links with our village Voluntary

Controlled primary school through governance and volunteering, including members of the congregation leading seasonal engaging programmes including 'Experience Christmas, Easter, and Pentecost'. The school holds regular services and concerts in the church, which are always very well supported. We welcome innovation to establish groups for seniors to build on the foundations of worship established in Sunday School. We are currently exploring digital technology opportunities to enhance inclusivity in our worship.

Our mixed-age and well-engaged PCC always has a packed agenda at meetings, with regular discussions around pastoral care, eco church status and mission action planning. Socially, walks and picnics are regularly organised amongst our congregation, there has been a recent trip to a Hindu temple and we are currently fundraising for an overseas 'Toilet Twinning' initiative, alongside our ongoing support of local, national and international charities. Financially, our parish share is paid in full.

Holy Trinity is more than a place of worship; it is a hub for fellowship, learning, and outreach, rooted in tradition yet open to new opportunities for mission and service.

Christ Church Friezland



Where we worship

We worship in a beautiful Grade II listed building from 1850. It is accessible and spacious, holding 250, with the usual facilities. The last QI was in 2021 and no major issues were identified, although the Bell Tower still suffers from water ingress. It sits on a prominent corner with surrounding graveyard, opposite the more modern church hall and car park. Collections are made for Charities after Sunday services (the beneficiary changes every quarter).

Who we are and what we do

Christ: We are just one expression of God's love revealed to us in Jesus Christ. 'Though we are many, we are one body because we all share in one bread.'

Gospel: An Inclusive Church from newborn to nineties, we welcome all as we share God's love. 'Woe be unto me if I preach not the Gospel' is inscribed on the pulpit.

Care: We take Safeguarding seriously. A committed group of Pastoral Carers try to minimise isolation. We raise funds for various charities and many volunteer in the community.

Creation: Saddleworth's Eco Church journey began here in 2018. Still helping others, we're going for Gold, with monthly Fairtrade stall and 'Ethical' co-op. 'Caring for God's earth and all its people.'

Community: Bellringers, Choir, Little Lights (playgroup) and Coffee Shop and concerts happen in church. Hall has Pre-School, Guides and Sports groups. We run Friezland Band Contest – very family friendly.

Cake: We always provide quality fairtrade coffee and homemade cake after Sunday Worship, with BBQ and Cheese & Onion pie on Whit Friday and Turkey Muffins at the Christmas Fair. And cake!

Children: Junior Church is lively and active, with our Harvest Monarch as a youth rep. Young people are involved in Worship. Committed volunteers provide activities on 3 out of 4 Sundays.

Prayer: ALMs in Worship & Liturgy, Pastoral Outreach & Listening and (training) Prayer & Spirituality plus former ALMs. Currently 1 in 4 Sundays are lay led. Forms of Worship/Prayer vary.

Creativity: Music and more! Organ/piano & robed Choir feature most Sundays and special events. The PA plays CDs & laptops/mobiles. All art forms welcome in Worship, with an Annual Art Expo.

Growth: We want everyone to know they are loved by God and to pursue their own relationship with God. We want to see growth in numbers by growing in relationship first. (Matt. 6 v 33.)

St Mary's Greenfield

Where we worship

St Mary's Church was consecrated in 1875 and is at the heart of the local community. The church provides a warm, welcoming and lovely atmosphere for worship, prayer, and community gatherings. It's beautiful stained-glass windows and well-maintained interior create a sense of peace that enhances worship.

Who we are and what we do

We offer a mix of traditional and contemporary services, including a weekly Sunday family service called Early Church, usually attended by over 100 adults and children, which fills the church. We do, however, struggle to retain families once children have transitioned to secondary school. There are many life events, and special services. During 2025 we held a Flower Festival and Christmas Tree Festival, to mark our 150th anniversary year.

The building is fully accessible, with a kitchen, toilets, baby changing and community space which could be marketed to the local community as an additional income stream. Everyone is welcome at St Mary's - we are inclusive and welcoming and work hard to make people feel part of the St Mary's family. Many have deep local roots, while others are drawn by our friendly welcome and faith community.

Volunteers are central to St Mary's, supporting worship, pastoral care and outreach work. Our charity shop is run by volunteers. The shop provides extra income which enables us to pay our Parish Share in full and to keep our church well maintained. The shop also gives us a strong presence in the local community, where potential customers call for a friendly chat or to find a listening ear, and where much kindness and support is given and shared. Other local outreach work includes supporting Oldham Foodbank and My Community Wardrobe Oldham.

Spiritual growth is important too at St Mary's through our fortnightly Bible study group, and through other spiritual support groups across the Benefice and in Churches Together in Saddleworth, in which we take an active part.

St Mary's is closely connected to the wider community, particularly St Mary's School, where we support pupils, families, and school events, helping to nurture faith and values from an early age. The Ordained Local Minister, Revd Barbara Christopher has very close links with both primary schools in Greenfield and is also a Governor at St Mary's school. Both schools are invited to major events at church, as well as Experience Easter, Pentecost and Christmas each year. There are also good links with Greenfield Methodist Church and regular joint services and an annual Christian Aid fundraising event.

At St Mary's worship, activities and community go hand in hand, reflecting our commitment to sharing the love of God in Jesus, and being a deeply rooted part of Greenfield life, and we are looking forward to working with a new Team Rector to help us grow and develop further.



St Anne's Lydgate

Where we worship

The parish church of St Anne is situated at the top of a hill on Stockport Road, overlooking Oldham, Ashton and Greater Manchester, and is therefore both a great vantage point, but also suffers from the ravages of bad weather from all four corners of the compass. It came into existence in 1788, when a "Chapel of Ease" was constructed and consecrated on the plot of land still occupied by the present church. The original building has been considerably altered over the years in order to better suit the needs of the community, but the most striking alteration was the installation of a Norman style clock tower in 1910/11. The parish also owns the Parish Hall on the opposite side of Stockport Road, which is used by several local organisations/groups for a great variety of purposes, and especially by Junior Church and our dedicated team of helpers who meets each Sunday to better serve the needs of the younger members of our congregation.



Who we are and what we do

Worship at St Anne's is currently moderate Anglo-Catholic, and we strive to be a welcoming and inclusive church. Our commitment is also to the wider community, and we are blessed to have close links to the "Love Lydgate" group, and especially with the "Lydgate Community Association" (LCA) which attends to both the lettings and the general maintenance and upkeep of the Parish Hall on our behalf.

Additionally, we also have extremely strong and mutually supportive links with "St Annes CofE Primary School", as a result mainly of the hard work of both Pat and Al Gillian, who have formed a strong bond with the children and their families and staff at the school. They normally visit school on a weekly basis to assist in conducting religious services. Visits to church also occur throughout the year with school parties attending to expand their religious knowledge and to celebrate special religious festivals. The linkages with school have also resulted in it having two "Child Bishops" currently in office and the popular weekly family service which takes place at 6.00pm each Wednesday (apart from August) is well attended. In 2025 a total of 46 such services took place, with an average weekly attendance of 61 adults and 75 children.

We, like other churches could not operate without a collaborative group of helpers, most of whom we have not mentioned by name. But we are blessed to be able to report that we have sufficient support to enable us to still thrive as a worshipping community, with all church officer positions filled, and our Parish Share regularly paid in full. So, we must give thanks for everyone who contributes in so many ways, and enables us to provide a safe environment to worship and grow in. We need however to be mindful of the average age of

these helpers, and we are hopeful that the new rector when appointed will be able to assist us as we endeavour to identify and support potential new additional leaders.

St Chad Saddleworth



Where we worship

The parish has three worship centres.

The Parish Church is situated about half a mile outside the village of Uppermill, into the hills. It was rebuilt in the 1830's with the tower being completed in 1847 and incorporating some of the 1746 fabric. There has been a centre of worship on this site for over 800 years. The current church is Grade II* listed and the nearby Hearse House, village stocks, war memorial and

Lawson table tomb are all Grade II listed. The church has seating capacity for 600 and whilst it is accessible, it is not easy. The PCC is currently awaiting the QI report but anticipates work on one of the windows, the roof and the tower to be highlighted as being required. A new heating system is becoming urgent. The church does not have a water supply or drainage system and relies on the facilities in the Hearse House.

The Mission Church in Kilngreen, Diggle is not listed. It has a seating capacity of 150 and the flexible space is used by several community groups. As with the Parish Church the QI report is currently awaited, however no issues are anticipated.

The Parish Centre is in Uppermill and is a former village school. Parts of the building are rented out long term. The building also houses includes the Team Office. The hall downstairs is used for worship and by various community and church groups.

Who we are and what we do

Although the congregations at each of the worship centres have individual identities they also work together as a team particularly for big occasion services and events.

All our congregations are welcoming and accepting of all who attend. Our services demonstrate slightly different styles of worship, from the more traditional at St Chad's and the Wednesday morning Holy Communion service in the Parish Centre, to the very informal family service also held in the Parish Centre. Kilngreen provides for a different congregation and is more middle ground.

We have a family service on a Wednesday evening to engage with as many young people and their families as possible. This service also enables children to gain the requisite attendance requirements to apply for the CofE secondary schools in Oldham.

St Chad's has strong links to the Methodist Church in Uppermill, holding one joint service each month, and together with the other worship centres plays an active part in Churches Together in Saddleworth.

A Café Church is held once a month at the Parish Centre and hosted by the team of St Mary's Greenfield. This service provides a relaxed and friendly worship opportunity.

We raise awareness and money for a different charity each month, primarily through hosting a Saturday Coffee Morning at the Parish Centre, often with speakers from the different charities.

Our links to the two primary schools in the parish are strong, particularly with St Chad's Primary School. Services held in school and at the church during festival times. One of St Chad's congregation is a Foundation Governor for the school. The links with Diggle School are growing and church events are advertised in its newsletter. One of the governors of Saddleworth School is a member of the congregation which enables us to keep in touch.

Kilngreen and the Parish Centre function as church or community halls which are used by a wide variety of local groups including theatre and dance groups, pilates, Guides and Brownies, a flourishing Art Group and Mothers' Group. A local group called Incredible Edibles utilises the outside space at the Parish Centre, along with other local sites, to grow vegetable and herbs that are available for anyone to pick.

Kilngreen organises several fund-raising events through the year under the auspices of the Kilngreen Supporters Club to raise money for the fabric of their building. The Friends of Saddleworth Church are a separate charity who raise funds to help maintain the fabric of all four of our buildings.



St Chad's has a fine ring of eight bells, which are rung regularly for services and events by an active group of bellringers.

