

PROFILE OF
ECCLES PARISH CHURCH OF
ST MARY THE VIRGIN



PARISH CHURCH, ST MARY THE VIRGIN, ECCLES

THE ECCLES TEAM

The Eccles Team Ministry is made up of four distinct parishes: Eccles Parish Church with Team Rector and shared vicar with St Paul's, Monton (Vacant), St Andrew's, Eccles and Christ Church, Patricroft share one vicar. This has allowed each Church the independence of making their own decisions whilst enjoying the benefits of being part of a team.

St Mary's is the most traditional of the 4 churches. We would hope that the Rector, as the Team Rector would continue with a more traditional style whilst being sympathetic to the other churches in the Team. We provide an alternative which some members of the other churches are pleased to attend. As we are a Team, they can do this without causing offence.

There is a Team Council which meets every 4 months and is well attended. It consists of the incumbents plus 2 representatives from each church. The Team diary advertises joint events, joint services and events at each church which may be of interest.

The Team Youth Group meets once a month at St. Andrew's and young people from all team churches are welcome. There are also other youth events throughout the year.

The Eccles Team Ministry has worked well together. Good foundations have been laid for future development, for the right person to take the Team forward onto the next stage.

St Mary's dedicated churchwardens and their deputies are good at keeping the fabric of the church in good order and contacting the architect, workmen, and cover for services. We have a Verger to assist at weddings and funerals. We also have a part-time Parish Secretary.

Description

The Parish Church of St. Mary the Virgin, Eccles, is a Grade I listed building situated in the town centre of Eccles in an elevated position with pleasant grounds. The Church building is beautiful and is a special place to visit. (1st recorded Minister 1180)

It is built in local red sandstone. The church has a Bell Tower with 8 bells, which are rung regularly, also a Sanctuary, Chancel and Nave and seats 400/600. To the north and south of the Chancel respectively are the Pitcairn Chapel and the Bridgewater Room (a lounge/ meeting room with a kitchen). Leading off the south aisle and situated in the St Catherine chantry (chapel) is the Heritage centre which contains the Brereton Tomb together with other historic artefacts. The church building is in good condition, has been re-wired and the roof restored. The church is the start and end point of the Eccles Town Centre Heritage Trail. Every corner of the Church is steeped in history, its architecture telling the stories of its past. It is very much a Church for today, its stillness providing a tranquil place of worship in today's hectic world.

Churchyard

The churchyard was conveyed to Eccles Borough Council in 1963. The whole area was converted into laid out lawns and gardens with the existing pedestrian rights of way being retained. New footways were laid providing access to all parts of the gardens. Public lighting columns were also erected at the same time. The church gardens remain consecrated ground and are now well maintained by Salford City Council. It is a peaceful place where people often come to sit and think away from the bustle of life. The grounds provide a wonderful setting to the ancient Church.

The only burials are the internment of ashes.

PARISH

Minister: Vacant

The Benefice consists of a total of 25,616 people.

There are 78 names registered on the electoral roll and we have 5 Eucharistic Assistants one of whom leads the Sunday morning worship. He is also a 'Street Pastor'. He is an Accredited Lay Minister (a position authorised by the Diocese). We have a dedicated team of lay members supporting Sunday Services by leading intercessions, reading lessons, assisting with Communion, carrying out Sides Person duties and welcoming the Congregation.

We also publish a monthly magazine which is edited by one of our Wardens.

Details of our website are as follows:- (http://www.ecclesparishchurch.co.uk/index_go.htm) which is currently being revised and re-designed.

POPULATION

People and Housing

The 5381 population of the Parish of Eccles appears to be a full cross-section of society living in both rented and owner-occupied housing.

The construction of the M602 divided the parish into two parts. The south side is made up of an industrial site, the town centre and the shopping precinct, together with high rise flats which are mainly occupied by single people. There is a small housing estate of town houses and two-storey flats.

The north side of Eccles contains most of the housing and schools. Also on this side there is the highly sought after residential area of Ellesmere Park, with its large Victorian and modern semi and detached properties, as well as luxury apartments.

Transport

The Metro Link tram system runs regular services to and from Salford Quays and the centre of Manchester with connections to Altrincham, Bury and Chorlton. There is also a bus station with frequent services to all areas within the Parish and beyond. Manchester City Airport can be easily and quickly reached via road or rail. Various departments of the BBC have relocated to Media City at Salford Quays, where there are theatres, the Lowry Art Gallery, and Lowry Retail Outlet, details of all these can be accessed on The City of Salford website.

Eccles has its own railway station and a "Friends" Association called Freckles. Manchester city centre is just a 10 minute train ride away with its renowned Bridgewater Hall, Opera House and Cathedral as well as two Premier football teams, United and City. Eccles is ideally situated for accessing the M60 ring road with direct links to the M6 and M62. Close by is Salford Royal Hospital one of the leading medical centres and finest teaching hospitals in the UK.

EDUCATION

Schools in the Area

The schools within the parish are:

Chatsworth High School and Community College

Oakwood High School

Salford City College

Ellesmere High School

Clarendon Road Primary School (Infants and Juniors)

There are also several private nursery, infant and junior schools.

There is an Eccles Parish Church Educational Trust which supports projects with an educational value.

INDUSTRY

The parish has a large chemical works on the banks of the Manchester Ship Canal, but the main trade is retail. There is a shopping precinct, which has a variety of shops. Within the Parish there are two indoor markets, supermarkets, hairdressers, newsagents, solicitors, Post Office, dental practice, several banks and multi-storey office blocks. There is also a Council run swimming pool and sports hall. The Town Hall has been renovated and refurbished as a social centre for the community. Also nearby is the Trafford shopping Centre.

CONGREGATION

Attendance

There is an average of 47 communicants on Sunday and 10 on Thursdays.

Times of worship

Sunday services:

11.00 am Family Holy Communion and occasionally All Age Worship with Baptism.

Team evensong is held at Christ Church at 6.30pm.

Thursday service:

10.30 am Holy Communion

Members of the congregation receive invitations to use to invite others at Christmas, Easter, Mothering Sunday, Harvest Festival and at the All Saints tide Memorial Service.

Christian Nurture

There is a Prayer group which is particularly concerned about healing run by one of our Eucharistic Assistants. Local residential and nursing homes are open to be visited. Also being run are Lenten Groups, Bible Study Groups and we share other Study Groups such as Alpha with other churches within the Eccles Team Ministry. We have a longstanding, friendly Mothers' Union.

Style of Worship

On Sundays we follow Common Worship, but on Thursday morning we use the 1662 Book of Common Prayer. The tradition of churchmanship could be described as central, with the minister usually wearing cassock, surplice and stole. Teaching is Bible based. We welcome male and female priests.

Our style is a key attraction for many in the congregation and one of the reasons why people also attend services from outside our Parish.

Activities

The café, which is situated in the Bridgewater Room and run by volunteers from the congregation, raises a considerable amount of money while being wonderful outreach. It is open Tuesdays 10am to 1.30pm, and until recently on Thursdays too, raising a total of £7014 in 2015 and on Saturdays 10am to 12 noon raising £1167 for the Restoration Fund in 2015. It has become a regular meeting place for non-churchgoers as well as our selves. We provide work experience placements for young people from a local college. Health, Safety and Hygiene regulations are met.

We are members of Churches Together in Eccles which covers all Christian denominations.

The Team offers a free counselling service with trained counsellors.

The church supports Christian Aid, the Tear Fund, World share and Life share. The church is a venue for concerts. We take part in the annual Heritage Weekend and this is well attended.

At Christmas we collect blankets and clothing as well as cash for Life share, a homeless charity open over Christmas. Harvest offerings of tins and dry food also go to the homeless.

Eccles Parish Rectory (one of the possible houses available to the clergy as well as St. Paul's vicarage)

The Rectory is situated in Ellesmere Park about $\frac{3}{4}$ mile, a 10-15 minute walk, from the church and 5 minutes from Monton Village and has been the one occupied by past Rectors Of Eccles Parish Church. It is a modern, five bedroomed detached house in a prestigious much sought after quiet residential area. It has large, well-tended gardens, 2 reception rooms, study, modern fitted kitchen with utility room, ground floor toilet and cloakroom, gas central heating. It is fully double-glazed. There is also a detached double garage. It is equidistant between the two churches and has a bus route at each end of Westminster Road.

OUR VISION, MISSION AND MINISTRY

Our Vision

We seek to be a friendly and welcoming Church with accessible worship and good Christian teaching, using special occasions like Harvest and Mothers' Day for invitation services. We are a fully inclusive Church where all feel welcome and valued. We are now beginning to attract some of the new immigrants in our community. Eccles Parish Church has a very supportive congregation. We seek to inspire individuals so that they can energise their faith and encourage others.

Mission

Our mission statement is to glorify God as revealed in Jesus Christ by

- worship that honours Him,
- love for one another,
- witness to the local community
- and work for the good of all.

Outreach and Evangelism

Christmas leaflets are delivered throughout the parish. Invitations go to baptism and wedding couples to special occasions and the bereaved are invited to an annual team All Saints Memorial Service.

Using Team Resources

Being part of a Team enables us to be involved in many things that would not otherwise be possible for us, such as Youth Weekends away, Alpha and Start Courses, Quiet Days, Growing Leaders Courses etc. The team hosts an Annual Holiday at Home for elderly people from residential homes. Common worship is used throughout the team churches.

LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

Our new Team Rector and Vicar of St Mary the Virgin, Eccles (Eccles Parish Church).

We are looking for a person of distinct personal faith and clear calling to this Parish, who can effectively proclaim the message of God's revelation through the scriptures and the good news of personal salvation in Jesus Christ, and who can help us to apply the scriptures to our everyday lives.

We need a person who has a proven track record of working collaboratively and successfully alongside other gifted and talented people; a person who is practised in communicating and skilled at encouraging and equipping people of all ages to use their gifts in the service of God and others.

We are also looking for someone who will provide well run and effective opportunities for worship and spiritual growth in accordance with the needs of the existing and potential congregation especially young people; in particular the clergy person appointed will participate fully in an open, on-going search for understanding of what it means to be individuals, and a community of faith today.

We long to have continuing confidence, energy, joy and passion in our faith and look to the new Incumbent, with God's help, to lead, direct, and inspire our efforts to achieve this through enthusiasm, encouragement and empowering leadership.

We need someone to lead and coordinate our efforts; to give focus and develop the skills and talents we have already, and to help us work on our weaknesses and build our strengths in order to make God known in our worship and the wider community. We also need a person of vision who acknowledging what God has already achieved here will seek to identify God's priorities for our Church and community.

We need someone who is an excellent motivator and communicator who can demonstrate leadership and management skills. We need a prayerful person to preach and teach the word of God inspirationally in a way that relates to modern life and actively builds up congregations and encourages people to grow spiritually.

We look forward to working together in achieving all that God has planned for us in our Parish and beyond. We pray for you to know His Will for your future and for ours.

Most of all, we are looking for someone called by God to come into relationship with us and who will respond to that call.

Brief summary of Church accounts for January to December
Approved by Mr D Gorsuch, our accountant

	<u>2015</u>	<u>2014</u>
	£	£
Opening Balance	9,930.20	14,866.15
Total Receipts	45,574.25	44,130.89
Total Payments	46,071.69	49,066.84
Resolution	<u>£9432.76</u>	<u>£9930.20</u>
(Including having paid our Quota quarterly thus receiving 2% discount from the Diocese)	Quota paid in full	Quota paid in full

APPENDIX

HISTORY OF THE CHURCH

The church of St. Mary gave its name to the area since the name Eccles is derived from the Primitive Welsh *eglēs* which can be linked to the Latin *ecclēsia* meaning a church. Its early origin is also indicated by the oval churchyard which suggests a pre-conquest presence here. The original parish covered some 80 square miles, but since 1541 when Deane parish was created out of the original parish, Eccles has become the mother church of the area.

The earliest visible surviving part of the present church is the 14th century arch in the south aisle. Rebuilding began in the early 15th century with the nave and side aisles and the south porch door and the tower probably also date from this period. Further rebuilding took place later in the century including the magnificent nave roof which is comparable with that in Manchester Cathedral.

In the 18th century the church became an auditory church with galleries at the west end (1717), side aisles (1770) and the chancel (1803). Some restoration work began in 1846, but a major scheme took place in 1861-3 under the newly appointed vicar James Pelham Pitcairn which included the removal of the chancel gallery. Further restoration work has taken place since then and the remaining galleries were removed in 1926. Following a bequest the former north chantry chapel was restored and dedicated in 1954 in memory of Canon Pitcairn.

The recent programme of restoration began with the re-leading of the nave and St. Catherine chapel roofs in 1994 and the development of the Bridgewater Chapel into the Bridgewater Room in 1996. This now acts as a parish and community room. Since then the rest of the roof has been re-leaded, and a new lighting system installed. Following a bequest the paintings on the east wall of the chancel were cleaned and conserved. Some restoration work remains to be done, including repairs to the leaded lights and the organ which is regularly tuned and serviced, also the conservation of the Brereton tomb.





Ladies luncheon club



Café staff



Café staff



Customers in the Café

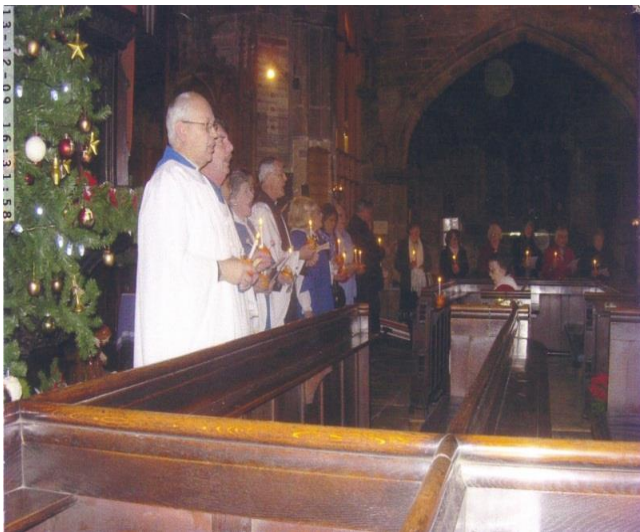


The Rectory





Easter daffodil Cross



Christingle Service

The clergy have probably benefited from the Team (in terms of support and fellowship) more than the congregations. There are pulpit exchanges across the Team from time to time and the usual united services for special occasions (Confirmation, along with preparation for candidates), Ash Wednesday, Maundy Thursday, Ascension Day, Songs of Praise, and healing services. There are Alpha Courses run by the team and there are Start courses currently run by the team. We also have a Quiet Day away together every year at the beginning of Lent. St.Paul's and St.Mary's have a joint Mother's Union meeting which is extremely cordial and well attended.