

The Parish Church of

Saint Catherine's, Heald Green



Our Vision

We serve Jesus locally
and in the wider world,
inviting and
encouraging each other
on our journey of faith.

Parish Profile

August 2017

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Introduction

We are delighted that you have asked for a copy of this profile of St Catherine's Church, Heald Green, Stockport. We hope that the information provided will give a good grounding to understand not only the Parish of Heald Green and surrounding area but also about St Catherine's as well.

St Catherine's Church is the Parish Church of Heald Green, Stockport which borders Manchester. We are a church with a lot of potential. We have good buildings, a lovely church, sound financial management and an excellent PCC structure.

We have recently revised our vision for our church which is **'We serve Jesus locally and in the wider world, inviting and encouraging each other on our journey of faith'** and we have been praying that God will direct the next person to be our new Vicar and join us in realising this vision.

We respond to encouragement in trying new ideas and a strong leadership with a focus on Bible study. We are a church which holds the traditional view of a family and we want to reach out to serve our local community and forge stronger links with local schools and businesses.

Further information is available on our website at www.stcatherineshg.org.uk.

What are we looking for in our new Vicar?

We need help in realising our vision, namely to “serve Jesus locally and in the wider world, inviting and encouraging each other in our journey of faith”.

We want someone who will undertake and encourage us in outreach to young people, to the children and their families who use our buildings and attend our local schools; who will work with us to bring them to be part of our church family and so reach out with the good news of Jesus.

You will have excellent leadership and relationship skills, with experience of parish work and will know the Lord; this will encourage our prayerfulness and understanding of God’s word. We should be thrilled if you could lead inspiring worship, engaging the whole church with your teaching and preaching, based on a deep knowledge and sound understanding of the scriptures.

You will have a natural vitality with warmth, friendliness and approachability.

We do not expect you to do everything yourself, but rather be able to motivate, delegate and affirm the gifts of others, and encourage the development of lay ministry.

The Village

Location

Heald Green is a suburb of Stockport, Greater Manchester, and is located in the south-west of the borough near Manchester Airport, approximately nine miles from Manchester city centre. Surrounding areas include Gatley, Cheadle and Cheadle Hulme (also part of Stockport Borough), the Cheshire villages of Styal and Handforth and Wythenshawe, which is part of Manchester.

The area is suburban, containing predominantly housing. The outlying areas include two farms, one specialising in meat products and the other on tomatoes and flowers – both have farm shops. There is also a large 'business park' containing several office blocks. There are a number of green spaces, including parks and farmland, some of which is designated as Green Belt.

Looking at the wider area, Heald Green is within an hour of some of the most beautiful countryside in the UK, such as the Peak District National Park, the Cheshire Plains, Pennine moorland and the Lancashire and North Wales coastal regions. Only a little further afield is Snowdonia and the Lake District.

Boundaries

The parish boundary does not exactly follow the political boundaries of Heald Green, although the differences are not particularly significant. In common with many churches, our congregation is drawn from the overall local area, rather than being defined by the parish boundary. Similarly, some people from Heald Green worship outside of the parish.

Housing

There are about 4,900 households, the majority of which are owner occupied. About 12% of properties are rented, either privately or through a Housing Association. The village has grown in stages from its initial rural setting: the shopping area was defined and the more central areas were built in the 1930s – these are predominantly larger detached and semi-detached houses. During the '50s and '60s large numbers of houses were built on both sides of Finney Lane, the main road through the village, and moving outwards from the centre. These were a combination of private and local authority (now Housing Association) properties of different sizes. Later, private, developments have infilled previously unused land.

There is pressure on the existing vacant land, most of which is currently Green Belt.

- The Seashell Trust, a charitable organisation, has submitted plans to sell off some its Green Belt land for housing (325 properties) in order to fund an expansion to its school site. The details within the plans are disputed and Stockport Council continues to request more detailed information.
- The Greater Manchester Spatial Framework (GMSF) is a joint plan to manage the supply of land for jobs and new homes across Greater Manchester, designed to ensure that Greater Manchester has the right land in the right places to deliver the homes and jobs needed up to 2035. The main effect of the overall plan on Heald Green would be to reallocate almost all our Greenbelt land for housebuilding. In particular it proposes to build 4,700 more houses in Heald Green. The plans, as they stood, were rejected by all 10 Greater Manchester Authorities and an updated version is expected in 2018.

Facilities

Heald Green has a wealth of local facilities:

The main shopping area is on Finney Lane and contains a variety of shops, including: grocery shops, a butcher, a baker, a flower shop, general stores, and charity shops as well as a number of services: library, hairdressers, estate agents, solicitors, post office, cafes, restaurants and takeaways. There are also five other small groups of shops within the parish. In addition to the local stores, John Lewis, Sainsbury, Tesco and Marks and Spencer and other 'out of town' stores are close by.

There are excellent transport links from Heald Green. Manchester Airport, with its many scheduled and charter flights is only two miles away and users of Heald Green station benefit from regular links to the airport, Manchester City Centre and south to Wilmslow and beyond. There are also regular bus services to Stockport, Manchester and towards Macclesfield. Taxis are easy to obtain and the nearby M60 and M56 provide speedy access to the national motorway network. The Metrolink Tram is just over the boundary in Wythenshawe.

There is a large local health centre, housing two GP practices as well as nursing care. This centre does not provide out-of-hours cover. The nearest A&E is at Wythenshawe Hospital, about three miles away, which is a large and well-renowned NHS Teaching Hospital. Also within the parish is St Ann's Hospice, providing care to patients with life-limiting illnesses. There are a number of dentists, both NHS and private, three pharmacies and an optician.

There are six Primary Schools within Heald Green: Four are schools with general admission – Bolshaw, Outwood, Etchells and Prospect Vale. Oakgrove is a special school maintained by Stockport Local Authority which caters for pupils from 4 to 11 years of age with social, emotional, and mental health difficulties. The sixth is North Cheshire Jewish Primary School. Most secondary pupils attend Kingsway High School in Cheadle, although part of the parish is in the catchment area for Cheadle Hulme High School. Some residents choose to send their children elsewhere: St James Catholic School in Cheadle Hulme and the grammar schools in Trafford are popular choices. Cheadle has a college facility for 16-18 year olds.

Population

At the most recent census in 2011, the population of Heald Green was given as 12440, with a roughly even split between male and female. The age profile shows a bias towards the older groups when compared to national averages (over 20% aged 65 or over, compared to 16% nationally).

	Heald Green	England
% aged 0-4	5.16	6.26
% aged 5-14	11.2	11.42
% aged 15-24	12.25	13.08
% aged 25-64	50.65	52.9
% aged 65 or over	20.74	16.36

The religious make up of Heald Green is 61.0% Christian, 16.2% No religion, 13.0% Muslim, 1.1% Hindu, 0.8% Jewish, 0.4% Sikh, 0.4% Buddhist. (The remainder had not completed the relevant part of the census form). Aside from the Christian churches in Heald Green, there is a Mosque at the edge of the parish and a Synagogue in Gatley.

Employment

A higher than average percentage of Heald Green residents are retired. Despite this, the percentage in work is consistent with national averages.

The top occupations listed by people in Heald Green are Professional 17.4%, Administrative and secretarial 13.5%, Associate professional and technical 13.1%, Sales and customer service 11.5%, Managers, directors and senior officials 11.4%, Caring, leisure and other service 9.8%, Administrative 9.8%, Skilled trades 9.5%, Sales 8.4%, Elementary 7.7%.

The Church – Buildings

The Church is on Outwood Road, near to the village centre of Heald Green. The overall site, consisting of the Church, the Church Hall and other rooms, is known as St Catherine's Church Centre.

The Centre is generally in good repair, and is heated by three gas boilers controlled by a bespoke management system. The next Quinquennial Inspection is scheduled for 2018.



The Parish Church of St Catherine

The Church itself was constructed in 1955 to supplement the original 1930s building (which is now the Church Hall) and consecrated by the Bishop of Chester in 1956. There have been further enhancements to the site in the intervening years to improve the facilities available.

Although relatively modern in construction, the church is traditional in its design, including a small Lady Chapel to one side and a font beneath the bell tower. On the opposite side to the Lady Chapel is the Vestry. The Chancel area has undergone cosmetic changes to bring together the clergy and congregation, making for a more inclusive environment.



The church has wooden pews with a central aisle and can seat over 200 people. There is a pipe organ and a piano. There is an amplification system using both hand-held and hands-free microphones. A hearing loop is installed.



The west window of the Church includes the Coat of Arms of the Archbishop of York and the Bishop of Chester as well as the badges of the parishes from which St. Catherine's Parish was born, namely St James, Gatley and St Thomas, Stockport.

The Church Centre

St. Catherine's Centre is a combination of:

- A large hall, with stage and sprung floor and a large modern kitchen, fitted out with two cookers, fridge, dishwasher and a large working space. The kitchen is also equipped with crockery and cooking utensils; in effect everything needed for a private party.
- A large bright and airy foyer / informal room between the Church and the Church Centre. There is disabled access to both the Church and the Church Centre downstairs rooms through the foyer. (The parish office is also accessed from the foyer)
- A coffee lounge leads off the foyer. This is used as a meeting room for small groups and also to prepare coffee following services in Church, as it has a small kitchen area.
- On the first floor there is a larger room (Watkins Room) for use by the Church for larger meetings, or can be hired out for people requiring a larger room.

St. Catherine's Centre has a very busy life. The revenues from the rental of the Centre provide much needed financial support to the Church.



Centre Users

The Centre is rented out from Monday to Saturday in various forms as highlighted below

Friday and Saturday afternoons and evenings are regularly used for:

- Private Parties. We have good facilities for Birthdays and family celebrations.
- Church Socials (Hoe-down, Beetle Drives, Church lunches, Quiz Nights etc.)

Regular Community Users

Regular users account for approximately 300 people per week passing through the Church Centre.

- **Scout Group (Monday to Thursday evenings)**
St. Catherine's has a thriving Scout Group, who use the Hall and its facilities in the evenings from Monday to Thursday. It consists of two Beaver Colonies, a Cub Pack and a Scout Troop.
- **Adventure Babies (Monday mornings)**
Two hours of activities are focused on babies from two months old, and has sensory activities including: play with water, lights, bubbles and feathers. The young babies and their mums enjoy the experience.
- **Community Choir (Tuesday mornings)**
This is an adult choir who are very complimentary about the acoustics in the Hall.
- **Rhythm Time (Wednesday mornings)**
This group is for Mums and Toddlers with songs and actions, and is very popular.
- **Kumon (Wednesday afternoons and Saturday mornings)**
Kumon have been with us for many years, and they class the Centre as their Heald Green Centre. The parents bring their children, the children go into the Hall for their lessons and the parents use the foyer as a waiting room.
- **Aerobics Class (Wednesday evenings)**
Aerobics Class for ladies.
- **Toddle-In (Thursday mornings)**
This group was set up many years ago as a church group. Young families or grandparents bring their toddlers along to play, and the carers to make friends and chat. Tea, juice and toast is also provided. We have a large number of toys which are stored on the stage, and the children love to play and run around.
- **Weight Watchers (Friday mornings)**
This group have been using the Hall for many years.
- **Horticultural Society**
Meet up four times a year and once a year they use both the Hall and the foyer for two days for their Annual Flower Show, and event which is enjoyed by the people of Heald Green and surrounding districts.

The Vicarage (217 Outwood Road)

The Vicarage is located:

- On the opposite side of the road to the church, approximately 200m away.
- To the right hand side are public fields between the Vicarage and the Village Hall.
- To the rear the garden overlooks the back gardens of houses.
- Within 500m of the local shopping centre.
- Within walking distance of Heald Green Railway Station with regular trains to Manchester Airport and the centre of Manchester.

The Property:

- Good sized, detached, family house
- Raised with a gently sloping driveway
- Garage
- Covered and lockable area between the house and garage
- Driveway suitable for 2 to 3 cars
- Gas Central Heating

Downstairs

- Living/Lounge Room (4.6m x 4.4m)
- Dining/Breakfast Room (6.8m x 3m)
- Vicar's Study Room (4.9m x 3.6m)
- Kitchen (3.5m x 3m)
- Toilet (2.4m x 1.8m)
- Cloak Room - under stairs

Upstairs

- 1 double bedroom (4.8m x 3.7m)
- 1 double bedroom (4.6m x 3.7m)
- 1 double bedroom (3.6m x 2.5m)
- 1 single bedroom (3.2m x 2.2m)
- Separate bathroom & toilet

Gardens:

Beautifully matured raised landscaped front garden - this is a standout feature.

Large (25m x 25m) rear garden which is mostly lawn with mature trees and shrubs.



The Curacy House (103 Baslow Drive)

This extended semi-detached property is owned by St. Catherine's and is currently rented out on a six month "notice to vacate" basis.

Downstairs: Dining Room, Living Room, Kitchen and Utility Room (rear of garage), Bathroom/Toilet

Upstairs: three Bedrooms and a Study Room.

The Church - Numbers

Electoral Roll

There are currently 95 people on the electoral roll.

Finances

The Planned Giving scheme includes direct payments to the bank and envelopes. Most who are tax payers Gift Aid their donations. A number of our members do not pay income tax but nevertheless are generous in their support. The objective is to cover routine expenses from the planned giving, this we consistently fail to do. The shortfall is covered by the income from the Curacy House and Church Centre lettings.

We pay our Parish Share in full and tithe our Outward Giving; these items are covered before any other expenditure.

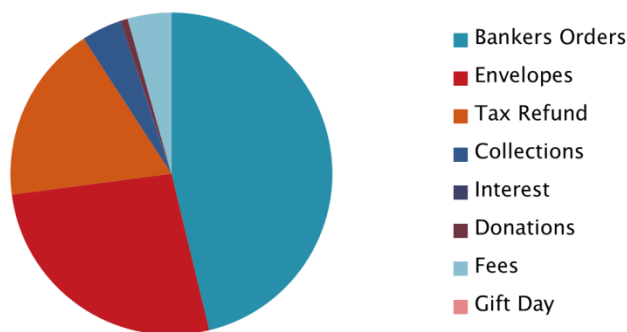
We are an ageing congregation and several generous supporters have left in the past few years, some to other parishes and some to a higher calling.

We do not run regular fund raising activities; however, we do have a number of social events that we put on during the year which are tasked with covering their expenses only. Occasionally, an event may be run to raise funds for a specific purpose.

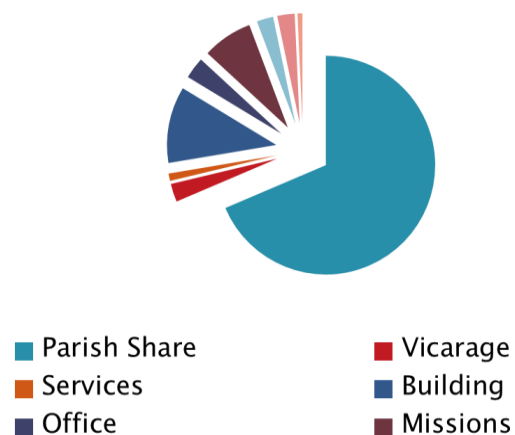
We received a significant legacy several years ago and this is held as a reserved fund for capital projects.

Note: For a more detailed financial overview of the year 2016, please refer to our "Annual PCC Report" for the year 2016, which is included in our Parish Profile.

Income in 2016 was £80,359



Expenditure in 2016 was £89,320



The Church - Services and Styles

Service Pattern

Regular service pattern

- | | | |
|-----------------|--------|-----------------|
| • Wednesday | 10am | Holy Communion |
| • 1st Sunday | 8.30am | Holy Communion |
| | 10am | Morning Worship |
| • Other Sundays | 10am | Holy Communion |

Occasional Services

There are a number of occasional services to celebrate particular events, including;

- Harvest Festival
- Remembrance Service, held at the local Cenotaph.
- Christingle
- Carol Service



Facilities

We have a visual display facility, using a Data Projector to show PowerPoint slides from a Laptop computer on a large screen, enabling the words of hymns and other worship material to be visible to members of the congregation, as an alternative to books.

Hand-held and hands-free microphones are used during most services.

Music

Music is an important part of the worship at St Catherine's. There is a choir who sing at the 10am Holy Communion Service every Sunday, and at other special services throughout the year.

Hymns and songs are a mix of traditional hymns and modern songs. There is a pipe organ and piano on which the songs are accompanied. We have a selection of Glorias, and have recently introduced a setting of the Sanctus in the Communion service. We have a sound system comprising a mixing desk, CD and tape players, microphones and loud speakers, as well as an induction loop for the benefit of hearing-aid users. When the organist is not available, the system is used to provide musical accompaniment from CDs, of which we have an extensive collection.



Concerts of singing and orchestral music by local amateur groups are sometimes held in the church.

The Church - Organisations

The Congregation

The majority of the congregation of St Catherine's is drawn from Heald Green, with a few members drawn from further afield.



Main Church



Lady Chapel

Staff

There are a number of people contributing to our services. There is a team of about 16 sidespeople who greet people at the church door, and welcome them in to join our worship. A further ten take turns to read the first lesson, and another seven lead our intercessions. One person takes the roles of Sacristan and Verger. Finally, there are eight people who administer the elements at our communion services.

Whilst we have no licensed lay workers, there is an ex Reader/PTO of 20 years' experience who assisted our previous Vicar for over four years by preaching regularly, and is eager to be licensed again, should her services be required.

Parochial Church Council

A revised copy of St Catherine's PCC Guide is available on request, which provides detail of the PCC and the various sub-committees. The PCC recently held an away day, which allowed time to reflect and revise our vision, namely:

**'We serve Jesus locally and in the wider world,
inviting and encouraging each other on our journey of faith'.**



The Churchwardens, PCC Secretary and Lay Chair

Children's Work

Baptisms

We use a CPAS video as the basis for preparing parents and, where possible, godparents. Opportunities are given to discuss questions and promises. The services are normally held in the afternoon, but we realise that this isolates the baptism families from the congregation, so that we are not giving the families the welcome we would like to give. We are keen to explore inviting the families to services in advance, and to be involved with them as a congregation on their day. We have not held many baptisms lately, but some of us are eager to make the baptism experience more welcoming.

Messy Church

Messy Church meets six times a year for two hours on a Sunday afternoon. Messy is supported by a dedicated group of church members. We have craft, games and a creative time together, learning about God, with whole families having quality time together. We also have a Messy for older children (10+) who meet at the same time, but in a separate area.

Sunday School

In 2016, we established a Sunday School which meets on the first and third Sundays of each month, during the 10am morning service. The Sunday School is aimed at children from three years and above. We welcome parents / grandparents / carers who may like to stay with their children as well. In the autumn of 2016, we created a dedicated room for the Sunday School. We have two to three children who are fairly regular attenders, and another five children who have attended a few times in the last year.

Other

On Christmas Eve, we hold a crib and Christingle service at 4pm, which is very well attended by the local community. Last Christmas, our Sunday School children had great fun dressing up as kings and shepherds as part of the service.

We have no Youth Group at present, but support a professional Youth Worker together with Churches Together in Heald Green, of whom more detail is given later.

Fellowship and Teaching

Mothers' Union

We have 21 members who meet each month to care for each other, and contribute to church life. We send our donations to Worldwide Relief funds and overseas funds according to guidance from Chester. Although we are an ageing group, we are quite vibrant in our outlook, and constantly on the look-out for new members. The Mothers' Union aims and objectives are to support marriage, family life, parenting and the protection of children.

Men's Fellowship

This group is open to all men of the church and their friends, with monthly meetings from September to late spring. The guest speakers cover a wide range of subjects, usually Christian in nature, but occasionally other topics are covered, for example a helicopter pilot from the United States Navy, who was invited to speak about his experiences in flight training, and as a pilot in the Vietnamese war. The Fellowship enjoy a Men's dinner at a local restaurant at Christmas, and external visits during the year.

House Group

Known as the Ginger Group, the House Group has been meeting for nearly three years. With up to 12 members, it meets fortnightly throughout the year, led by an experienced teacher with years of Lay Readership. The members are keen, and hungry to learn and grow; they ask lots of questions, and often choose the topics to be studied. These have included Mark's Gospel; How the New Testament came to us; The Patriarchs, and the beginnings of our Faith; Passover, Exodus and the Law; what happens when we die? Why is it so rare to see God at work today? The Bible is always our source book. After our study, we pray for each other, and for matters further afield.

Prayer Meeting

A few of us meet for an hour every Saturday morning, usually between two and six faithful souls. Some are asking for teaching on Prayer, beginning to ask, "Lord, teach us to pray". We know that we need a touch from God to make this happen in a powerful way. We are considering starting a prayer school as people have been asking about teaching.

Pastoral work, and Home Communion visits

Half a dozen people received some training for Holy Communion a few years ago, but as yet have not been released into this ministry.

Several members of the church visit those who have been active members in years past, but this is out of their own friendship, love and service. This is not officially commissioned by the church, which may well be a more comfortable approach.

Publications

Aside from the essential publications required for the running of the Church, there are two main vehicles for communication.

Linkline is a quarterly magazine, edited by a member of the Church. It contains a mixture of local, national and not-so-serious articles – some are directly related to church matters, whilst others are of a more general nature. All members of the congregation are encouraged to submit articles for publication, although it is fair to say that more local content would be welcome. The previous vicar was a regular contributor. There is a small charge for the Magazine to cover printing costs.

www.stcatherineshg.org.uk is the website for the Church. Up until recently this was wholly administered by the previous vicar. Prior to his departure the technical set up of the site was transferred to a simpler, more content-driven system using the ChurchEdit software package. Following conversion, management of the site was handed over to a member of the Church, who is in the throes, with others, of putting into place a sustainable set of procedures to ensure that responsibility for the content and update of the site is more widely spread.

Work of this Church which touches the Community of Heald Green

Events Committee

We have an Events Committee which plans and organises social events to help us get to know one another better, and also helps us to include friends who don't attend church. As these occasions take place, we hope to have fun together, and create a happy and caring environment which will make others feel relaxed about attending our church services, and hopefully to join "the family" here. The work is shared amongst church members, and this provides togetherness and friendship.

We want to reach out further into the community, and encourage a closeness, friendship and co-operation in the work of bringing the Gospel to as many in Heald Green as possible.

Churches Together in Heald Green (CTHG)

CTHG in Heald Green is a group of churches who find that more can be done together than separately. Each of the congregations involved is vibrant and outward-looking, but still find something indispensable in working together to share insights in common endeavour.

Ecumenical endeavour is an important aspect of life together as Christians in the area. There are five churches that are members of the local 'branch' of Churches Together in England:

- **Christ Church**, Finney Lane, Roman Catholic Church
- **Heald Green Methodist Church**, Brown Lane
- **Life Church**, Outwood Road, (Independent Church)
- **St Catherine's Church**, Outwood Road (Church of England)
- **United Reformed Church**, Wilmslow Road

There are six meetings per year with one church leader and two representatives from each Church.

Justice and Peace Group

There is a very active ecumenical Justice and Peace Group. The members meet together regularly and look at the world scene, the injustices, the poverty, the preventable diseases, and try to devise means of spreading awareness of these problems, and seeing what they can do to help matters. The group is an active supporter of the Fairtrade initiative.

Lent House Groups

These constitute an excellent occasion to consider biblical and spiritual themes, as they resonate with the participants, whatever their denomination. People are encouraged to mix with others of different denominational and spiritual backgrounds.

Youth Initiative

Through the work of Churches Together in Heald Green, a youth initiative has been established for a number of years. There is a professional youth worker who has a firm and continuing programme (TAG - Talk about God) to work in and around Heald Green supporting young people. St. Catherine's Church supports the work of TAG through voluntary donation and being Trustees to the charity.

Heald Green Festival

For about 60 years St Catherine's annual Rose Queen was a stalwart of village life – enjoyed and remembered with affection by Heald Green residents past and present. However, time and other commitments took their toll and the last Rose Queen was crowned in the early 90s.

In 1998, St Catherine's was approached by the local Rotary Club to partner in a new venture, the Heald Green Community Festival. The then vicar, Roger Clarke was enthusiastic, having hosted a church fun day earlier that year and suggested that for such a task, it might be good to include the other churches in Heald Green through the Churches Together initiative. The plan went ahead and the first Community Festival was held in June, 1999 – a successful start. 'Community' is the key word here – the objective is to bring together the residents of Heald Green, any surplus funds are a bonus and are used to benefit the local area.



Local children enjoy one of the activities in the Messy Church tent at the Festival

The Festival, which includes a Procession, Fun Fair, Stalls, Music and a Junior Football Competition has continued to go from strength to strength and runs each year on the last Saturday of June. St Catherine's still plays an active role in the overall organisation, and also mans the refreshment area, a Messy church stall and the Justice and Peace stand on the day.

Work of this Church beyond the Community of Heald Green

Mission Support

We completed a survey a few years ago which revealed a wide interest among our members for a huge number of Christian ministries, independent of the church. As a church, we allocate 10% of our income to "outward giving". 35% of this goes to local work in schools and among young people, 15% to various diocesan funds, and 50% to overseas work in Laos and Kenya (where members have personal links) and to the Bible Society and USPG. One of our members runs a Christian charity in Kenya, and goes there annually, so keeps in close contact.