

Parish & Role Profile for the Parish Priest (Oversight Minister) serving at:

St Cyprian, Hay Mill & St Michael, South Yardley

Prepared and Agreed by both parishes
November 2018

PART A: INTRODUCTION

This profile describes the role of parish priest for two neighbouring parishes in the eastern part of Church of England Birmingham in the deanery of Yardley and Bordesley.

The role is an opportunity for a priest looking to serve in a city context with a variety of contexts, including significant inter faith work. In addition, the parishes offer a rich range of worshipping life, significant historic and contemporary buildings, good links into the local community and an industrial project at St Cyprian's which places both historical and contemporary context and partnerships at the heart of mission.

The previous incumbent was the first to be priest to both parishes and the relationship continues as part of the wider local group, known as the Swan Group. Following a review, the Bishop has been glad to affirm this role as fitting within his vision for mission and that expressed by the diocesan People and Places programme.

The majority context for these parishes is urban on the edge of the central part of Birmingham moving out towards the suburbs and Solihull. St Cyprians is set beside a busy main road, next to retail and industrial sites and has a historic building from 1874 with a modern hall nearby. St Michael's sits within a largely residential setting a little further out with a modern building of considerable beauty fitting their more high catholic style of worship, with adjacent hall and vicarage across a large site. The population and missional context fits within the diocese People and Places strategy and we hope our vision of Transforming church will continue to inform and enrich the ministry and mission of these places.

The new minister who God is calling will want to join the people in pursuing the following in particular:

- Foster a sense of vision and direction in both as individual churches and working in partnership together, this will include working on what the long-term partnership will look like in mission and ministry as well as any formal shape it may need.
- Respect and encouragement for both ecclesial traditions ('Formal Anglican' and lower church)
- Enable the churches in mission and outreach especially amongst younger people
- Will be energised by the oversight of a significant area for mission and ministry
- Grow relationships with several potential partner churches, organisations and schools
- Have an appetite to take a leading part in an innovative Industrial Heritage project including the refurbishment of St Cyprian's and its mission to present commercial partners and context.
- Offer a period of stability to undergird these aspirations

During the vacancy the staff of Church of England Birmingham have worked with the parishes over their buildings, sense of future ministry, financial matters and more to get to a place where the Bishop is ready to appoint a new priest for both parishes. The new priest will be resident in the vicarage at St Michael's South Yardley, but equally present with St Cyprians.

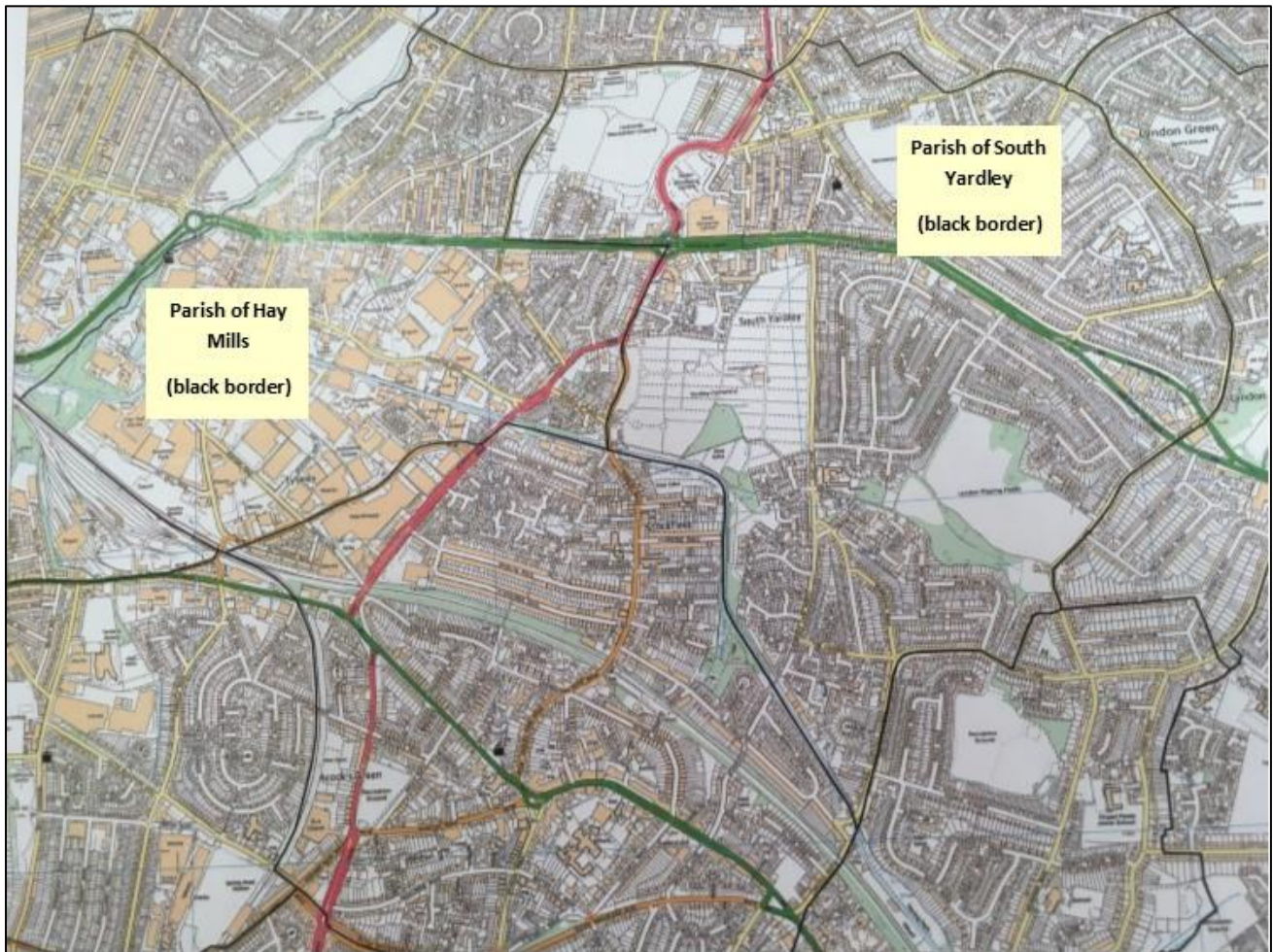
This profile should be read alongside the Diocesan Profile, Transforming Church and People and Places strategies and contains:

- **Part A** This introduction, including a map locating both parishes
- **Part B** The Vision, Future as described by each parish and their sense of what they need in a new priest
- **Part C** Details information for each parish about their area, mission and ministry.

Further information and informal conversation may be sought from the Archdeacon of Aston, Ven Simon Heathfield on 07769 187435 or at simonh@cofebirmingham.com.

Location of Both Parishes

The main road running left to right is the A45 with central Birmingham to the left and Solihull/Birmingham Airport to the right.



PART B: THE VISION, FUTURE AND PERSON DESCRIPTIONS

ST MICHAEL'S, SOUTH YARDLEY

1. Our Future

- We especially want to maintain our good relationship with the other two churches in the Swan Group, St Cyprian's Hay Mills and St Mary's Acocks Green.
- We want to continue our current links with other Christian churches in the area through "Yardley and Stechford Churches Together"
- One desire for the future is the need for growth in all areas of our church life, in particular our regular worshipping numbers at services.
- We are open to change, so someone with fresh ideas would be welcomed.
- In the future we would like to think about having a Mother and Toddler Group if we could find suitable accommodation within the church.
- A number of families in the parish are of a Non – Christian Faith, and we would like to encourage them to our activities and worship.
- We wish to grow as a team.

2. What do we need from our new incumbent?

We would like our new incumbent to be:

- Energetic and friendly, with an understanding of Catholic liturgy
- Have a sense of humour
- People orientated, with an understanding of life both within and outside the church.
- Inspirational and engaging.
- Approachable and down to earth.
- Be spiritual and prayerful.
- Capable of management and leadership.
- Able to give mutual support.
- Practical and flexible
- Understanding of the need for a period of stability

St CYPRIAN'S, HAY MILLS

3. Our Vision & Mission statement

"Through Jesus Christ in unity, reaching out with love and service into the community"

- Growing our congregation; building and strengthening the fellowship and spiritual life of the congregation.
- Reaching out to all the people of Hay Mills through the love of our Lord Jesus Christ. Proclaiming God's love for all people.
- Using established links such as the 'Swan Group' and 'Stechford and Yardley Churches Fellowship' and the participation in the 'Women's World Day of Prayer' to extend our vision effectively.
- The church has already contacted 'Thrive Together Birmingham' to see if and how they can help and guide the future of our community. The one thing that is certain is that God wants Christ's message to carry on in this area of Birmingham and it is us who need to carry out this task.

4. What can we offer a new incumbent?

- A challenge! Because of the size and age of the congregation this will be a real challenge but we also see this as an opportunity to encourage the growth of the congregation and hopefully attract younger members.
- A loyal and supportive congregation.
- A church family who are loving, generous, kind and who are welcoming to everyone who walks through our doors.
- As a church we have always paid our apportionment.
- The support of the Readers and Pastoral Team.

5. Gifts we are looking for in an incumbent

- Someone who will be able to connect the Bible to everyday life in a modern, imaginative and creative way.
- Someone who can be flexible in their approach to worship.
- A person with a life rooted in prayer.
- Someone who will collaborate with our ministry team and encourage all to use their skills and talents.
- A person who can be a strong presence in the local community, including strengthening existing local school links and continue those with the Webster and Horsfall factory, Wilson's Funfair Community and also develop an offered connection with the local Fire Station.
- A person who will catch the vision for our Industrial Heritage Centre project in collaboration with significant local partners and relish the prospect of developing the community, church and partners links to create something of city-wide significance as an engine for spiritual and social renewal.

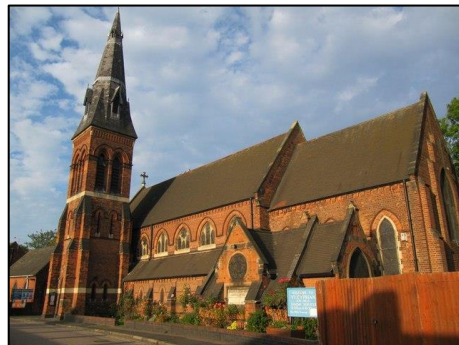
- A person who can affirm our congregation, its church tradition and encourage more worshippers into Church, especially young people and children.
- Someone who will encourage people to serve God and one another.
- Someone who will promote an active relationship with other local Churches.
- We hope our incumbent will enjoy working with both churches and their different traditions and contexts, making Sundays work for all and building quality time with each community and congregation.
- Someone with experience of life and a good sense of humour.

PART C: DETAILED PARISH INFORMATION

ST CYPRIAN'S, HAY MILLS

6. Background

The parish of Hay Mill is situated on the east side of Birmingham. It is bounded by seven other parishes with parish churches of various Anglican traditions and social economic circumstances. The oldest part of the church building was originally built as a school house for the mill workers children by the mill owner Charles Horsfall on land belonging to the factory estate. This was subsequently converted into a chapel and the present School Room which stands beside the church was built in 1863. In 1873 the foundation stone was laid for the present-day Church. The new building was erected above a tunnel built over the River Cole. In January 1874 the Church of St Cyprian was opened for public worship. This land was then in the parish of Yardley. When the parish of Hay Mill was established the church was situated at the western edge of the parish.



St Cyprian's Church is now a 'Listed Building' which means that it has been officially recognised as having special historical and architectural interest. The historic links with the Horsfall family and factory continue to this day and we are glad to look forward to celebrating the 300th anniversary of the factory in 2020 and progressing our industrial heritage project together and more.

7. The Local Area

The A45 is a three lane dual carriage way that cuts through the parish with most of the housing on the opposite side of the road to the church.

A large number of houses and businesses were demolished to make way for the building of the road.

The parish is in a Multi-faith area.

The area has a variety of shops i.e. Barbers, Takeaways, Supermarkets, Decorating Suppliers, Builders Merchant, Furniture and Carpet Shop, Asda, B&M, Argos and Next. The Swan Shopping Centre is nearby and has a Tesco and variety of other shops. There is also a Farmfoods and Lidl supermarkets within the area.

There is a Public House and two Primary schools within the area, Redhill School and St Bernadette, which is a Roman Catholic School.

There are various factories in the area. The church has always had a good relationship with the Webster and Horsfall Factory. There is a local train station where they occasionally have Steam Trains running.

The A45 has a very good bus route which goes directly into Birmingham City Centre, Birmingham International Airport, Solihull and Coventry.

8 The Congregation

The congregation, which is usually in the low to mid twenties, is an older one, most of whom have been attending the church for a number of years. The children who used to attend have grown up and moved away to other parts of the country or even the world. The presence of young families is something everyone really misses, but God is working on this.

9. Current Worship Pattern

The normal services at the moment consist of a single Sunday morning service of either Holy Communion (with a visiting Priest) twice a month, Morning Prayer or Family Service.



There are four Readers working in the parish. This allows not only the weekly services to be covered, but for bible study courses to be offered by two of the readers for those wishing to attend.

10. Swan Group

The church is part of the Swan group of churches which includes St Mary the Virgin Acocks Green and St Michael and all Angels South Yardley.

St Michael and St Cyprian previously shared a Priest so both churches are now in interregnum.

The Swan group have combined services at various times of the year with variable attendances from each of the visiting churches. Each church seems to have a core membership who will try to support the other churches in the group at these events.

11. St Cyprian's Ministry - The Five Marks of Mission

11.1 *Proclaiming the Good News of the Kingdom*

There is a single act of worship on a Sunday morning. This is Holy Communion (Common Worship Order 1) with a visiting priest and Morning Prayer or a Family Service lead by the Readers. When the service is Holy Communion anyone who is a communicant member of their own church is welcome to take Holy Communion or receive a blessing.



11.2 *To teach, baptize and nurture new believers*

Anyone may be brought for baptism, be it a child or adult for baptism. A member of the pastoral team will usually visit the parents or the person prior to baptism to explain its meaning and what will happen. Infant baptism has become unfortunately rare, as with Confirmation in the parish, so nurturing the growth of new believers maybe limited to giving a loving welcome to visitors, but God has to be able to start somewhere.

11.3 *To respond to human need by loving service*

St Cyprian's Church was the first to have a Pastoral Team commissioned in the Birmingham Diocese and there have been new members of the team that have been commissioned. The Pastoral Team visit the sick, take communion to those who are frail or to ill attend church. They also go into the parish to prepare families for baptism and carry out bereavement visits. Two of the Readers have a good relationship with Redhill Road

School and once a term attend the school to take the assembly.

The Pastoral team, which includes some of the Readers, show God's Love constantly in the parish and also in a wider field to those who need the assurance of God's Love. The PCC has a Safeguarding policy. All Readers and PCC members either have been or soon will be DBS checked.

Marriage

The church is licensed for weddings to be carried out here. Previous priests have performed the re-marriage of divorcees in the church.

Funerals

Anyone who wishes their loved one to have a church service prior to committal is welcome. The service will be carried out to their wishes as long as it falls within the Christian message.

11.4 seek to transform unjust structures of society, to challenge violence of every kind and pursue peace and reconciliation

There is a regular Coffee Morning held on a Friday morning from 11am till 1pm, which is open to the local community and is part of The Place of Welcome scheme. We sell cakes, sandwiches, cooked breakfast and hot drinks. Profits made from the coffee morning are donated monthly to a variety of charities.

There is a monthly community bingo afternoon held on a Monday. Profits made from the bingo afternoon are donated monthly to a variety of charities.

Some of the charities that are regularly supported are Marie Curie, Breast Cancer, MacMillan, The Children's Society, Tear Fund, Birmingham City Mission. We make regular donations of money and food to Birmingham City Mission for their homeless work, food bank and we donate produce from the Harvest Festival and toys at Christmas time. Shoe boxes are filled and sent abroad on an annual basis.



A Ladies Group 'Grapevine' meet monthly and cover a wide variety of activities, craft evenings, occasional talks from outside sources etc.

Through our close links with Tear Fund we are active members of the 'Toilet Twinning' scheme which benefits African and Asian communities.

We regularly hold social events, concerts, barn dances, lent lunches and always have a cup of tea and a chat after Sunday Morning Services.

We hold a St Cyprian Memorial Event with a different theme each year. This is a weekend long event celebration of St Cyprian and this church within its community. Themes such as 'A walk down the Fordrough' and 'St Cyprian's 150 Years Anniversary' have attracted many people to attend or return back to the locality bringing with them photos, mementoes and stories of their families for sharing with all.

Wilson's Funfair community consider St Cyprian's as their local Church and hold their celebrations with us.

The Memorial Hall

- We hold most of the Churches social events in the Memorial Hall. Events such as Concerts, Barn Dances, Harvest Supper, Quizzes, Coffee Morning, Bingo Afternoon, etc.
- The Memorial Hall is also used by members of the community for a variety of events.

- Narcotics Anonymous Group meet on a Tuesday evening.
- The Language School meets on a Wednesday Morning, providing English language classes.
- The Recovery Church meets on a Thursday evening.
- Two separate African Churches meet in the hall on Saturdays and Sundays.
- Family celebrations are held in the hall, particularly members of the Asian Community.
- The local Catholic School held their 'Leavers Prom' celebration in the hall last July.

11.5 To strive to safeguard the integrity of creation, and sustain and renew the life of the earth

Where possible we try to use Fairtrade products. We are aware of our carbon footprint and are constantly making an effort to try to reduce this.

The factory next to the church are undertaking conservation work in the area and is a centre for renewable energy, this work is ongoing.

A recent review of the Quinquennial Inspection raised significant questions about repair and renovation needs in the Church building. This has developed into an exciting partnership with the Horsfall and Webster factory towards a full-scale redevelopment project with the historic church and their adjacent historic hall, museum and archives at the heart. This will have particular resonance in 2020 which is Horsfall's 300th anniversary and a focus for energy and activity. It is envisaged that the church would link with the centre for renewable energy, a new Birmingham University centre being established on the factory site and a Colne River valley mapping project. This envisions the church becoming a centre for Urban Industrial Heritage with continuing living worshipping community, both as mission and ensuring its sustainability going forward. This has support from CofE Birmingham the Archdeacon and Historic Places of Worship Support Officer. The project is currently preparing an application for an Awards for All grant as preparation for a major fundraising application sometime in 2019. The project will aim to revitalize the church at the centre of a key and historic industrial area of East Birmingham, where currently there is no historic focus.

ST MICHAEL & ALL ANGELS SOUTH YARDLEY



St Michael's is a very welcoming church community.
All are welcome to join us in our worship and in our various activities.

Our worship follows a high Anglican format and we are proud of our strong musical roots.

We are a church with a big heart that worships in a big building.
That heart is to see God's kingdom break through into the lives of our families, friends and neighbours.

‘Let no one be a stranger in our midst!’



**St Michael & All Angels
Rowlands Road
Yardley
Birmingham
B26 1AS**

Parish website: www.smaaa.church



12. OUR LOCAL AREA

We are situated in a mainly residential outer suburb of Birmingham in the east of the city, near to Solihull.

Transport

We have good local public transport, being a short walk away from a number of local bus services. We are situated close to the centre of national motorway and rail systems, being close to Birmingham International Airport.

Shopping

There are a number of well-known supermarkets locally, with the Bullring Shopping centre in Birmingham, and Touchwood Shopping Centre in Solihull.

Schools

There are four primary schools in our parish, Yardley Primary School, Oasis Academy Hobmoor, Gilbertstone Primary School, and Lyndon Junior and Infants School. In addition there is Brays School Sheldon (for children with special needs), and East Birmingham Network Academy. There are also a number of Grammar Schools and Independent Schools in the area.

Culture

The world class Symphony Hall and the CBSO, Birmingham Royal Ballet are in Birmingham City Centre, also the Alexandra and Repertory Theatres, with regular shows, along with Museums and the Art Gallery.

There are two large entertainment arenas, the Gentings and Barclaycard, both close by. Further afield is the Royal Shakespeare Theatre at Stratford-upon-Avon.

Sport

Premier and Championship football teams, West Bromwich Albion, Birmingham City, and Aston Villa. The Alexander Stadium is used regularly for National and International Athletics, and the NIA is used for many different indoor events.

Historic

Blakesley Hall, is a only a short walk away. Sarehole Mill, The Jewellery Quarter, and the Back to Backs (a National Trust site) are in Birmingham. The towns of Warwick, Stratford-upon-Avon, and Kenilworth are all a short drive away.

13. PARISH HISTORY

The origins of what is now the parish church of St Michael & All Angels, South Yardley, are to be found in the early 1880's, when St Edburgha's, the parish church of Yardley, (at that time still part of Worcestershire), established a small wooden mission room in what was later to be known as Church Road, just below the Swan. This was replaced in 1898 by a more substantial, if unprepossessing, brick building, also in Church Road, but lower down, a few yards above Milton Crescent.

With the continuing increase in the population of South Yardley, this building was enlarged in 1909, and on 16th April 1912, being now in Birmingham, it was licensed for public worship by the Bishop of Birmingham, taking the name of St Michael's Church Room.

As South Yardley continued rapidly to develop, it was decided by St Edburgha's that a curate should be taken on specifically to live in, and be given responsibility for, the area, and so in 1923 one of the new houses then being built in Rowlands Road (No. 43) was acquired for this purpose, being given the name of St

Michael's House. Following the gift of a plot of land in that immediate area by Thomas Rowbotham, a new hall was enabled to be built at the junction of Yew Tree Lane and Rowlands Road, and on 15th March 1930 St Michael's Church Hall, designed by Gately & Parsons, was formally licensed and opened. The old church room in Church Road was retained and continued to be used as a parish room up until 1964, when following the expiry of the lease, it was demolished.

In 1948 St Michael's finally achieved its independence from St Edburgha's when the conventional district of South Yardley was created, with a priest-in-charge. In 1956 this status was upgraded to that of a statutory district, (a parish in all but name), with a vicar. The only impediment then to full 'parish' status was the lack of what was perceived to be an appropriate church building, but ten years later this matter was rectified when on 7th May 1966 the bishop of Birmingham, Dr Leonard Wilson, consecrated what is now the parish church of St Michael & All Angels, South Yardley. This new building incorporated a new vicarage linked to the church and was connected to the old building, (to be used in future as a hall), via a long narthex.

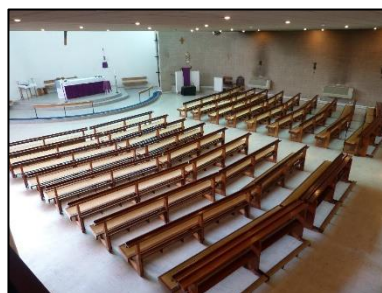


The plain white interior of the new church was enhanced by the inclusion of two works of art by the noted sculptor, John Bridgeman, these being the statue of Madonna and Child and the large crucifix suspended over the high altar. In 1988 the interior was further enhanced by the addition of the Stations of the Cross, and then in 1997 a permanent chapel dedicated to St Gregory was established in the Baptistry, the statue of St Gregory being inherited from the redundant church of St Gregory the Great, Small Heath.

Given the restricted amount of the funds put at their disposal, the architects, Denys Hinton & Associates, had produced in 1966 what was a remarkably fine building, but, unfortunately, one with a flat roof. Over the course of the ensuing years, following constant problems with leakage, it became evident that this feature of the building would eventually require what would be expensive refurbishment. This finally came about in 1999 when, in accordance with designs by Jenns Howell Ltd. a new angled roof was erected over the church, together with a false ceiling and new clerestory windows at the east end. The refurbished church was re-hallowed by the bishop of Birmingham, Mark Santer on 7th May 1999.



With the advent of the new millennium in 2001, the church's millennium project, a statue of St Michael by Peter Eugene Ball, was installed over the west door. The statue, together with a Wayside Calvary mounted on the exterior south wall (a gift from St Aiden's) was formally blessed by Bishop Santer on 16th September 2001. Further artwork arrived in 2002, with the installation of the painted panels for the clerestory windows, the work of Rachel Wroe-Sawko, which were duly blessed by the Bishop of Aston, John Austin on 7th May 2002. With its (relatively) new roof and refurbishment, attractive artwork and musical attributes, St Michael's is well equipped to face the challenges ahead.



OUR CHURCH TODAY

14 Our Church “Establishment”

Readers	Faith Smith [Worship Organiser] Jane Clarke [Safeguarding Officer]
Churchwarden	Ian Biggs
PCC Treasurer	Andrew McIntock
PCC Secretary	Margaret Atkins
PCC Members	Kathryn Hoskin [Guide/Brownie liaison officer] Denise Knott Rosemary Lissaman Dorothy Morrow [Sacristan] Lesley Pattison [Flower arranger]
Sacristan	Dorothy Morrow
Organist	Ian Biggs



15 The Parochial Church Council.

Our PCC is a close-knit group full of ideas and aspirations. We have one dedicated churchwarden, 6 PCC members and 2 Readers and PCC secretary but, being a small group, discussions can be lively and fruitful. As a whole the committee is dedicated to the spiritual and general well-being of St Michael and All Angels church and works hard towards its advancement and growth along with outreach into the wider community. With a number of sub-committees, which include non-PCC members, our needs are covered very efficiently. The sub-committees are Worship and Mission, Buildings and Maintenance, Communications/Publicity and Social. The PCC meet once a month, except for August.

16 The Congregation

Numbers at our Sunday services remain relatively stable, attracting between 35/40 people. The majority of our congregation are at present in the over 60's bracket. While a few of our regular congregation are within walking distance, there are a number that live on the outer limits or outside our parish so these use private transport. Some of the less able members of the congregation are given lifts by others.



We are currently looking at ways of encouraging growth in our worshipping numbers with the hopes and aims of attracting new members, families and young people. Whilst our worship is traditional, formal and dignified, all families are encouraged.

Our style of worship has been the mainstay of St Michael's for many years, and the congregation is made up of people from differing traditions, who find our worship appealing and enriching.

The laity are very actively involved by reading and leading intercessions. We have two licensed readers who lead services from time to time and also preach at times throughout the year.

The numbers of people who attend the Tuesday morning Mass, which is followed by breakfast, range upwards to around 18. This service offers people both a spiritual refreshment and good fellowship.

The numbers who attend our Thursday evening Mass (currently only held once a month during the vacancy) can range up to around 8 people.

17 The Swan Group

The Swan group is made up of three local churches, St Michael's, St Cyprian's Haymill and St Mary's Acocks Green. We meet every 6 – 8 weeks and are represented at the meetings by our Churchwarden and the two readers. We discuss matters relating to our individual churches and the group as a whole.

We hold three joint services each year, the first Sunday in Advent, Candlemas, and a Songs of Praise Service in the summer. These are rotated so no church does the same service two years running.

18 Safeguarding

Safeguarding is an issue that we take very seriously at St Michael's. We have a dedicated safeguarding officer, and a recently updated safeguarding policy. A copy of this is available for anyone to see, and is shortly to be put on the website. In addition all our PCC members have had DBS checks carried out as required by the Diocese.

THE MINISTRY OF OUR CHURCH

19 Worship and Mission

Worship at St Michael's follows the High Church tradition. Our Sunday Service is a Sung Eucharist, using Common Worship Liturgy order one, with readings from both the Old and New Testament. We follow the Triduum over the Easter Period.

We have a team of Servers who assist at this and other services on a regular basis, along with a rota of readers and intercessors.

Tuesday Morning Holy Communion Service

This said service is very popular and it is followed by breakfast. We use Common Worship liturgy and the week-day Missal for the readings, and Saints days are observed. A server also assists at this service, which is conducted in the Gregory Chapel.

Thursday Evening Healing Service

A healing service, with said mass, is currently held on the evening of the first Thursday of every month, during our vacancy. Specific prayers are said for healing and this service is both popular and helpful to a number of people. Again, this service is conducted in the Gregory Chapel, and a server assists the priest.

Play and Praise

In February 2016 'Play and Praise' was started. This meets on the first Sunday of each month at 2.00pm in the church hall. It offers an opportunity for those with families who find it difficult to attend regular worship for whatever means to begin to become part of the life of the church. Activities are held, along with prayer and bible teaching. Attendance has grown since inception. It is run by one of the Readers, ably assisted by two members of the congregation. It is hoped in time that those attending will begin to feel that they can become part of the regular worshipping community. This latter point is being actively but gently encouraged.



The Ministry Team

This consists of the two readers at present, with the churchwarden attending in the absence of the priest. Currently the two readers share the sermons with the visiting priests. One of the readers is responsible for conducting funerals when necessary.

Sacristy Team

We have a small team led by our Sacristan. Their role is setting up the church for all of the services throughout the year. This includes preparation of the altar, the vessels and the vestments.

They are also responsible for changing the liturgical colours around the church, in accordance with the Church Calendar.

Pastoral Care

Home Communion is offered in times of illness, and hospital visits are made to church members when needed. Our monthly magazine "The Messenger" keeps people up to date with current and forthcoming events.

We have a regular demand for Baptism's from the local community. We had 6 baptisms during 2017. All Baptism families are contacted at Christmas time with details of our Christmas Services, in the hope they will join us over the Christmas period.

We also keep in touch with bereaved families, who are invited to our Annual Memorial Service at All Souls Tide.

20. Outreach

Local Schools and Pre-School

We have excellent contacts with Gilbertstone Primary School, which has over 450 pupils and 70 staff. Their latest Ofsted report was "good".

The School use our church at least twice a year for services, and these are attended by the pupils and teachers. In addition many of the many parents attend with many of them being of differing faiths. We have also been asked to allow a visit from the pupils in the near future for a project on "Places of Worship". Our reader Jane Clarke continues to keep in contact with the school in the absence of a priest.

Harvey Road Pre-School uses our church hall every weekday morning and afternoon during term time. Spiritual contact is made with them at least four times each year (Christmas, Lent, Easter and Harvest), when the children and parents are invited into the Church for a short service, led by one of our ministry team.

The Website

Our regularly updated website promotes the Church and its activities, ensuring we have a distinct online presence. We were fortunate in planning ahead to be able to secure our website address in the face of high interest from other churches with the same name.

We are able to add almost unlimited pages, so expansion is not an issue, and so far, we show service times, events, special activities, plenty of photographs of both inside and outside of the church, and we can focus on particular happenings, such as Holy Week, Christmas and Summer Fairs, and so on. There are sections devoted to our history, the architecture and social activities. We also link our site to several others including those within the Swan Group.

We are aware that our site has been warmly received by those at the Diocesan Office, who wants to check and see what we are doing. There have been several contacts from people who used to come to St Michael's or who live in the area and many have thanked us for this information. Enquiries for weddings, baptisms, hire of the church hall, etc. can be made via the contacts section. One special feature is being able to have several months of "The Messenger" available to download for people who don't manage to get a printed copy, so they can view it online.

The website address is shown on our new noticeboards and we will soon be able to add the QR (Quick Response) code to those signs to make it even easier to view www.smaaa.church.

The Messenger

The Messenger is produced monthly and advises of current and future events and contains articles submitted by members of the congregation. It also remembers birthdays and special anniversaries or bereavements. It is helpful in keeping members of the congregation in touch especially in times when they are ill and can't come to church.

Social and Fundraising

We have a strong sense of fellowship, with regular social and fundraising events through the year. These events allow us to work together, relax together and very often to share a meal, which contribute to church funds.

Recent events have included:

- Bi-monthly film show followed by afternoon tea
- Beetle drive with fish and chip supper
- Charity coffee morning
- Quiz evening with home cooked supper
- "April Fooling Around" evening to appeal to that inner child in us.

We have a Summer Fair, which is held outside around the church (weather permitting). This is a visible presence and attracts members from the local community, with our major fundraising event of the year being the Christmas Fair.

Music and Recitals

The church is extremely fortunate to be blessed with two outstanding instruments – a large Makin digital organ voiced in the French tradition, and a Steinway grand piano. The organ is always used for services, and the piano at times for recitals and other occasions. Both instruments are in a good state of repair and tuning. We have an excellent organist whose music continues to enhance our style of worship.

There is an annual series of organ and piano recitals, currently on the first and last Bank Holiday Monday of the year, with other dates in between. There is a regular committed group who attend these recitals, not only from St Michael's but also other churches.

The Children's Society

St Michael's has a long tradition of supporting The Children's Society. We hold an annual box collection and each year the proceeds of the Christingle Service collection go to this worthy cause, particularly supporting vulnerable teenagers.



21. Ecumenical Activities

Stechford and Yardley Churches Together.

St Michael's is a member of the Stechford and Yardley Churches Together. We are represented by 2 lay members of the congregation. There are two meetings each year, and two joint services, one in Holy Week, and the other in Advent at which all the churches are invited to take an active part.

There are two outside services held each year at the local shopping centre. These are on Easter Saturday and before Christmas, followed by refreshments at St Michael's.

We also hold joint lent courses at a variety of churches.

Women's World Day of Prayer

This annual service moves to a different church each year. We are represented at the meetings by our two readers, Faith and Jane, although other members of our congregation take part in the service.