

St.Lawrence's Church Over Peover



Parish Profile





In a nutshell

St. Lawrence, Over Peover is a small rural parish of 684 residents residing in 288 dwellings with an equally small, but deeply faithful and welcoming congregation. Holy Communion on three out of every four Sundays is very important to us as the core of our worship, but we are open to alternative forms of worship such as Café Church in the wider community in addition to more village pastoral care especially as our church is over one mile distant from the village centre. Bringing the Church in all its senses into the community is paramount in seeking to grow.



We have introduced initiatives - Garden Church, Advent Windows, Cherish Days, a Posada Trail in Advent and until recently, Family Festivals, so recognise the need not only to sustain, but also to grow our profile in the village. In addition, we have well attended Summer and Christmas Fairs, a thriving 100 Club and a renowned Nativity Service attracting a congregation of over 300.



We have an historic church in a tranquil setting. A significant percentage of our regular congregation live outside the village but choose to worship at St. Lawrence. The siting of a new village hall is a key issue at present and is important to the Church, not least as it would give us a central base from which to offer Café and Family Church in the heart of the village.



Skills and qualities

We wish to continue in our united benefice with Lower Peover on the existing 75/25 basis and the new incumbent we seek shall be

1. A warm, enthusiastic and welcoming presence in our church and our community
2. Able to work alongside us to grow our church across all age groups to ensure that St Lawrence is relevant to their needs. Maintaining a profile in the village is key to growing the church and, if a new village hall is built, its use by the church will aid that goal.
3. Have a deep faith which will inspire those already within our regular congregation and reach out to those whose existing links (e.g. 100 Club members) with St Lawrence need to be encouraged and nurtured.

A little more about our Village



Over Peover, also known as Peover Superior, lies between Knutsford, Chelford and Lower Peover. The A50 cuts through the westerly part of the widespread parish which also encompasses the hamlets of Snelson and Peover Heath. Housing is predominantly privately owned but there are Council owned bungalows and a new development of affordable housing

Historically the main sources of employment in the village have been agricultural and horticultural. Those remain, but the main employer is Barclays Bank Technology Centre situated in Radbroke Hall, with over 1500 people working on site.

The village has its own primary school which is part of the Aspire Education Trust. Our previous vicar attended once a month for an assembly and the children come to our church for their annual carol service. There is also a recently opened private day nursery, Kids Country.

The village hall dates from WW1 and is owned jointly by the Church and the WI. Its replacement is the subject of current local debate. It is supported by the Parish Council.



The main clubs and societies in the village are the WI and the Cricket Club. The local Mainwaring Probus Club now meets in Knutsford due to the lack of facilities at the Village Hall. The WI organises a biennial Produce Show. The playing fields offer football training facilities and fitness classes

There is an active Methodist Chapel in Snelson and two alternative wedding venues at Colshaw Hall and Merrydale.

There are three public houses, The Parkgate in the heart of the village, The Whipping Stocks by the A50 and the Dog at Peover, the latter having hosted our Advent Carols for the last few years.



The Church of St Lawrence

Our Church is situated next to Peover Hall in Peover Park over a mile distant from the heart of the village. It is accessed through the Hall farmyard, which is a geographical challenge in growing the church!

The north and south chapels date from the fifteenth century and house the nationally significant monuments of the original manorial family, the Mainwarings. The main body of the church is brick built and was constructed in 1810 following a fire. It is Grade 1 listed and currently in reasonably good repair, awaiting some external pointing work in Spring 2020.



There are two important points of interest, namely one of only two churches in England that has surviving fragments of stained glass depicting the murder of St. Thomas a Becket and a Stars and Stripes flag presented to the Church by General Patton who was stationed at Peover Hall during WW2 and worshipped at St. Lawrence.

Church activities

For 12 of the 14 years of our last incumbency we held Family Festivals ten times a year for families at 4pm on a Sunday at the church. Links with our FF families have been maintained and we also have a What's App group for those young families in both Over and Lower Peover who join in the Posada trail throughout December. The Holy Family make their way from family to family, arriving at church on Christmas Eve for our re enactment of the Nativity by adults which culminates in a stable tableau with real donkey! Over 300 people attend. We have plans for a Journey of the Kings for Epiphany.

We have until recently marked each Advent Sunday with carols at various venues in the village but it is being reduced to just one Sunday for carols around the village Christmas tree in 2019. We also have a Service of Nine Lessons and Carols with soloists from our congregation.

In the summer months we have held Garden Church where we gather in a village garden for quiet contemplation and prayer.



Our main fundraising events are a summer fete in July in the gardens of Peover Hall and a Christmas fair in November in the Village Hall. We have staged other fundraising events such as a Flower Festival and a Cherish Day to ensure that our finances remain stable.

We also have an active 100 Club which is supported by many who reside in the village, but do not attend regularly. In 2020 we plan to invite our 100 Club Members for tea at church with historical tours so they can appreciate how their financial support aids the upkeep of our Church.

Fellowship after the service with coffee in church is held twice a month. Hospitality is challenging with no kitchen or toilet facilities, but that does not dim our resolve to be a warm and welcoming church!