

The Parish Church of St. Mary, Sandbach



‘Tis Good, Lord, to be here!

Would you like to be here and help us grow our church?

Are you the person to become part of our family, build up our Church and encourage us to fulfil our mission and become an increasing blessing to the community?

We ask you prayerfully to consider coming to serve with us in our parish.

The parish church sits at the heart of the historical market town of Sandbach, Cheshire. There are outstanding features to be found in the Sandbach area: The Ancient Crosses; lovely countryside; good schools and amenities; other beautiful historic buildings. It is thought that a church has existed on or near this site for over a thousand years and it now serves an ever expanding population, with new builds within and on the outskirts of the Parish.

It would undoubtedly be challenging, but a position with great potential.

There are several retired clergy in the area who are willing to help, a Reader Emeritus and church members, all with a common aim to fulfil our mission in the community.

Do please look at our website:

www.sandbachchurch.co.uk

This has a lot of information as well as many photographs.



Come, Holy Ghost, Our Souls Inspire

Within the challenges of the modern era we are looking for a man or woman of God who aspires to be

A deeply spiritual, joyful, kind and loving vicar with an infectious faith, though still an active learner.

A confident and collaborative leader.

A good listener.

An intelligent communicator of the gospel and a good bible teacher.

A leader in taking our faith beyond our church doors and to be a visible presence in the community we serve.

A joyful celebrant of the sacraments.

Committed to strengthening and building on the important links that we have with our schools.

A facilitator of lay ministry to people of all ages.

Supportive of the work of our PCC teams.

Willing to continue the work of developing positive meetings, services and events for all ages.

An encourager of our partnership with Sandbach Churches Together.

Well organised and be able to plan ahead and facilitate excellent communications.

Computer literate and aware of social media.

Sympathetic to ministry in our area.

Self-aware and conscious of the need to balance work and home life.

A vicar who will be pleased to work with the local authority on Civic occasions and the local Royal British Legion on Remembrance Sunday.

Supportive of the development of musical activities in order to enhance our worship.

We seek a leader who will encourage and inspire these same qualities in us, and through working together we shall meet and achieve our challenges for the future.



Be Still, For The Presence Of The Lord

The Parish Church of Saint Mary

St Mary's Church is recorded in the National Heritage List for England as a designated Grade II* listed building

The present church dates largely from the considerable degree of rebuilding by Sir George Gilbert Scott in 1847–49. Much of the existing fabric was replaced and the remaining fabric was encased in new stone. The east end of the church was extended by some 40 feet (12 m) and the tower was rebuilt as a copy of the former tower. The stone, which came from quarries in the Mow Cop area, was given by Sir Philip Grey Egerton M.P. Part of the west end had to be repaired in 1894–95 following a fire. In 1930 Austin and Paley added a choir vestry, and a north porch.

The plan of the church consists of a clerestoried nave and a choir of five bays, with aisles, side chapels, and a tower at the west end. The choir vestry projects from the northwest. The tower is unusual in that it stands on three open arches through which passes a public footpath.

Interior

The font dates from 1859; it is made of Caen stone and was constructed by Thomas Stringer. It has a Greek Palindrome inscription, that reads "NIYON ANOMHMA MH MONAN OYINE". This translated means "Wash my sin not my countenance only". The old octagonal font dated 1669 and decorated with acanthus leaves, was returned to the church in 1938. Scott arranged the memorials around the walls of the aisles. One of these is a marble relief to the memory of Rev. John Armistead, who was vicar from 1828 to 1865.



In 1876 another monument in memory of John Ford, who died in 1839, and which includes a life-size allegorical female figure by an altar.

The roofs are dated 1661. The roof over the north aisle includes a large coat of arms in a wreath.

In the chapels and chancels is stained glass by William Wailes, and in the north aisle is a window by Kempe.

Below you will be able to see how the monuments adorn the wall of the north aisle.



Father, Hear The Prayer We Offer

Current Worship at St Mary's



8.00am Sunday

The service at 8.00am lasts about half an hour and follows the version of Holy Communion in the Book of Common Prayer (Book of Common Worship, Order 2). Between 10 and 15 people attend. There are no hymns and it includes a very short sermon. If you want time to pray or think in peace, the doors open about 7.40am. If you want to speak to the vicar there is usually an opportunity to do so at the end of the service.

10.00am Sunday

The service at 10.00am is the Parish Eucharist and is a more modern-language service from the Book of Common Worship (Order 1). Hymns are part of the service as is a simple music setting of some of the words of the service. There's a sermon, usually lasting about ten minutes. Altogether about 60 to 80 people attend. A crèche area for young children is available at the back of church. Refreshments follow in the church hall.

Usually on the first Sunday of each month, the 10.00am service is a non-Eucharist service of "Morning Prayer for Sunday". On the first and second Sunday, parents with a child who will shortly be baptised also come along to take part in a short Thanksgiving for the Gift of their child.

6.30pm Sunday (3.30pm in winter)

Evensong (the ancient evening service of prayer of the church) is every Sunday evening at 6.30pm (3.30pm in winter). It lasts about 30 minutes and includes prayers, readings, psalms and a short sermon. On the 4th Sunday of the month the choir is usually in attendance. Like the 8.00am service Evensong is a quieter, more thoughtful and reflective kind of worship, following a regular pattern found in the Book of Common Prayer. On Sundays where there has been "Morning Prayer for Sunday" at 10.00am, there is a short Holy Eucharist at this time. Here the emphasis is upon prayers for healing and reconciliation of individuals and the world. During the interregnum only the monthly Choral Evensong has been able to be continued.

11.00am on Wednesday

During the week there is a service of Holy Communion from the Book of Common Prayer at 11.00am on Wednesday. Usually there is a short sermon and about 15 people attend. The service lasts about 30 minutes. Afterwards refreshments are served at the back of church.

Other services are announced on the Notice Board, through the Parish Magazine and on the Website

And It's From The Old And Travel To The New

Worship for All

Our services are currently traditional in style and we enjoy a stable congregation with that format.

We would like to encourage more people of all ages and traditions to be able to find services that are meaningful and helpful for them

Though we do have some families and children, we pray that there will be more opportunities for children and younger people to find a place amongst us.

Our schools have used the church for their Harvest Festivals, Carol Services and Commemoration day. Our Crib Service on Christmas Eve is very popular and sees the church bursting at the seams (with a capacity of around 400).

Could you be the person with the drive to realize the potential and bring back the children and families to our church by giving them something to come back to?

Many baptisms have taken place in St. Mary's, parents are also encouraged to come to church to receive their Baptismal Certificate and to give thanks to God for their child.



When In Our Music God Is Glorified

St Mary's - a musical church



The Choir

The music is an important aspect of the life and worship at St Mary's. Mirroring the worship of the church, the music takes different forms and involves different people.

Our Director of Music Kevin Birch has a connection to the church from the 1970's where his father was the organist.

We have a traditional robed choir which is RSCM affiliated. Currently it only has adult members but it would be an ambition to try to bring back young people to the choir.

The choir faithfully sings the Parish Eucharist each week and usually on the fourth Sunday we have over the last two years re-introduced Choral Evensong, where the choir sings some Anglican chant, the responses and occasionally an Anthem.

They are also a great support to the church and for the last two years have put on an Afternoon Tea prior to Choral Evensong.

Each year the choir sings at the Diocesan Festival at Chester Cathedral.



The Organ

The church has a three manual Hugh Bantom computer organ which is well voiced. It is around 30 years old and has had some mechanical problems over the last few years. An organ fund has been set up for which funds are gradually dripping into for the future.

Further information about St. Mary's organs in the past can be found at the National pipe Organ Registry.

The Music Group

We have a music group which usually plays on the first Sunday of the month at Morning Worship. It is wind and brass group at the moment with the Roland piano.

The music is still mostly traditional but there is scope for a more up to date feel for them.

Heather Bottomley (under the guidance of the Music Director) coordinates the players and music for the group.



On some occasions our choir and our Music Group combine with the organ. This broadens the opportunity for both to worship together through music.



The Bells

Our Captain of the bells is Steven Stoker.

He coordinates all the ringing in the tower and bell ringing practices.

They ring regularly for all the church's services including the weddings and tolling at some funerals.

A peal board in the tower records their pealing records.

At Christmas the townsfolk were treated to some carols rung on the bells which proved very popular



I Danced In The Morning



Until June 1961 St. Mary's Church Hall was the National Day School. In November of that year the PCC bought it for the church.

It is a large space capable of seating 150 people and can be hired for wedding receptions, christenings, birthday parties, concerts and dances etc. It is currently self-financing but the biggest drain on that is the maintenance of an aging building. That said it is a huge asset to the community and to our church. It would be an ideal place to grow the children and youth ministry with messy church or other activities.

At present, it is regularly used by many groups in the town, and others on individual bookings, but there is scope to grow.

The regular groups include:

Archery Club

Brownies

Guides

U3A

Sandbach Animal Rescue

Sandbach Concert Series

Sandbach Partnership



St. Mary's runs its Community Thursday Teas. It is a popular weekly event where both locals and visitors to the town meet up with friends and enjoy various sandwiches and homemade cakes. The newly refurbished kitchen is fully equipped and has a double cooker and is large enough for several people to work in at the same time.

Take My Silver And My Gold

Money matters

Our treasurer is responsible for fulfilling our obligations to the Diocese through the parish share, managing our accounts and week to week business.

It is fair to say that as with other churches managing the finances is one of the challenges we face.

Our faithful congregation are good at rising to the occasion when it comes to regular giving and Gift Aiding, capital projects and mission and charitable giving.

There has been a successful Stewardship Campaign in 2019 and income is supplemented by; fees for special services, church and church hall hire for concerts and other events as well as fund-raising events. Recent improvement projects have been funded by NHLF and through our own reserves.

There is a monthly collection for different missions and charities, at home and abroad.

The church accounts for 2018 are attached.

Fundraising Events During 2019 have included a Beetle Drive, Autumn Fair, Table- Top Sale, Afternoon Tea, Garden Party, various fellowship lunches, and a concert in church



Be Thou My Vision

Our Challenges For The Future

- Being a more open, welcoming family.
- Introducing new and imaginative Services and meetings.
- Lay involvement through various teams.
- Integrating more with the community.
- Deepening our understanding of faith and building up our spirituality.
- Involving more young families.
- Carrying our mission further into the Community.
- Becoming more confident in sharing our faith in Jesus and commending his way of life.
- Growing our choir and music group.
- Encouraging more participation in our church services from all local schools.
- Making full use of the church hall for children and youth ministry and for further development of our Community involvement.
- Re- ordering of the church building to bring clergy, choir and congregation together in worship, to make celebrating the communion safer for our congregation and to enhance our suitability for community use. Achieving this reordering is expected to involve significant projects to be completed over the next few years where we would need to obtain financial help from the National Lottery Heritage Fund.
- Completing the refurbishment of the roofs in the Bradwall and Wheelock Chapels to make them water tight.



Brother, Sister, Let Me Serve You

We are in the Deanery of Congleton in the Diocese of Chester.
Our Patron is the Diocesan Board of Patronage .

You will be supported by lots of people in the Parish

The Churchwardens - Anne Birch, Sheenagh Ashworth

The Reader Emeritus - Joan Plowman

Retired clergy - David Ottley, Howard Eales, Jane Colley

Director of Music - Kevin Birch

Music Group Coordinator - Heather Bottomley

Treasurer - Roger Cooke

Bell Tower Captain - Steve Stoker

Secretary of the PCC - Aileen Higgs

Safeguarding Officer- Joanne Johnson

Electoral Roll Officer—Anne Birch

Sacristan - Andrew Wood

Covenants and Gift Aid - Aileen Higgs

Church Flowers - Sheenagh Ashworth,

Web Editor - Heather Bottomley

Facebook - Kevin Birch

Church Hall Booking Clerk - Sylvia Watkins

Magazine Editor - John Bottomley

Churches Together Representative - Katie Cavanagh

Food Bank Representatives - Stella Craven

Deanery Representatives - Joice Nixon, Joan Plowman

PCC Members

Anne Birch, Aileen Higgs, Janet Hydes, Howard Yates, Brian Day, Reg Dunning,
Ken Winfield, Lynne Winfield, Andrew Wood, Roger Cooke, John Bottomley

Other members of the church contribute in a variety of ways.

Please see the magazine on the church website.

CHALLENGE



The Parish Magazine of St Mary Sandbach

Till We Have Built Jerusalem



Traces of a settlement are found in Sandbach from Saxon times, when the town was called Sanbec. The town's inhabitants were converted to Christianity in the 7th century by four priests: Cedda, Adda, Betti and Diuma. The town has an entry in the Domesday Book from 1086, at which time it was sufficiently large to need a priest and a church.

By the 13th century, much of the land around Sandbach was owned by Richard de Sandbach who was the High Sheriff of Cheshire in 1230. He specifically owned a manor; and claimed an interest in the living of Sandbach. The manor in Sandbach passed through numerous families, including the Leghs and Radclyffes. It was eventually bought by Sir Randolph Crewe who became the Lord of the Manor.

Sandbach has been a market town since 1579, when it was granted a Royal Charter by Elizabeth 1 due to the petitioning of Sir John Radclyffe, who, as the largest landowner in Sandbach and the owner of the Sandbach Old Hall, encouraged the farmers of the area to hold a market in the town on Thursdays.

The Thursday market is still held outdoors on Scotch Common, and in and around the town hall. Sandbach is also home to other listed buildings including Sandbach School.

Many of the local public houses, which were formerly stagecoach stops, are listed, for example the Lower Chequer. Many of the buildings of the town were designed by the renowned architect Sir George Gilbert Scott who designed Sandbach Literary Institution, Sandbach School, and the Almshouses.

He also restored St Mary's Church.

God Is Working His Purpose Out

Employment and prosperity

Today the population of Sandbach is about 8070. In recent history its people found employment in the town's two vehicle manufacturers Foden's and E.R.F. Neither of these companies exist and therefore people find employment largely in retail, education, nearby towns, or commute to Manchester and other regions of the North West.

Though many of the population are reasonably prosperous, there are small areas where there is unemployment and food poverty.

St. Mary's contributes to the local foodbank operated by the Sandbach Methodist Church



Health Care

Health care in the town is provided by the Ashfields Primary Care Centre.

There are Dentists, Physiotherapist, and care homes. The nearest hospital and A & E is in Crewe about five miles away.

The previous incumbent visited and administered Holy Communion to those who are unable to come to church or who may be in local care homes.

Schools

These include:

Sandbach Primary Academy School

Offley Primary Academy

Sandbach High School and Sixth Form College.

Sandbach School And Sixth Form

The previous incumbent was a governor at Offley Primary Academy School.

Sports and clubs

Bowls, cricket, cycling; golf, rugby, Leisure Centre (Gym and Swimming Pool), Sandbach United Football Club.

Scouts, Guides, Beavers, Cubs, Beavers, Brownies, Lions Youth Brass Band, Cooperative Youth Windband, Love Music Trust Music Hub

There are also a large number of groups run by U3A

When I Needed A Neighbour

Other Churches and Christian Groups in Sandbach

St Mary's has good relationships with the local Roman Catholic, Methodist and Baptist Church. These groups are linked as Churches Together in Sandbach and our representative at the regular meetings is Katie Cavanagh.

A number of services are shared across the churches throughout the year. On Good Friday an outdoor presentation of the Crucifixion takes place around the town with members from all denomination.



In the Summer of 2019 the Churches Together in Sandbach started an initiative to provide for Children and families who were on free school meals.

For the incumbent's farewell, all these churches attended a Choral Evensong at St. Mary's which was well attended and a presentation was made .

The incumbent has met and co-operated with members of the local Royal British Legion to arrange the yearly Remembrance Parade and Church Service at St. Mary's. In other years an Armed Forces Service has been organised to coincide with Armed Forces Day.

In 2014 more than 140 soldiers from The Mercian Regiment marched through the centre of Sandbach on Sunday, June 29, as they are granted the Freedom of Entry to the town. They were welcomed to St. Mary's for a church service following the march.



From The Book Of Numbers

Parish Statistics	
Number on the Electoral Roll	135
Percentage from out of the Parish	15%
General Age Range	50 - 80
Usual Sunday Attendance under 16	4
16 and over	77
Average Sunday Communicants	62
Baptisms During The Year	61
Confirmations	0
Weddings	12
Funerals in Church	38
Funerals in Crematoria	8

Statistics as at APCMs, December 2018

In My Father's House

The Vicarage is set on the outskirts of the Parish of Sandbach and is a four bedroomed house with spacious rooms, garden, and is a ten minute walk into the centre of the town, close to the Offley Primary Academy School, with both high schools in easy reach.

It has good parking. There is a study and the kitchen was refurbished for the outgoing incumbent.



Are you the one God is calling to serve in Sandbach, to rejoice with us in what has been achieved and to take up the challenges of those things that we know must be done... and, perhaps, some that we do not yet know?