

**The United Benefice of
St John the Evangelist, Macclesfield &
St Thomas, Henbury**

St John's Macclesfield



St John the Evangelist, Macclesfield (population c.9118)

St John's Macclesfield:

Welcome to our church! Based in the South West corner of the town of Macclesfield, St. John the Evangelist is a modern Church of England congregation with a friendly atmosphere whose aim is to serve the community around us and now forms part of the local authority's Connected Communities scheme.

We are inclusive and accessible, with up to date facilities for disabled people, a loop for the hard of hearing, a lift, toilets and baby-changing facilities, and a sound proof gallery' for hard-pressed parents from where the services can be seen and heard. We are committed to Fair Trade, and you can join us for a fairly traded cup of tea or coffee after the Sunday services. We also have plenty of car-parking.

2019 saw the celebration of the 25th anniversary of the opening of the present building (the third St John's Church!).

Electoral Roll: 41

Usual Sunday attendance: 25 (16 years of age and over) + 3 (under 16 years of age)

Our Belief and Vision for the future.

Following an Away Day, facilitated by the Parish Development Officer for the Macclesfield Archdeaconry, the following outcomes were identified and we believe these still to be relevant:

1. Develop engagement with the congregation (and the wider community)
 - a. Through social events
 - b. Home groups
 - c. Prayer groups
2. Explore alternative forms of worship
 - a. A degree of formality
 - b. Excitement
 - c. Has Family Service had its day?
 - d. Worship in the school

Church Services

Sundays:

9.30a.m. Holy Communion (apart from every 2nd Sunday of the Month).

Children of primary school age can join **Sunday Club** during the service; a programme of activities and teaching tailored especially for them, before joining the adults for communion. Clergy dress code is cassock alb

9.30a.m. Family Service every 2nd Sunday of the Month.

An informal service for people of all ages and stages of faith - a great introduction to church. This has historically been devised from scratch month by month by a small lay team in conjunction with the vicar. In the recent past the production of the service has been the sole preserve of the incumbent. During the vacancy the team approach has been resurrected assisted by a Reader from a neighbouring parish. There is no Sunday Club during Family Service. Clergy dress code is informal

Music for the above services is either provided by keyboard or downloaded, mostly from Small Church Music. Back up is also provided by the wife (a practising Roman Catholic) of a member of the congregation when she is not committed to her own church. True ecumenical spirit!

Mid-Week Activities:

Mid-week worship has in recent years lapsed but was formerly an early Wednesday morning act of worship and prayer, being an extended version of the vicar's morning office and often based on Celtic themes and music.

Messy Church is held approximately 4 to 6 times a year on Saturday afternoons led by a committed team of Sunday Club leaders, supported by other members of the congregation. Numbers attending vary considerably but are not uncommonly as many as 30.

A prayer breakfast is held monthly on a Saturday morning and Friday afternoon hosts a coffee drop-in session for a couple of hours each week. The latter is part church-backed and part Connected Community but is moving towards a full time commitment from the parish. Both are supported by members of St Thomas's Church Henbury.

The church supports enthusiastically an annual Christingle Service organised by the parish representatives on the local Children's Society Committee. This is also supported by the School and frequently raises over £500.



Remembrance Sunday



Easter Day



Messy Church

Church Hall

The “Church Hall” is integral with the worship areas and has a wide range of facilities to suit everyone’s needs. It is available throughout the week; daytime and evening and is ideal for small or large parties, celebrations, exercise classes, use by U3A, Connected Communities, counselling and more:

- A variety of room sizes
- Kitchen Facilities
- Audio-Visual Aids/Television
- Data projection built-in in main church room
- On-site, off-street parking
- On main ‘bus routes
- Wheelchair Accessible
- Induction Loop Hearing Aid
- Lift to First Floor
- Community/charity rates
- Broadband connection throughout the premises



The Parish



“I will lift my eyes up to the hills” - thus is the view above from the vicarage study window. The parish comprises three distinct areas. The first in which the church and vicarage are located is former local authority housing built for Manchester post-war overspill and now very largely privately owned or transferred to the local Housing Trust which has expended a lot of time money and effort in improving the environment to the benefit of all. The second area towards the east and the town centre is 1930’s, 1950’s and 1960’s suburban residential development and includes St John’s Aided School. The final area is 1970’s-1980’s residential slightly more up-market estate housing to the south of the parish and which is seen as a little remote from the church. The dividing line between the two latter areas includes one of the more affluent executive housing roads in the town dating from the 1930’s

Finances

Benefice Profile St John the Evangelist Macclesfield & St Thomas, Henbury

PCC income in 2019 was c£44,000, a significant part of which is derived from room hire fees and included an unexpected bonus of some £7,000 from an NHS use of the building for significant parts of the week albeit for only a few months.

Average weekly giving: £ 4.41

Until the change in Parish Share some 13 years ago the PCC met its financial obligations in full. Following the completion of the phasing in of the current system the PCC has never been able to meet its Parish Share in full and despite the combining of the benefices the current share is still beyond the parish's reach.

Charitable giving: We are committed to give 5% of our free will income to charities, split between overseas and home charities and the parish also supports modestly the work of the Hope Centre - a commercial venture by a unity of denominations (Hope in North East Cheshire, formerly Churches Together in Macclesfield but still affiliated to the Churches Together movement). Whilst the Parish can no longer support the annual envelope collection of Christian Aid open plate collections during Christian Aid Week and at Harvest and Christmas are given to Christian Aid.

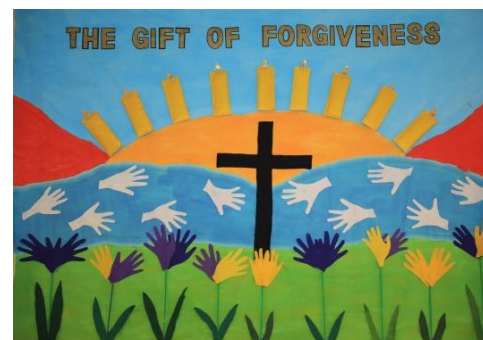
A DVD recording of many of the activities in the life of the church on an annual basis is available on request and a special compilation of the photographic record from 1994 to date was prepared for the Silver Anniversary last summer.

Administration

St John's currently has a voluntary administrator who works 2.5 hours per week in the church office. Sunday service sheets are prepared, invoices sent out for room hire and sundry messages and enquiries dealt with. The church has its own website and broadband connection. Pastoral support is provided via two nominated points of contact who ensure that information received is followed up either by themselves or by delegation to others. The parish has a safeguarding officer and the PCC is individually undertaking the diocesan safeguarding training prior to DBS certification being obtained. All Sunday Club leaders are already in receipt of a DBS certificate.

St John's C of E (Aided) Primary:

The school's most recent Ofsted inspection in 2018 gave an overall assessment of "good". The school has welcomed the parish priest to take assemblies once a week and has always been welcomed into other school activities. There is an excellent relationship between church and school. The school has an independent but closely related Pre-school on site which was originally a spin-off created by the school with significant support from church members. Below are a couple of examples of wall hangings from the school hall



Worship and Ministry in the United Benefice.

The normal current pattern of Services in the two parishes is set out elsewhere. Refreshments after the sole service on a Sunday at St John's means that it considers it important that its morning service is at a time when that time of fellowship can take place

Joint Benefice activities:

We have regularly held joint services with Broken Cross Methodists, Calvary Church and Upton Priory on a quarterly basis but following new appointments elsewhere these have currently been reduced to twice a year. There is a desire to see these perhaps increase to not less than three times a year as they seem to have been much appreciated by those members of the congregations who have travelled to take part! During the vacancy the parishes have chosen on the last Sunday of the month to worship together at the main service on Sunday when there are five Sundays in a month.

The Diocese and the Deanery

The Diocese of Chester

Does the Archdeacon want to add a paragraph here about the diocese?

The Deanery of Macclesfield

Likewise?

Prayer

Lord Jesus Christ,
You have called us
to follow you and
spread the Good News and to make new disciples.
You have called us to be the living body of Christ.
Help our churches to build Your kingdom in our communities,
to be full of joy,
to dedicate our lives
to your worship and service,
reaching out to those
around us and
kindling in others
the fire of your love:
May your Spirit
let us discern your vision
for these churches
and work through us
to serve you
faithfully,
to your glory
and honour.
Amen