

Christ Church Willaston

Parish Profile

April 2022



Contents

	Page
Introduction	2
People	2
Worship and Music	2
Church and Churchyard	5
The Parish	6
Finance	7
Work with Children and Young People	7
Church Groups	8
Pastoral Care	8
Churches Together	9
Community Outreach	9
A Warm Welcome awaits	10
Person Specification	11

Introduction

Christ Church is looking forward to appointing a part-time Priest-in-Charge, who is keen to share the good news of Jesus Christ with the people of Willaston and its environs and help us to grow both spiritually and numerically. The post attracts the provision of a house and 40% of a stipend. The post-holder is expected to offer Sunday duties plus 3 days of ministry per week.

People

The people of Christ Church are known for their warm welcome and are ready to support an enthusiastic and encouraging Priest-in-Charge who is friendly and outward-looking with a desire to minister to all the people of Willaston.

Our Assistant Priest, a self-supporting minister who is in full-time secular employment, has served us extremely well in this role for 12 years. Through our vacancy, he has been ably supported by an experienced team of lay people, some of whom have undertaken the 'Foundations for Ministry' course.

There are various groups of church members, who support the smooth running of the church, from our PCC members, churchwardens and sides-people to our cleaners, gardeners, flower arrangers and refreshment makers. All give abundantly of their time and talents and are greatly valued.

Worship and Music

Two Sunday morning services, each reflecting a different style of worship, are a key part of our strategy for growth, helping us to appeal to a cross-section of the people in the parish. Our aim is to enable people to live out their Christian faith in everyday life by providing good biblical teaching and meaningful praise and worship in an uplifting and encouraging way.



The 9am Parish Communion service uses Common Worship liturgy with traditional hymns and music, which is provided by our organist on the very good pipe organ. There is considerable lay involvement in this service. A quarterly rota helps to ensure that the services run smoothly and encourages the active participation of the laity, a true asset to the life of the church.

The 10.30am All-Age Service uses more informal liturgy with modern worship songs and music, provided by a new church member on the keyboard or through the CD player with words displayed on the screen. Several members of the laity provide talks and activities for younger children, which are fun as well as educational and enjoyed by all. There is much scope for reaching out to young adults and young families.

We hold occasional Sunday evening services and recently held some bi-monthly Choral Evensong services at 6:30pm supported by an excellent visiting choir and organist. These were well received.



Outdoor services have proved popular and have included Carols in the Churchyard on Christmas Eve, a Climate Sunday service and a Pets service. Christmas is a time for special services including our Christingle Service and occasional musical concerts with visiting musicians.



Currently, there is a service of Morning Prayer at 10am on the first Wednesday of the month, which is lay-led and is followed with refreshments in the local café.

Our organist has initiated a programme of organ recitals to raise funds for the continued upkeep of the organ, including most recently an excellent concert for the Platinum Jubilee.

We share occasional services with our friends at the Methodist Church, notably an open-air service on the village green at Pentecost and a Remembrance Sunday service which begins in the churchyard with a short service of wreath-laying at the War Memorial.



Church and Churchyard

Christ Church, a Grade II listed building, provides a tranquil oasis in the centre of the village and at the heart of the Willaston Conservation Area. The church, which was consecrated in 1855, was designed originally as a chapel of ease for Neston Parish Church, thus creating a place of worship and welcome for the people of Willaston which continues today. In 1865 it opened its own church registers and became a Parish Church in its own right. There are now 115 names on the church electoral roll, which represents almost 5% of the parishioners.

A north aisle extension, choir vestry and toilet facilities were added to the church in 1925. At the same time, alterations were made to the chancel, including new oak panelling, altar table, pulpit and a fine two-manual Nicholson pipe organ. The church has some beautiful stained-glass windows by Kempe, Bryans, Simpson and others. The generous nave space seats approximately 150. We hold a number of weddings and funerals each year.



The church hall which stood opposite the church, was demolished ten years ago and new housing built on the site. Money from the sale of the land is available to support the reordering of the church to make the interior more functional and appealing. The old pews are neither beautiful nor comfortable and offer poor flexibility of use.

It is important that our new Priest-in-Charge should be keen to see the church reordered. Reordering the church has long been a prime goal for PCC

and parishioners alike and much discussion has taken place to identify the key objectives to make the church more widely useable. The essential requirements were established and following the appointment of a firm of architects, an initial design study was undertaken, followed by a mechanical and electrical design study carried out by specialist consultants. The design will provide the comfort and flexibility our growing church needs while recognising the importance of using sustainable solutions. The work is being managed and coordinated by a member of the PCC. We will be seeking to appoint a volunteer Project Manager to oversee the work when the main contract is awarded.



The churchyard is of a good size and is still in use as a burial ground. We employ a gardener to cut the grass and hedges. Other maintenance of the grounds is undertaken by volunteers from the congregation. A Scout Hut is sited within the churchyard. The building is currently in need of refurbishment and as a consequence, has temporarily fallen out of use. Discussions are taking place with the scout leadership regarding future plans.

Within a short walking distance of the church, there is a **modern Vicarage**. This is a pleasant, well maintained 4 bedroomed detached house, centrally situated for the primary school, recreation ground, shops and other village amenities.



The Parish

Christ Church Willaston is one of 13 parishes in the deanery of Wirral South which is one of 9 deaneries in the Archdeaconry of Chester.

The parish of Willaston is situated in an attractive semi-rural part of Cheshire, centrally located on the Wirral peninsula. Having grown from a small farming community, with several farms clustered round the village green, it is now home to about 2500 people some of whom commute to Chester, Liverpool, Manchester and even London to work.

Facilities in the village are very good. There is a primary school, a recreation ground with football pitches, tennis courts, children's play area and allotments, medical and dental practices, a pharmacy, mobile post office and library. There is also a range of small shops including a Spar, delicatessen, gift shop and florist. For eating and entertainment, there are two cafés and two pub/restaurants. Willaston is situated 3 miles from Neston, where larger supermarkets and other services can be found. Bus services to Neston, Ellesmere Port, Chester, Heswall and West Kirby run approximately every 2 hours. Hooton railway station is just over 1.5 miles away and has regular trains to Liverpool, Chester and Ellesmere Port.

There are a number of historic buildings of interest including the Old Hall, the Old Red Lion and the Mill, all now private residences. The restored Grade II listed Hadlow Road railway station houses a museum and a cafe. At the station, you can join the Wirral Way, the

disused railway track, now a footpath, cycle and bridleway, which will take you the length of Wirral, a distance of some 12 miles and which connects to other cycleways and footpaths.

Finance

Copies of our recent Annual and Financial Reports are available. This year we have succeeded in increasing our voluntary income through a Giving Initiative. Occasional fund-raising events also help to boost our income.

In recent years, we have struggled to reach our full Parish Share, as required in our high banding. As such we are now unable to afford the cost of a full-time Priest-in-Charge. However, the PCC is confident that we are in a position to offer a part-time post to include Sundays plus 3 days.

We hold designated reserves for the reordering of the church building and we hope to commence the work in the very near future.

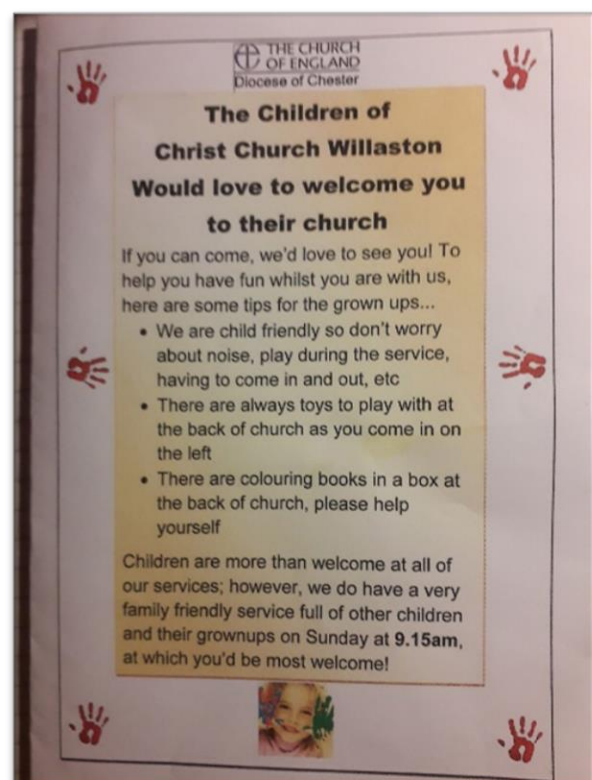
We have dedicated collections of money, toys and foodstuffs for local and national charities. A donation is made to the RBL each year as we share the collection from the Remembrance Sunday service. In particular, we contribute to Christian Aid, the West Cheshire Foodbank, Wirral Churches' Ark Project, the Charles Thompson Mission, the Children's Society, Teams4U Shoebox Appeal, Save the Family and the Bible Society.

Work with Children and Young People

Through Baptisms and our All-Age service, we have links with several young families. We also have a strong relationship with our Church of England controlled primary school.

The school is rated Good by OFSTED and holds an Outstanding SIAMS rating. The staff and children normally come into church for special services four times a year. The Priest-in-Charge leads collective worship in school each week and is one of our three Foundation Governors.

In the autumn the children made poppies to "plant" by the war memorial in the week of Remembrance Sunday to commemorate the centenary of the war memorial and in the summer, they took part in the Churches Count on Nature activities in the churchyard including making a bug hotel. The Headteacher commented "What a brilliant event. Such great partnership working. Thank you all".





For the last two years, the church has provided Christingle packs for the children to make Christingles during their Christmas assembly in school. The Headteacher highlighted how much the children had enjoyed creating their own Christingle to take home.

Historically, we have provided many activities and events for our Youth and Young Families. We have held a fortnightly Youth group, a monthly Praise and Play group and a Holiday Club.

Church Groups

We have a small number of church groups including Mothers' Union, Knit and Natter, Uplift Women's Group and Men's Group which meet for fellowship, fun and food and to support charitable causes and projects in the UK and around the world.

A home group meets fortnightly in the evening for Bible study, prayer and fellowship and is led by members of the group. There is scope for increasing the number of home groups, allowing flexibility of meeting times and the opportunity to include more church members.



We have held successful Lent groups and discipleship courses in the recent past.

We have three church representatives on Deanery Synod and actively support diocesan and deanery events.

Pastoral Care

We offer fellowship and a sense of belonging to a loving church family. At the moment we rely on individual church members to visit those in local residential and nursing homes, those in hospital, the housebound and the bereaved. Two PCC members are licensed to distribute Holy Communion to the house-bound and in care homes. Some of our members visit the nursing home in the parish to lead a service once a month on a Sunday afternoon and this has been well received. However, we feel that there is still work to be done to improve our pastoral care ministry.

Churches Together

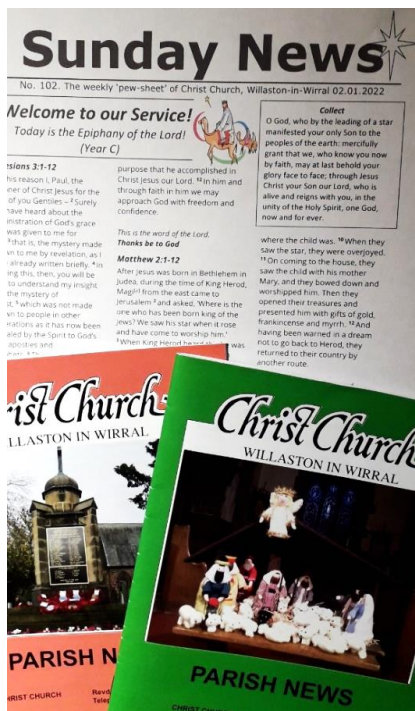
Christ Church is an active member of the ecumenical Neston and District Churches Together. Open the Book is taken into local schools and there are occasional services held on Neston Market Square and in local care homes. Annual services are held for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, Christian Aid Week and One World Week. An ecumenical Lent Group is held with Willaston Methodist Church. Christ Church is also an active member of the Neston Committee of the World Day of Prayer. Last year's service was shown on YouTube and received many views.

Community Outreach

We are conscious that we need to do more in the community and are looking to develop our work in this area. It will be important for the new Priest-in-Charge to get to know the community, to make friends with members of other village organisations and develop an understanding of local issues. Willaston Memorial Hall provides a meeting place for many local groups and a venue for village events, including some church fund-raising events.

The Priest-in-Charge would be a Trustee of the Johnston Recreation Ground Advisory Committee, joining the churchwardens in that role. The Committee advises on the use of the recreation ground for football, other sports and recreational activities, including the very popular allotment spaces. Facilities are maintained by the council. In addition, there are two tennis courts, which are maintained by the tennis club.

The church plays an active part in the Willaston Residents' and Countryside Society, which has a role rather like that of a parish council and promotes good, responsible care of the village and its environs.



We have a monthly parish magazine, *Parish News*, which has lots of information on church and village events. Contributors and subscribers include churchgoers and non-churchgoers alike. We also have a weekly pew-sheet, *Sunday News*, and a church website (www.christchurchwillaston.com), which has attracted interest but presently requires updating.





A Warm Welcome awaits.....

All who come to Christ Church are assured of a warm welcome. We are proud of what we do here in Willaston and look forward to sharing the task with a new Priest-in-Charge just as soon as we can.

Person Specification

Christ Church Willaston is an Anglican church and therefore a part of “the body of Christ”, a community of people where all need each other and where everyone is of infinite worth in the sight of God. The Christ Church congregation feels it is being called to develop and grow by bringing together in joyful fellowship and worship those who follow the Anglican family's apostolic, catholic, evangelical, liberal and reformed traditions with strong bonds of affection between its members. Members of the congregation are actively committed to and involved in maintaining the work, worship and witness of the church in the village and have a desire to see the development and growth of the church spiritually, numerically and representationally.

In this context the congregation is looking for a vicar/priest who can work with us and lead us all in worship, fellowship, ministry, outreach and growth to the glory of God and His Son Jesus Christ and to the extension of the Kingdom of God. This includes:

- to lead our church through prayer, teaching and worship, enabling God's people to be better Disciples of Christ;
- to preside at Holy Communion, baptisms, weddings, and funerals, walking alongside people in their joy and in their grief;
- to be committed to the mission and practices of the Church of England, working with others to build up the Church through recognising where God is at work in the world and in the lives of others.
- to encourage the congregation in living out their faith in everyday life, Monday to Saturday and not just on a Sunday.
- to provide leadership on safeguarding and encourage all to contribute toward creating a safer church.

We would like our vicar/priest:

- to be a disciple of Jesus Christ, a person of faith and prayer, loving God and neighbour, having the fruit of the Spirit and filled with an infectious and life transforming faith;
- to have an inspirational and flexible approach to worship making use of and developing the available gifts and talents;
- to relate effectively to different generations and build up a ministry to all;
- to understand, interpret and teach the Word of God in formal and informal settings;
- to enhance and develop the leadership team with organisational and communication skills;
- to be forward thinking and to inspire and enthuse us to reach out and increase the size and make-up of our congregation;
- to have a heart for the community and become a recognised, respected, involved and accessible member of the local community;
- to contribute to the Church of England Primary School and help the church to develop further the working relationships with the school and with local youth organisations.